

Key Evidence-based Programs in District's SOA Plan

**Ralph C Mahar (0755) Public School District - FY 2025 - SOA Plan Progress Report - Rev 0**

**In this section, you will indicate which evidence-based programs are detailed in Section 5 of your district's SOA Plan (FY25-FY27)**

\* Please select the evidence-based programs that are detailed in Section 5 of your district's SOA Plan (FY25-FY27). *(Select all EBPs that apply from the list below)*

2.1B Supporting Curriculum Implementation (+2 others)

Clear

Search...

Select All/Deselect All

☐ 1.1A Integrated Services for Student Wellbeing

☐ 1.1B Enhanced Support for SEL and Mental Health

☐ 1.1C Positive School Environments

☐ 1.2A Effective Student Support System

☐ 1.2B Comprehensive Tiered Supports

☐ 1.3A Diverse Approaches to Meaningful Family Engagement

☐ 1.3B Students and Families as Valued Partners

☐ 2.1A Inclusive Curriculum Adoption Process

☒ **2.1B Supporting Curriculum Implementation**

☐ 2.1C Comprehensive Approach to Early Literacy

☐ 2.1D Early Literacy Screening and Support

☐ 2.2A Effective Use of WIDA Framework

☐ 2.2B High Leverage Practices for Students with Disabilities

☐ 2.2C Collaborative Teaching Models

☐ 2.2D Targeted Academic Support and Acceleration

☐ 2.3A Authentic Postsecondary Planning

☒ **2.3B High-Quality Secondary Pathways and Programs**

☐ 2.4A Expanded Access to Pre-Kindergarten

☒ **2.4B Extended Learning Time**

☐ 2.4C Effective Programming for Multilingual Learners

☐ 2.4D Diverse Enrichment Opportunities

☐

- ☐ 3.1A Intentional Hiring Systems
- ☐ 3.1B Enhanced Pathways to Increase Educator Diversity
- ☐ 3.1C Educator Preparation Partnerships
- ☐ 3.2A Inclusive School Communities
- ☐ 3.2B Retention Support Programs
- ☐ 3.2C Pathways for Professional Growth and Leadership
- ☐ 3.3A Resource Allocation Aligned to Student Success
- ☐ 3.3B Support for Effective Team Practices:
- ☐ 3.3C Collaborative Labor-Management Partnerships

Section 1: Summary of Progress to Date (Academic Year 2024-2025)

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**In this section, you will summarize:**

- steps taken to launch, expand or deepen the implementation of the evidence-based programs in your SOA Plan;
- early evidence of change related to your implementation; and
- evidence of gap-closing on interim and longer-term outcomes for student groups targeted in your SOA Plan

\* **Implementation Activities:** During academic year 2024-2025, what steps did your district take to launch, expand, or deepen the implementation of each EBP in your SOA Plan?

**Implementation Activities: 2024-2025**

During the 2024-2025 academic year, Ralph C. Mahar Regional School took intentional steps to launch, expand, and deepen the implementation of evidence-based programs aligned with our SOA plan. Our focus remained on strengthening curriculum implementation, enhancing high-quality pathways and programs, and extending learning opportunities for all students.

- To support curriculum implementation across all disciplines, we continued our work on writing across the curriculum, culminating in the development of a standardized writing rubric applicable to all departments, including mathematics, science, English, social studies, and world languages. This initiative fosters consistency in writing expectations and assessment across content areas, supporting student growth in critical communication skills.
- A team of educators, with representation from each academic department, participated in professional development sessions through the Massachusetts Consortium for Innovative Education Assessment and the Education Commonwealth Project. These sessions focused on developing performance-based assessments that emphasize student engagement, agency, equity, and community connections while providing diverse opportunities to demonstrate mastery.

- To further refine instructional practices, we incorporated a data specialist into academic department meetings. This specialist played a key role in assisting faculty with analyzing student performance data to identify strengths and areas for growth, allowing for timely curriculum adjustments and evidence-based instructional strategies.
- In an effort to enhance our dual enrollment offerings, we conducted a thorough evaluation of our partnership with the local community college and determined that it was not effectively meeting the diverse needs of our students. As a result, we established a new partnership with American International College (AIC), providing students with access to English 101, English 112, Psychology 101, and Biology 132. These courses are now taught within our school building by our educators who are also employed by AIC, creating a more seamless and supportive learning experience for students enrolled in dual enrollment programs.
- Additionally, we continued to expand and promote career-specific electives such as JROTC, drone robotics, and Firefighter I & II training. Our collaboration with MassHire has provided students with internship opportunities at our local elementary school, and six students successfully passed the Paraprofessional (Parapro) Assessment, positioning them for employment opportunities post-graduation.
- Recognizing the importance of extended learning time, we implemented multiple credit recovery sessions to support students who faced academic challenges. Credit recovery programs ran in the summer of 2024, as well as in February 2025, with an additional session scheduled for April vacation. Furthermore, the summer 2025 credit recovery program will continue to serve students in need of academic support to ensure they stay on track for graduation.

Through these targeted initiatives, Ralph C. Mahar Regional School has strengthened our commitment to equitable access to high-quality learning experiences, ensuring all students have the resources and opportunities necessary for success.

\* **Early evidence of change:** Please describe and reflect upon the extent to which progress monitoring data reflects early evidence of change (e.g., changes in actions, discourse, beliefs, expectations, and instructional practice) that you anticipate will ultimately lead to improved outcomes and smaller disparities in outcomes for student groups targeted in your SOA Plan?

### **Early Evidence of Change**

As we continue to implement our SOA plan, early progress monitoring data indicates positive shifts in student engagement, academic achievement, and attendance, particularly among student groups targeted for support. These changes reflect the impact of our evidence-based programs and signal long-term improvements in student outcomes.

One of the most significant indicators of progress is the increase in student enrollment in our dual enrollment program. Along with this expansion, we have observed an increase in earned grades and mastery of content within these courses. The shift to a more structured and supportive dual enrollment model, facilitated by our new partnership with American International College (AIC), has created a more meaningful and accessible opportunity for students to engage in college-level coursework. This success suggests that students are not only taking advantage of early college experiences but are also demonstrating greater confidence and competency in rigorous academic settings.

Key early indicators of change include:

- **Increased Dual Enrollment Participation & Success:**

- More students are enrolling in our dual enrollment program.
- Students are earning higher grades and demonstrating greater mastery of content in these courses.

- **Improved Attendance Among At-Risk Students:**

- Chronic absenteeism among low-income students participating in JROTC or Firefighter courses has **decreased by 2.4%**.
- This suggests that career-specific pathways are fostering engagement and a sense of purpose.

- **Academic Gains for Students with Disabilities:**

- The percentage of students with disabilities meeting or exceeding expectations on the **7th and 8th grade ELA MCAS increased by 5.5%**, exceeding our target goal.
- This improvement may be linked to our focus on writing across the curriculum, data-driven instruction, and performance-based assessments.

Taken together, these early indicators of change—higher dual enrollment participation and performance, improved attendance among at-risk students, and notable academic gains for students with disabilities—demonstrate progress in the areas of equity, engagement, and academic achievement. These shifts in student actions, expectations, and instructional practice lay the groundwork for closing opportunity gaps and ensuring that all students have access to rigorous and relevant learning experiences. Moving forward, we will continue to monitor these trends and refine our approaches to sustain and build upon this early success.

**\* Progress in closing disparities for student groups in your district:**

Please describe and reflect upon the extent to which progress monitoring data on interim and longer-term student outcomes reflects the following:

- improvement for the student groups targeted in your SOA Plan;
- reduced disparities for student groups targeted in your SOA Plan;
- progress towards meeting targets for the lowest performing students group

**Reflection on Interim and Long-Term Student Outcomes**

Progress monitoring data reflects some improvement for targeted student groups in our SOA plan. However, while these gains are promising, they have not yet resulted in significant reductions in disparities between these student groups and the overall student population. In some cases, progress remains minimal or inconsistent, highlighting the need for continued focus and refinement of our strategies.

Key findings include:

- **Improvements for Targeted Student Groups:**

- Increased enrollment in dual enrollment courses and improved academic performance in those courses indicate greater access to college-level learning opportunities.
- A 5.5% increase in students with disabilities meeting or exceeding expectations on the 7th and 8th grade ELA MCAS suggests progress in targeted interventions and instructional strategies.
- A 2.4% decrease in chronic absenteeism among low-income students in JROTC and Firefighter courses demonstrates the potential of career-aligned pathways to boost engagement.

- **Limited Progress in Reducing Disparities:**

- Despite gains in key areas, the achievement gaps between targeted student groups and the overall student body remain largely unchanged.
- While students with disabilities made progress in ELA MCAS performance, disparities persist in other subject areas, and gains have not been sufficient to significantly close achievement gaps.
- Attendance improvements for low-income students in career programs have not yet translated into broader attendance gains for this student group as a whole.

- **Progress Toward Meeting Targets for the Lowest-Performing Student Groups:**

- While certain student groups have shown improvement, overall progress toward closing gaps for the lowest-performing students remains slow.
- Continued efforts are needed to ensure that interventions are reaching the students most in need and that improvements are sustained over time.

Although early indicators of change suggest positive movement in some areas, the data underscores the reality that reducing disparities and closing gaps is a longer-term process. Moving forward, we will refine our strategies to ensure that improvements extend to the lowest-performing students and translate into meaningful, system-wide change. Targeted support, enhanced progress monitoring, and continued collaboration with educators and community partners will be essential in accelerating progress for all student groups.

## Section 2: Key Changes to Your Plan and Next Steps in Implementation

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#### In this section, you will:

- describe any key changes or amendments to your district's SOA Plan (if applicable); and
- briefly describe implementation plans for academic year 2025-26 to expand, deepen, and/or strengthen your implementation of the EBPs in your SOA plan (required)

**If applicable**, please describe any key changes to your district's SOA plan that your stakeholders should be aware of (e.g., *substantial shifts in your approach to EBPs in your SOA plan, significant changes to 3-year budget; dropping or adding an evidence-based program.*)

### Key Amendments to Our SOA Plan

#### 1. Review of the Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) in Grades 7-12

- We will conduct a comprehensive review of our current MTSS structure to ensure it effectively identifies and supports students at all levels of need.
- This review will inform adjustments to intervention strategies, progress monitoring processes, and targeted academic and behavioral supports.

#### 2. Evaluation of the Structure and Schedule for Grades 7 and 8

- We will analyze the current middle school schedule and structure to determine if adjustments are needed to optimize instructional time, intervention opportunities, and student engagement.
- The goal is to ensure that students receive the necessary supports and access to high-quality instruction in core subject areas.

\* What steps will your district be taking to expand, deepen, and/or strengthen the implementation of the EBPs in its SOA Plan during the 2025-2026 school year?

### Implementation Plans for 2025-2026

To expand, deepen, and strengthen our implementation of evidence-based programs, we will prioritize the following initiatives:

- Content-Specific Professional Development for Mathematics and ELA Departments
  - We will provide targeted professional development focused on effective instructional strategies in mathematics and ELA.
  - This will include training on data-driven instruction, differentiated learning strategies, and methods to support diverse learners.
- Implementation of a New High-Quality Math Curriculum in Grades 7 and 8
  - To improve student outcomes in mathematics, we will adopt and implement a research-based, high-quality curriculum designed to strengthen foundational math skills and improve long-term success.
  - Professional development and instructional support will be provided to ensure effective curriculum rollout.
- Professional Development in Universal Design for Learning (UDL)
  - All educators will receive professional development in UDL strategies to better support diverse learners, particularly students with disabilities and low-income students.
  - This training will focus on increasing student engagement, providing multiple means of representation, and fostering more inclusive classroom environments.
- Intentional Recruitment of Low-Income Students and Students with Disabilities in Dual Enrollment
  - To ensure equitable access to early college experiences, we will implement a targeted recruitment strategy to encourage more low-income students and students with disabilities to participate in dual enrollment courses.
  - This may include outreach efforts, family engagement, and additional academic supports to help students succeed in college-level coursework.

These targeted amendments and initiatives are designed to address identified gaps, reduce disparities, and ensure that all students—especially our most vulnerable populations—receive the support and opportunities necessary to thrive. By strengthening our MTSS framework, refining middle school structures, and enhancing instructional strategies, we aim to create a more equitable and impactful learning environment for all students.



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**In this section, you will describe:**

- activities implemented in 2024-2025 that engage families/caregivers, particularly those representing student groups experiencing the greatest disparities, about how to best address their students' needs;;
- evidence of progress to date in improving family/caregiver engagement, using the metrics in your SOA Plan (FY25-FY27);
- the ways in which your district engaged with different stakeholder groups, particularly those representing student groups experiencing disparities, throughout the 2024-2025 school year.

\* Please briefly describe your districts efforts during the 2024-25 school year to engage families/caregivers, *particularly those representing the student groups you have identified for targeted support, about how to best address their students' needs.*

**Activities Implemented to Engage Families and Caregivers**

To ensure families are informed and empowered to support their students, we have taken the following steps:

- Title I Presentations
  - We hosted two Title I presentations during the 2024-2025 school year—one at our Fall Family Night and another at our Winter Community Open House. These sessions provided families with important information about available academic supports and strategies to assist their children.
- Family Surveys for Input and Feedback
  - We distributed Title I surveys to all families to gather insights on how we can better support students academically.
  - We also sent out SOA-specific surveys to ensure that family perspectives were considered when assessing the impact of our implementation strategies and identifying areas for improvement.
- Special Education Parent Advisory Council (SEPAC) Meetings

- To improve accessibility and encourage broader participation, SEPAC meetings were held virtually, allowing more families—especially those with students with disabilities—to engage in discussions about services and supports.
- Adoption of ParentSquare for Improved Communication
  - We implemented ParentSquare, a new communication platform that allows families to receive school updates in their preferred language, improving access to important information for multilingual households.
  - This system has enhanced two-way communication between educators and families, fostering stronger connections and more responsive support.
- Intentional Review of Family Reachability Data
  - We conducted a data review to assess the extent to which we were successfully reaching families, with a particular focus on low-income families and families of students with disabilities.
  - This analysis has helped us refine our outreach strategies and ensure that our communication methods are effective in engaging all families.
- Presentations at School Committee Meetings
  - We provided regular updates at school committee meetings on our SOA plan and progress toward key goals.
  - These presentations ensured transparency and allowed for public discussion on strategies to address student needs and reduce disparities.

\* Please share evidence of increased or improved engagement with families/caregivers, particularly those representing the student groups targeted in your SOA plan, during academic year 2024-25. *(Districts may use the metrics described in their SOA Plans, or other relevant metrics)*

### **Evidence of Progress in Family and Caregiver Engagement**

While our efforts have strengthened communication and opportunities for engagement, progress monitoring indicates that we are still working toward deeper and more consistent family involvement. Some early signs of improvement include:

- Increased participation in virtual SEPAC meetings, demonstrating that accessibility remains a key factor in family engagement.
- Greater response rates on family surveys, suggesting that more caregivers are actively engaging with school initiatives and providing valuable feedback.
- Improved communication reach through ParentSquare, particularly for families who previously faced language barriers.

\* Please briefly describe the following types of stakeholder engagement during the 2024-2025 school year, making certain to include information on stakeholders representing student groups targeted in your SOA plan:

1. how your district shared updates on SOA plan implementation and early evidence of change student outcomes with different stakeholder groups
2. the ways in which your district collected input and feedback from different stakeholder groups;
3. the substantive input and feedback you have received to date—and whether/how that has impacted your SOA plan implementation

## **Engagement with Stakeholder Groups**

Throughout the 2024-2025 school year, we have prioritized engagement with various stakeholder groups, particularly those representing student groups experiencing disparities. Key efforts include:

- Family-focused events such as Title I nights and open houses to provide direct support and gather input.
- Surveying all families to assess needs and gather feedback on academic programming and support services.
- Virtual SEPAC meetings to ensure accessibility for parents of students with disabilities.
- School committee presentations to foster transparency and public discussion on equity-focused initiatives.

While these efforts have strengthened our outreach, we recognize the need for continued improvement in engaging families—particularly those from historically underserved groups. Moving forward, we will build on these initiatives, refine our strategies based on family feedback, and ensure that all families have a voice in shaping our district's efforts to support student success.