

# STUDENT OPPORTUNITY ACT PLAN

## Stoughton

### **Commitment 1: Focusing on Student Subgroups**

*Student subgroups requiring focused support to ensure all students achieve at high levels in school and are successfully prepared for life.*

- First language not English students
- English learners and former English learners
- Students with disabilities

*The rationale for selecting these student subgroups.*

English Language Learners, Special Education Students, and Students of Color are the primary focus groups, however ALL students will benefit from the targeted action steps the district is taking.

English Language Education – Program Impact

Over the past ten years, the Stoughton Public Schools has seen the population of students identified as English Learners (ELs) increase from 3.6% (2008-9) to 6.3% (2018-19), a 75% increase. At the Wilkins Elementary School, which houses the district's Elementary English Language Education (ELE) program, the number of ELs increased by only 8.5% in that time. The disproportionately low increase at the Wilkins was offset at the other four elementary schools that experienced increases in the population of students who qualified for ELE services, but chose to opt-out of services to stay at their home school. As only the Wilkins provides ELE instruction by certified ESL teachers, the number of elementary students that were qualified for services who were actually receiving services fell from over 95% in FY09 to just 61% in FY19.

English Learners – ELA Academic Performance

An analysis of the 2019 MCAS results of non-high school ELs and former English learners (FELs) illustrates significant gaps in performance between ELs and FELs when compared to their respective cohorts. In ELA the average composite scaled score for all students was 500.0 vs 492.0 for ELs and FELs.

English Learners – Mathematics Academic Performance

An analysis of the 2019 MCAS results of non-high school ELs and former English learners (FELs) illustrates significant gaps in performance between ELs and FELs

when compared to their respective cohorts. In Mathematics, the average composite scaled score for all students was 497.9 vs 492.4 for ELs and FELs.

Special Education – Behavioral, Social/Emotional Support. Alternative Learning Center (ALC)

Over the past five years, the Stoughton Public Schools has seen a 31% increase in the number of students who receive services as part of the District's elementary ALC program. The ALC is a specialized therapeutic program for students with social / emotional / behavioral disabilities. The program offers a full spectrum of programming from substantially separate to full inclusion / co-teaching.

## **Commitment 2: Using Evidence-Based Programs to Close Gaps**

### ***Focus Area 1: Inclusion/co-teaching for students with disabilities and English learners (D and/or E)***

#### ELE Program Adjustment

To address an expanding population of ELs and a decreasing percentage of ELs receiving services, the District will, over a four-year period, transition from a District-wide ELE program provided at the Wilkins Elementary School, to a school-based elementary program built around direct services provided by a certified ESL teacher, inclusion and co-teaching provided jointly by a certified ESL teacher and the classroom teacher, and Sheltered English Immersion based instruction provided by the classroom teacher. In FY20, our three-year plan began with EL students transitioning from the Wilkins Elementary back to one of the other four elementary schools. The plan was to have the other three schools receive their EL students over the next two years, but the SOA allows us to speed up that process. The first year of each transition will focus on establishing direct services to EL students. The second year will integrate inclusion and co-teaching into each school's ELE program. At the end of each transition year, a service delivery and impact self-assessment will be conducted and used to make incremental adjustments to the new ELE model.

	FY21 budget item	Amount: enter number, do not use the \$ character	Foundation Category
1	2 ESL Teachers	\$120,000.00	Classroom & Specialist Teachers
2	Expanded Translation Services	\$10,000.00	Pupil Services

***Focus Area 2: Research-based early literacy programs in pre-kindergarten and early elementary grades (E, F, and G)***

English Learners – ELA Academic Program Adjustment

The District has selected, and began the implementation of the Teachers College Reading and Writing Program (a.k.a. Lucy Calkins Units of Study), utilizing a reading and writing workshop model as the core curriculum for elementary ELA instruction, laying a substantial foundation for future improvements in students' literacy skills. The District's overall goal is to maximize student achievement by creating an environment that ensures that student-centered learning is driving instruction.

This program specifically benefits English Learners as it increases their ability to work directly with their teachers during independent reading and writing time through one-on-one conferences and small group experiences. The program also provides teachers a greater degree of flexibility when conferencing with students and small groups, allowing instruction that is more directly based on individual student's needs. This is particularly important when working with new ELs who may come to school with varied levels of formal schooling, literacy in their native language, and life experiences that might have involved trauma that could impact their learning.

In SY21, the District will adjust its elementary literacy interventionist/coaching model to better support the implementation of the Workshop Model and Units of Study. The updated structure will include a District-wide coaching model that will significantly impact the level of instruction provided to all students, with a particular benefit to English Learners and Special Education students. The district will also add books to all classroom libraries with an emphasis on diverse representations of characters and themes.

	FY21 budget item	Amount (enter number, do not use the \$ character)	Foundation Category
1	1 Literacy Specialist / Coach	\$60,000.00	Classroom & Specialist Teachers
2	Diversification of Classroom Libraries	\$14,500.00	Instructional Materials, Equipment, and Technology

### ***Focus Area 3: Supporting educators to implement high-quality, aligned curriculum (E and F)***

#### English Learners – Mathematics Program Adjustment

To improve the overall level of mathematics instruction across the district, and to provide ELs with a much greater opportunity to succeed in the field of mathematics, the District will upgrade its mathematics program from enVision 2.0 to enVision 2020 – MA Standards. The enVision 2020 provides significant advantages to ELs over enVision 2.0 due to the fact the program has a much greater focus on scaffolding the meaning behind the mathematics, specifically enVision 2020:

- Expands the use of hands-on manipulatives: Manipulatives such as counters and blocks enable students to carry out a mathematical operation, literally with their hands, and actually see the concrete results of this operation.
- Provides whole-class and small-group project work: Working either as a whole class or in groups or pairs, students can engage with real-life or simulated projects that require application of a variety of mathematical skills.
- Deliberately focuses on the use of visuals: Visuals enable students to "see" the basic concept the teachers are trying to teach much more effectively than if they rely only on words. Once students have the concept, they are much more likely to be able to figure out the meaning of the words we use to talk about it.
- Provides language clarification: This category includes a variety of strategies and language-oriented activities that clarify the meanings of new words and concepts. Teachers can modify their language to students by paraphrasing ideas and explaining new concepts and words. Important vocabulary can be repeated and recycled as part of the paraphrasing of ideas.
- Provides multiple problem-solving methods: Students are provided multiple methods for solving each type of problem encountered, allowing teachers to

more effectively differentiate instruction and provide targeted assistance that meets individual student needs.

To enhance mathematics instruction across the district, but focus on secondary students, the District will provide a District-wide Mathematics Specialist/Coach to work with teachers primarily at the Middle School level. The coach will help middle school teachers engage more students by helping them develop more active, challenging pedagogy, and also provide direct instruction to students through targeted interventions based on student performance data.

	FY21 budget item	Amount (enter number, do not use the \$ character)	Foundation Category
1	enVision 2020 Program Update	\$80,000.00	Instructional Materials, Equipment, and Technology
2	Mathematics Specialist / Coach	\$60,000.00	Classroom & Specialist Teachers

***Focus Area 4: Inclusion/co-teaching for students with disabilities and English learners (D and/or E)***

Special Education – Behavioral Support, Alternative Learning Center (ALC) Expansion

In order to address a 31% increase in the number of students with disabilities that receive services in the District's elementary ALC program, the District will expand the program provided at the Hansen Elementary School by adding a 1.0 FTE Special Education Teacher and a 1.0 FTE Special Education Teaching Assistant. This will reduce the projected student to teacher program ratio from 10.5:1 to 7:1.

	FY21 budget item	Amount (enter number, do not use the \$ character)	Foundation Category
1	1 Special Education Teacher	\$60,000.00	Classroom & Specialist Teachers
2	1 Special Education Teaching Assistant	\$24,500.00	Other Teaching Services

***Focus Area 5: Diversifying the educator/administrator workforce through recruitment and retention (D and/or H)***

Diversification of the Workforce and Diversity Training

The Stoughton Public Schools will partner with the EDCO Collaborative's Initiatives for Developing Equity and Achievement for Students (IDEAS) program, as well as the Massachusetts Partnership for Youth, to provide its Pre-K through Grade 12 faculty and administrative team with both individualized and cohort-based professional development opportunities, to develop a more culturally responsive school district. Additionally, there will be an intensified human resources focus on Alternative Pathways to Certification and expanding the District's presence at job fairs and college campuses where the potential exists to attract a more diverse candidate pool for open teaching and administrative positions.

	FY21 budget item	Amount (enter number, do not use the \$ character)	Foundation Category
1	Diversity Training	\$30,000.00	Professional Development
2	Human Resources Focus on Diversity	\$5,000.00	Administration
3	Alternative Pathways to Certification	\$7,500.00	Professional Development

**Commitment 3: Monitoring Success with Outcome Metrics and Targets**

*Outcome metrics that will be used to measure progress in closing gaps for selected student groups.*

- Student Achievement: English language arts (ELA) achievement as measured by average scaled scores on MCAS
- Student Achievement: Mathematics achievement as measured by average scaled scores on MCAS
- Student Growth: ELA mean student growth percentile (SGP)
- Student Growth: Mathematics mean student growth percentile (SGP)
- English Language Proficiency: Progress made by students towards attaining English proficiency (percentage of students meeting annual targets calculated to attain English proficiency in six years).
- Custom District Metric 1: Overall EL Student Services Percentile

**Commitment 4: Engaging All Families**

*District plans for ensuring that all families, particularly those representing identified student subgroups most in need of support, have access to meaningful engagement regarding their students' needs.*

The Stoughton Public Schools recognizes that family engagement is critical to ensuring successful outcomes for all students. Given our focus on student subgroups, it is particularly important that the district finds ways to effectively engage our families of students of color, students from low-income backgrounds, EL students and students with disabilities.

The District currently connects with the under-represented members of the school community through a dedicated family engagement program, a parent/child/home program, and multiple other programs and activities. The District also recognizes that existing family engagement opportunities at our schools may not be effective in reaching all families. Therefore, in addition to our ongoing family engagement activities, the District will research, develop, and implement a comprehensive District-Wide Family Engagement Plan. Specific components will be targeted to increasing the family involvement of students of color, EL students, students with disabilities, and those from low-income backgrounds. As part of the plan development process, the District will focus on the following components:

- Partnering with community-based organizations working with historically underserved families to develop and implement a district-wide family engagement plan.
- Committing to a regular engagement schedule (e.g., School Council members and PTO presidents from each school meet bi-monthly with district leadership).
- Removing as many barriers to participation as possible: Holding meetings at a variety of times, including outside work hours, and providing translation, food, and childcare. Consider offering transportation reimbursement or stipends.
- Following up and following through: Sharing, through the channels used to advertise engagement opportunities, an overview of feedback received from the community and actions that the district is taking as a result.

## **Certifications**

*Certification that stakeholders were engaged in accordance with the Student Opportunity Act.*

The Stoughton Public Schools deployed a community survey which was sent directly via email to parents/guardians, faculty, and administration. The survey was also made available to the wider school community through postings on the District's website and on multiple social media platforms. Overall, there were 237 responses, representing the following breakdown of stakeholder groups:

46 Community Members 9 School Council Members  
156 Parents / Guardians 6 Special Education Parent Advisory Council Members  
71 Faculty Member 3 English Learner Parent Advisory Council Members  
12 Administrators

*Certification that School Committee has voted (or is expected to vote on the district's Student Opportunity Act Plan.*

Date of Approval: 04/14/2020