


PUBLIC SCHOOLS of
BROOKLINE

Superintendent Entry Plan Report of Findings

March 10, 2022



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- Introduction and Background
 - Method
 - Summary of Findings
 - Department Findings
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PSB, At-A-Glance

~7,000 PK-12 students

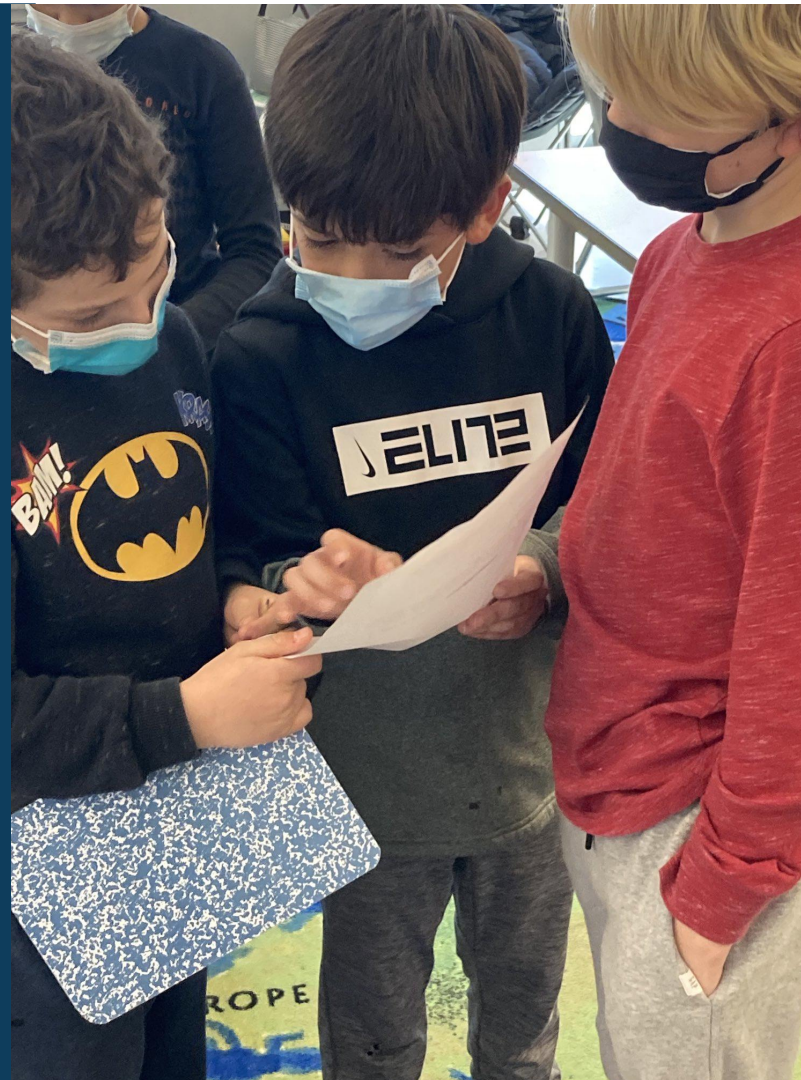
~1,400 staff

10 schools located **13** overall buildings

80 out of district placements

Mission

“To ensure that every student develops the skills and knowledge to pursue a productive and fulfilling life, to participate thoughtfully in a democracy, and succeed in a diverse and evolving global society.”





Superintendent Landscape

NSIP Cohort 12

43 new superintendents

Current Superintendent Openings

**12 hires, approximately 21
searches**



Superintendent Landscape: *A look at Brookline*

Public Schools of Brookline: Superintendents

Last Name	First Name	Start Date	End Date	Years of Service	Comments
Guillory, Jr.	Linus J.	July 1, 2021			
Marini	Vincent	July 1, 2020	June 30, 2021	1	Interim
Lummis	Benjamin	August 19, 2019	June 30, 2020	1	Interim
Gittens	Nicole	August 12, 2019	August 18, 2019		Acting
Boff	Andrew	July 1, 2016	August 9, 2019	3	
Connelly	Joseph	November 1, 2015	June 30, 2016	1	Interim
Lupini	William	July 1, 2004	October 31, 2015	11	
Silverman	Richard	August 1, 2001	June 30, 2004	3	
Rowe	Peter	July 1, 2001	July 31, 2001		Acting
Walsh	James	July 1, 1988	June 30, 2001	13	
Sheridan	William	July 1, 1987	June 30, 1988	1	Acting
Slater	Charles	July 1, 1982	June 30, 1987	5	
Sperber	Robert	July 1, 1964	June 30, 1982	18	
Caverly	Ernest	July 1, 1931	Jan. 30, 1964	33	
Gallagher	Oscar	Oct. 1, 1919	June 30, 1931	12	
Aldrich	George	Sept. 1, 1900	Sept. 19, 1919	19	
Dutton	Samuel	Sept. 1, 1890	Aug. 1, 1900	10	
Daniels	D.H.	Sept. 1, 1882	Aug. 1, 1890	8	
Reid	William T.	Sept. 1, 1872	1874	2	

20 superintendents in 150 years
~seven superintendents in the last six years~*



Strategic Leadership

Why?

Why are we doing this? Why are we doing it this way?

What?

Are we doing the right thing? How do we know?

How?

How does it connect to other things we are doing to have maximum impact?



What is an Entry Plan? *Expanded Form Supt + Senior Team*

An entry plan allows incoming administrators the opportunity to learn about the district, values, goals, aspirations, and challenges.

In other words, it is a process by which I am able to learn about the strengths and challenges of our system.

This will aid in the development of a strategic plan.

Components of an Entry Plan

Information Gathering

What are the stories the PSB community and its stakeholders are telling me?

What are the stories that the data we have on our district tell?

What are the stories I am getting in my own observations?

Analysis and Recommendations

Based on what I have seen, what themes and patterns have emerged?

What norms, cultures, and values do we want to maintain; what do we want to change?

Strategy and Implementation

How can various aspects of PSB work together so that meaningful and sustainable change can occur?



Specific Objectives

- To get to know the school district and its people as fully as possible in a brief period of time, outside the daily context of crisis and problem solving;
- To examine key issues in the school system's past, in order to make sense of how such issues are handled and to identify the norms which affect how the organization may function in the future;
- To examine key operating systems, their efficiencies, and make further recommendations for refinement;
- To identify the tasks which need to be done and to rank them in order of priority;
- To establish how these tasks should be accomplished; and
- To generate a District Strategy grounded in the entry findings

Timeline

Pre-Phase 1: Process

(Feb 2021 - June 2021)

Phase 2: Review and Reflection

(September 2021 -
February 2022)

Phase 4: Strategic Plan Development Launch

(August 2022 -
December 2022)

Phase 1: Process

(July 2021 - August
2021)

Phase 3: Conclusions and Sharing

(March 2022 - June
2022)

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Guiding Questions

- What processes and approaches are deemed highly successful and high functioning?
- What processes and approaches would benefit from review or revision?
- What priorities should PSB establish for our work?

Sources of Information

What I've Seen

Observations Within and Outside of our Schools

30+ official school visits conducted.

30+ “drop-ins” visits.

What I've heard

Formal and Informal Interviews

100+ meetings involving
430+ individuals within the community.

What I've Counted

Analysis of District Data

Ongoing review of District artifacts, existing policies and bargaining contracts

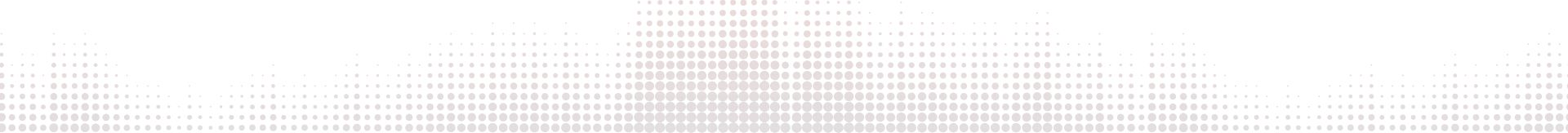
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A Look in the mirror.



Overall District Summary

- Overwhelming love of education; system and community really care about and value public education
 - Our diversity is one of our greatest assets
 - We are like a family
 - Our system offers a wide range of opportunities to our students
 - The Town invests in, supports, and believes in the PSB
- 

Overall District Summary

- Need stable leadership/leadership turnover is a problem
 - Gaps exist between expectations and reality
 - Performance gaps continue to exist for some students
 - We must address equity
 - We must address our finances
 - Need for clearly defined roles and responsibilities
 - Need for strategic plan and direction
- 

Direct Feedback: Parent Survey

“There is a range of offerings and programs that advance students to college and career readiness.”

“There are lots of opportunities to try new things, enrichment, and opportunities to get involved.”

“My child had to leave PSB because their needs weren’t met. My 3rd child left the district because of sped needs not met. Repeated staff changes and shortages, lack of consistency and available inclusion opportunities and differentiation. Not the fault of staff and principal — they tried their best with what they had.”

“There is a caring staff and teachers where they care about more than teaching, they care about kids.”

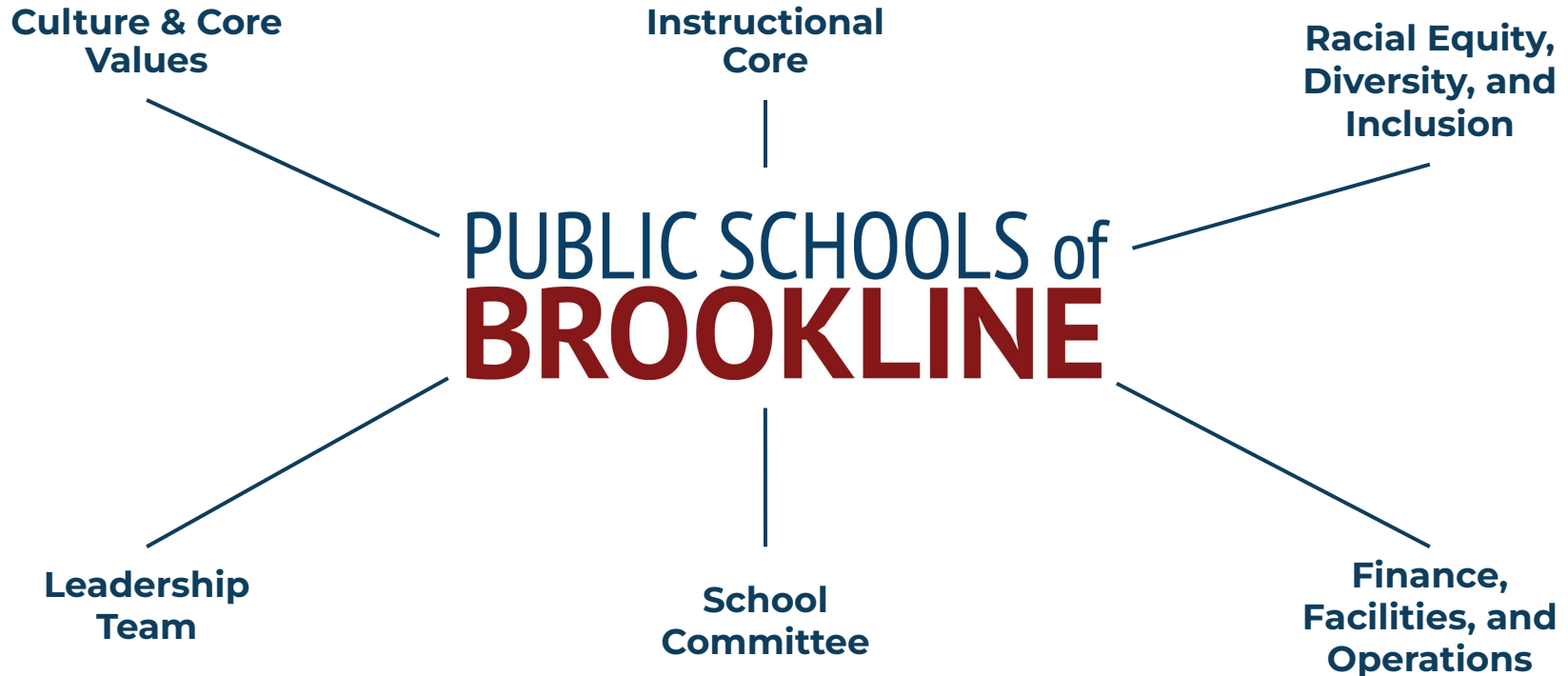
“I am grateful to have a Black school superintendent but my kid needs Black and brown teachers and culturally aware teaching trainings for white teachers. Some things are beginning to happen to change the culture of the schools but there is a long path ahead.”

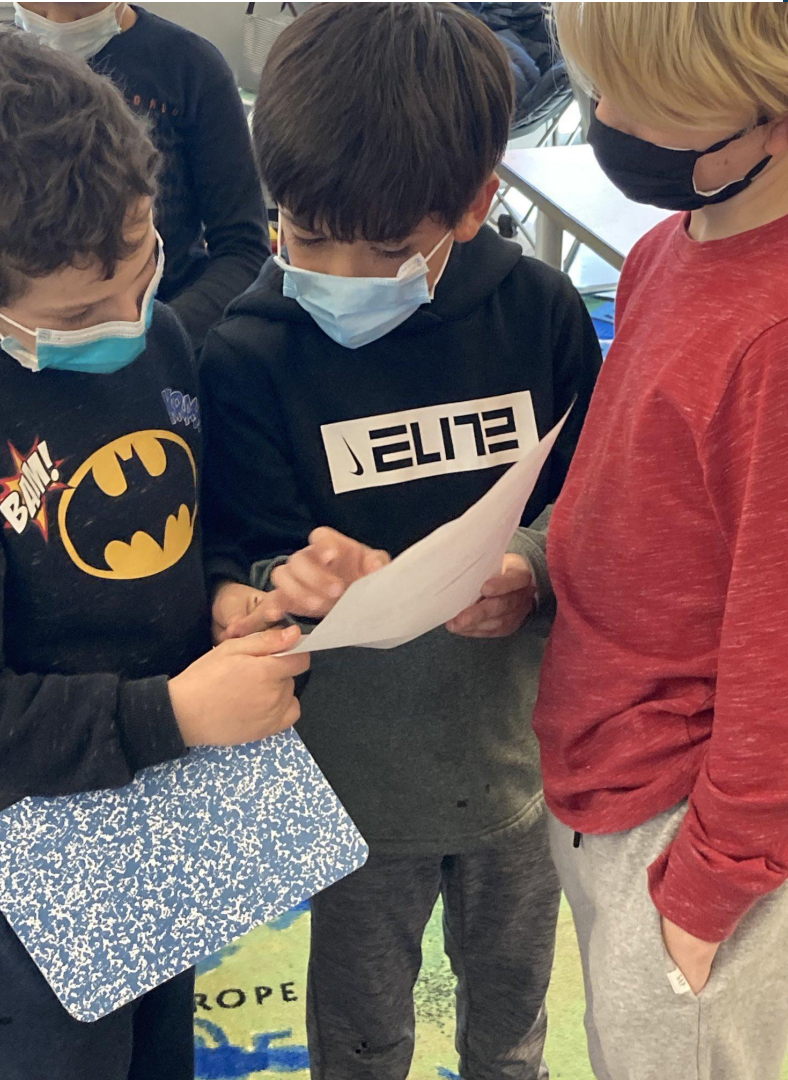
“Science education is incredible - both of my children LOVE science and I know it is thanks to the teachers!”

“My child has struggled mightily with mental health since his dad died on his last day of kindergarten. Staff have consistently been supportive, patient, and flexible in ways that have allowed my child to do remarkably well academically and socially.”

“It’s critical to align budget priorities in a sustainable way with educational priorities of families/children.”

Patterns that Emerged





Culture & Core Values

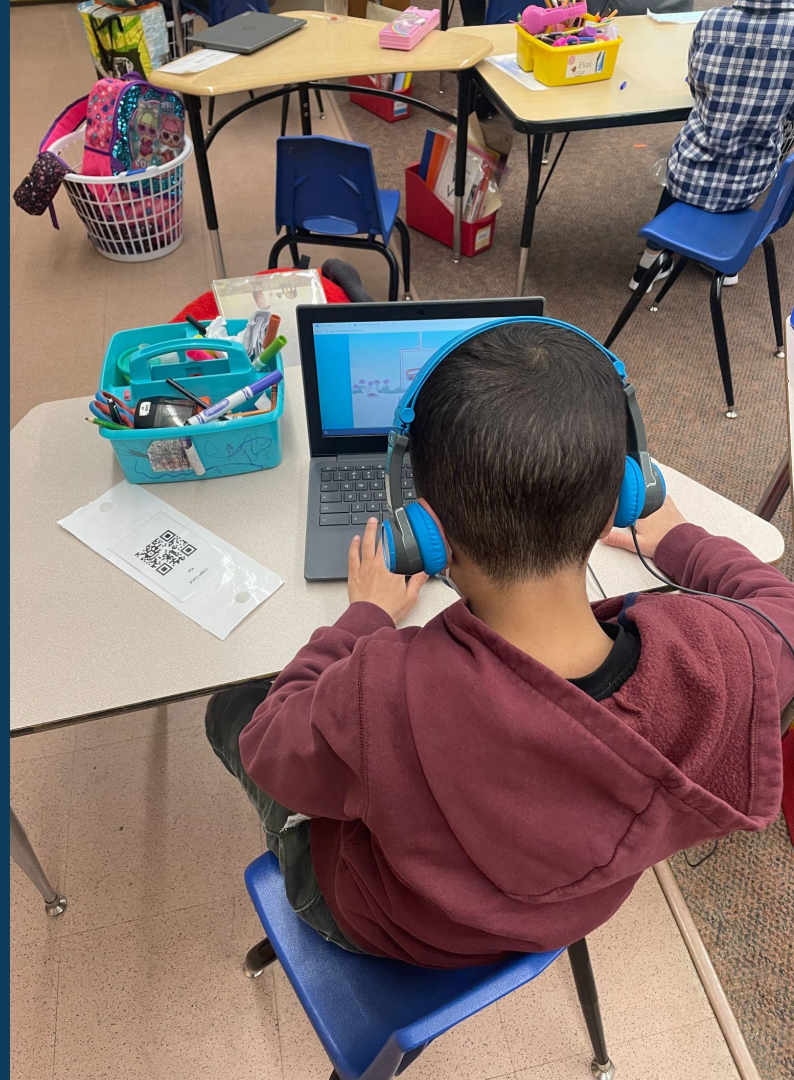
- Faculty and Building Leadership are highly regarded and respected by students and parents
- Overall perception that PSB teachers are highly qualified and are passionate about their content areas
- Enduring commitment to student wellness, best practices, and educational excellence

Culture and Core Values

- The district provides extensive, high quality extracurricular opportunities for students
- Teachers care about students and make close personal connections with students and families
- Positive feelings & associations with individual schools
- Voiced concerns over morale and express initiative overload
- Concerns around cultural proficiency foster discussion of inclusivity and acceptance
- Need to build relationships of trust and collaboration between district leadership, staff and community

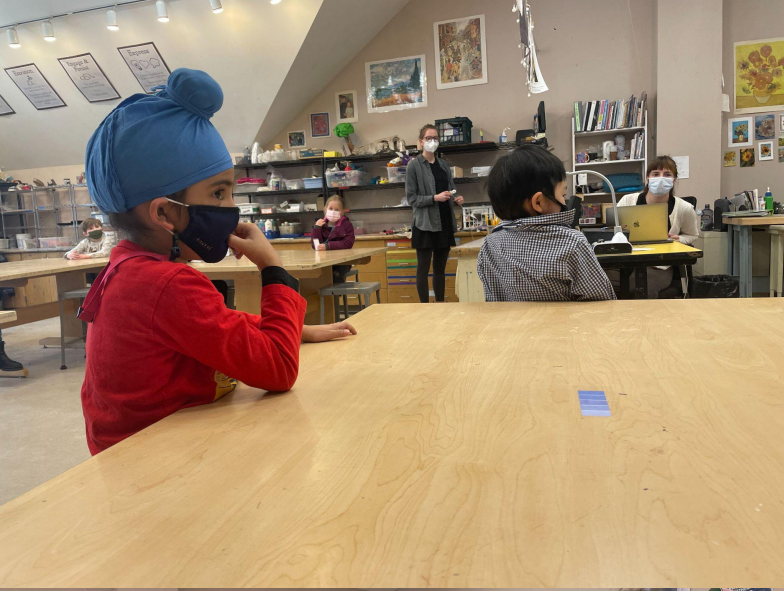
Instructional Core

- State-wide metrics indicate that PSB is consistently among the highest in academic performance within MA school districts
- Various models of intervention are in place/under development across all of K-12
- Students and teachers are provided with necessary and additional resources to enhance the learning experience



Instructional Core

- Tension exists between consistency and autonomy
- Special education services are provided both within the district and outside of the district to meet a growingly complex population
- High expectations are in place for students and are shared among faculty and parents
- The level of discourse in classrooms is rigorous and promotes higher order thinking
- Continuing the extensive work in the K-12 curriculum results in vertical and horizontal alignment based on the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks
- While data collection is extensive in K-8 through benchmarks and common assessments, data collection at HS is at the course and section level
- A review of a continuum of special education services and resources across PK-12 will provide a guide for creating access to general education for students in special education
- Development of a long range vision of teaching and learning based on inquiry, individualization and problem-solving using technology as a tool would maximize its potential impact
- PSB and BHS can establish priority areas for professional development in pedagogy to further the extensive work in K-12 curriculum completed over the past four years



Racial Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion

- Educational Equity is an emerging area of focus for the community
- Clear investment in resources to facilitate learning and willingness to learn from the community
- Opportunities for stakeholder involvement (e.g. community, staff, parent, and student voice) are growing

Racial Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion

- The diversity in our student population is a strength
- Engaged and committed faculty/staff
- High-achieving students and educators
- Involved parent communities
- Desire for more professional learning to reinforce learned practices and go deeper in adaptive change work
- Continued need to diversify the staff
- Fear of loss and behavior change are barriers to the pursuit of equity for educators
- Structural model of our schools does not necessarily provide space for DE&I work
- Student and adult dissatisfaction around belonging culture, proactive work and response to bias incidents

Leadership Team

- Highly committed building leadership teams
- New central leadership team with a variety of experiences in diverse settings
- Opportunity for new direction and focus on the organization



Leadership Team

- Student-centered
- Relatively new group of building leaders, many promoted from within the organization
- Deep knowledge of students, families, faculty and staff
- New central leadership team-excitement in the team
- Positive relationships between building leaders and teachers
- Since 2015, PSB has had 7 superintendents (acting, interim, permanent)
- Numerous cabinet members
- District has experienced tremendous turnover in central administration - we need stability



School Committee

- Membership is stable, engaged, and reflective of the community's needs
- Invested in and committed to the success of the District
- Strong relationships with Town partners

School Committee

- Strong and well utilized subcommittee structure that covers the range of PSB affairs
- Demonstrated openness to learning and growing as a committee
- Reflective school committee focused on the needs of all students and faculty
- Navigating the line between governance and management
- Continue working on public communication
- Continue defining the core job of the committee i.e. providing guidance to the Superintendent

Finance, Facilities and Operations

- State of the art builds/renovations provide a highly productive and exceptional learning environment
- The Brookline Community has historically supported school budgets and other operational plans
- Alternative funding outside exist through opportunities from private and community groups



Finance, Facilities, and Operations

- Tremendous investments in building infrastructure
- The community historically supports school budgets and demonstrated needs
- Through sound fiscal stewardship and maximizing grant opportunities, the FY 2023 structural deficit to be carried over to FY 2023 has been reduced to \$3 million
- Must restore community confidence in PSB finances
- Need for a facilities/financial/CIP master plans
- PSB was not in compliance with Massachusetts General Laws with respect to not having a member of its School Committee sign the warrant that encompasses a listing of the schedule of bills to be paid. Working with the Comptroller's Office; this issue was rectified during October 2021 and moving forward and bill payments are being reported during the business meetings of the PSB School Committee

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Office of Teaching and Learning

Findings:

- Lack of Shared Vision for Instruction
- Scheduling continues to impact teaching and learning opportunities
- Particular curricula is not fully aligned and updated state standards and frameworks.
- There is a lack professional development offerings provided by the district
- The structures or requirements for teacher participation is limited

Opportunities:

- Program Reviews (Social Studies, Middle School, English Learner CIMP) currently engaged to collect information and develop structures
- Unified Scope and Sequence for K-5 content areas lends itself to integrated curriculum opportunities
- Defining K-8 master schedules as a first step for system-wide consistency



Office of Student Services

Increased needs with limited capacity

- Student needs increased due to pandemic while staffing remained a challenge
- Unfilled position and previously cut position led to increase in work for OSS Directors
- Increase in complaints have led to more time investigating

Increased collaboration with OTL

- Addressing significant disproportionality, dyslexia screener implementation, and Child Study Teams

Special Education Program Review

- Systemic review to highlight strengths and areas for improvement



Office of Equity

All educators being evaluated this year; prioritizing SEL and anti-racism work

- The focus on timely, meaningful feedback toward educator goals connected to equity elevates and prioritizes the work in clearly defined ways

Variable awareness and understanding from community that structural racism and bias perpetuates and exacerbates disparity within PSB.

- Creation of new resources and PD (e.g. Equity Website, SEED Training and other offerings in the Equity PD Menu)) and community focus groups (BEED, CARE Parent Coalition, Staff Workshops)

Lack of reciprocal transparency on disruption learning and movement within adult community.

- Equity Learning Teams (ELTs) and full faculty trainings dedicated to adult learning including opportunities to share growth and feedback with colleagues, students and families



Office of Administration and Finance

Past forecasting errors has eroded confidence and trust in future financial projections.

- Increased collaboration with School Committee and town departments to ensure compliance with MA General Laws and deadlines
- Filed 2021 End of Year Report (EOYR) on schedule; Independent audit revealed reduced errors and material weaknesses compared to previous years



Office of Human Resources

- Existing HR systems in need of refinement and clarification.
- Employee data, information, and accessibility continue to be a challenge.
- Developing and implementing new-hire onboarding records module.
- Various trainings and paperwork now fully converted to electronic processes.
- Instituted templates for organized interview and exit processes.
- Collaboration with Town Payroll led to restructure of onboarding new hire paperwork process for PSB employees.



Office of Strategy and Performance

Specific focus on internal and external communications

- Public presentation templates
- Weekly Superintendent updates
- COVID-19 website, dashboard and documentation

OSP collaboration across multiple departments is necessary for district to operate effectively and efficiently

Continued FTE changes in department have implications for what can and cannot get accomplished

- Compliance reporting (DESE and Federal)
- Data inquiry limited due to capacity to collect and analyze
- 500+ registrations for one person (Summer 2021)

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