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| ***Key Finding #1*: We need to reverse declining student performance in core areas** *caused by the loss of essential staffing and resources.*   * In 2012, the district’s accountability level dropped from Level 1 (highest level) to Level 2; district has remained at Level 2 status from 2012-2015. * The 2014 state accountability report shows an overall decline in district performance over the past 3 years based on MCAS data. * Over the most recent 4-year period there were declines in pupil performance index (PPI) scores, a cumulative combination score measuring how well the district narrowed proficiency gaps in English, Math, and Science, how well the district grew in English and Math, and the district’s graduation and dropout rates. | | | | |
| ***Verified Root Causes:*** | ***Corrective Actions:*** | ***Requests:*** | ***Associated Costs:*** | ***Metrics of Success*** |
| * **Staffing cuts have resulted in large class sizes in many core classes.** * 52 core classes at the High School have over 25 students (range 26-34). * 11 core classes at the Middle School have over 25 students (range 26-33). * **Reduction of curriculum leaders has led to decreased monitoring and coordination of core instructional programs.** * There are currently no elementary curriculum coordinators. * Middle and high school curriculum coordinators have no dedicated time to monitor or align curriculum. * **Limited funds for instructional materials have impeded alignment with current state standards.** * District spending on instructional materials in 2014 ($124 per pupil) is less than: * the state average ($409 per pupil); * Best-in-Class districts ($410 per pupil); and * the district’s FY2013 spending level ($207 per pupil). * In FY2016, the total supply budget is $48,805 less than FY2010. Note that in FY2010, instructional supplies spending for G-D was 14th lowest in the state. * **Professional development (PD) has not been adequately funded to enable teachers to improve curriculum implementation.** * Teachers who receive an average of 49 hours of intensive and sustained PD per year can boost their students’ achievement by about 21 percentile points.• Elementary GD teachers currently have a total of 30.5 hours and the high school has a total of 18.5 hours embedded into the calendar.   • Spending on PD in FY2016 is $12,703 less than FY2010.  • The amount of state-required training that must be funded by the district has increased (i.e., new educator evaluation system, new state curriculum standards, and new requirements to teach English Language Learners). | * **Increase staffing to target core class sizes of no more than 25 students.** * **Provide core curriculum coordination at all levels through increased staffing.** * **Provide materials and resources that align with current MA state curriculum standards.** * **Offer PD program that aligns with the new, high quality professional development state standards and re-certification guidelines** | * **Staffing**   ○ 1 Literacy Teacher (MS)  ○ 1 Math Teacher (MS)  ○ 1 Math Teacher (HS)  ○ 1 English Teacher (HS)  ○ 1 History Teacher (HS)  ○ 1 Literacy Coordinator (SU/FR)  ○ 1 Teacher for coordination coverage (HS)   * **Additional Materials** * Ensure appropriate funds to cover instructional materials and PD. | **$65,970**  **$65,970**  **$65,970**  **$65,970**  **$65,970**  **$92,000**  **$55,410**  **$100,000**  **$50,000**  **\* Staffing costs include salaries and benefits.** | **Measurable Outcome:**  *Within 6 years, all schools within the district will have a cumulative PPI (Progress and Performance Index) score of 75 or higher (Level 1 range).*   * + *Currently, schools PPI range from 74-100 (for all students), the cumulative district PPI for students with disabilities is 49 out of 100.*   *The district will demonstrate measureable student growth in Fountas and Pinnell and mid and end of module math assessments (elementary), a norm referenced standardized measure (PLATO as an example) at the middle school, and SAT scores and AP participation rates at the high school. Benchmark measures of success will be detailed in annual district improvement plans.*  **Process Outcomes:**   * Core Classroom Class Sizes of 1:25 or less * Curriculum Leadership in all Core Areas PK-12 with Products Online (A scope and sequence that Documents that Define Curriculum Alignment with All Current State Standards) * Staff PD Satisfaction rates of 80% or higher on end of year PD survey |

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| ***Key Finding #2*: We need to restore and improve programs to meet the needs of students** *in the areas of the arts, library science, physical/behavioral health, technology and engineering, and foreign language.*   * Staffing cuts have occurred in fine and performing arts, library, and foreign language, reducing options and increasing class sizes. * In a 2014 student survey, students expressed the desire for additional fine arts offerings including music, drama, and art. * In recent open forums, staff articulated a need to restore “full-time certified librarians” at the elementary and middle school level, fine arts positions, and curriculum leadership * In 2014, a theme emerged from parents and elected officials regarding the need to restore programs that were cut in the past. | | | | |
| ***Verified Root Causes:*** | ***Corrective Actions:*** | ***Request:*** | ***Associated Costs:*** | ***Metrics of Success*** |
| * **As a result of staffing cuts, programs were eliminated, reducing the depth of offerings in the district and significantly increasing class sizes in Integrated Arts.** * In FY2009, a total of four certified librarians were and replaced with library specialists, who are not certified teachers. In FY2011, the middle school library staff was further reduced to one para-educator. * In FY2012, elementary school physical education was cut from two days per week to one day per week. * Foreign Language at the elementary schools was scaled back in FY2009, and cut altogether in FY2010. * Groton-Dunstable is missing programs that most other Best-in-Class districts offer to students, such as 3D art and drama. Additionally, the High School has the highest student-to-teacher ratio in music, and the second highest in visual arts. * At the high school, there are currently nine classes with class sizes over 25 (ranging from 26-34 students), including physical education, health, art, chorus, and transitions (college prep including college essay writing). * In the Middle School, 33 Integrated Arts classes currently have over 25 students (ranging from 26-36 students). * There are no Fine Arts and Physical/Behavioral Health coordinators. * Foreign language stipend and grade level oversight was reduced from grades 1-12 to only include the secondary level. | * Additional staff will allow the district to restore, expand, and strengthen program offerings. * Additional offerings will reduce class sizes. * Certified librarians will teach organizational, study, and research skills. * Additional staff will allow the district to enhance elementary specialist offerings. | * **Staffing** * 1 Specialist Teacher (SU)\*\* * 1.5 Specialist Teachers (FR)\*\* * 1 Part Time Librarian (SU) * 1 Librarian (FR) * 1 Librarian (MS) * 1 Part Time Mandarin Teacher (MS/HS) * 1 Full Time Music Teacher (HS/MS) * 1 Part Time Art Teacher (HS) * 1 Part Time Theater Teacher (HS) * 1 Part Time Videography Teacher (HS) * PE/Health Coordinator Stipend (K-12) * Fine Arts Coordinator Stipend (K-12) * Foreign Language Coordinator Stipend (1-12)   *Note:*  ***The Math Teacher (MS) position requested in Key Finding #1 will also provide coverage for an existing staff member to teach a new Technology and Engineering class at the MS.***  ***\*\*These elementary Specialist Teachers may be in areas such as Foreign Language, Technology, Guidance, or Physical Education.*** | **$65,970**  **$103,955**  **$36,441**  **$65,970**  **$65,970**  **$50,858**  **$65,970**  **$47,500**  **$18,470**  **$9,515**  **$8,172**  **$8,172**  **$8,172**  **\* Staffing costs include salaries and benefits.** | **Measurable Outcome:**  *Within 6 years, the district will offer a comprehensive program of studies inclusive of the arts, library science, physical education and health, technology and engineering, and world language, of which electives will be analyzed for comparability with neighboring and best in class districts.*   * *In addition to data in the Verified Root Causes column, See Page 765 (Table 23) of the Needs Assessment for current comparisons*   **Process Outcomes:**   * Specialist Class Sizes of 1:25 or less (unless programmatically needed such as chorus) * (A scope and sequence that Documents that Define Curriculum Alignment with All Current State Standards) |

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| ***Key Finding #3*: We need to provide comprehensive social and emotional support to our students.**   * Staffing cuts and decreased district spending for guidance counselors have left the district with insufficient support structures to adequately address the social and emotional needs of students. * Survey responses from parents and staff have expressed the desire to offer greater support of students’ social and emotional needs. * In March 2014, a Youth Risk Behavior Survey asking students about factors such as their social and emotional well-being during the previous 12 month period found:   ○ At the middle school level, 22% of 6th graders and 55% of 8th graders report having high or very high levels of stress as a result of their academic workload.  ○ At the high school level, 53% of 9th graders, 60% of 10th graders, 66% of 11th graders, and 64% of 12th graders report high or very high levels of stress as a result of their academic workload. | | | | |
| ***Verified Root Causes:*** | ***Corrective Actions:*** | ***Request:*** | ***Associated Costs:*** | ***Metrics of Success*** |
| * **Due to past staffing cuts, staff members do not have consistent or sufficient support structures in place to assist students with social emotional needs.** * The Massachusetts School Counselors Association strongly recommends no more than a 1:250 counselor-to-student ratio. * At Florence Roche, the counselor-to-student ratio is 1:540. * At the High School, the counselor-to-student ratio is 1:289. * In FY2014, the district’s spending on guidance counselors was $185 per student, which was: * less than the Best-in-Class average spending of $508 per student; * § less than the FY2013 state average spending of $206 per student; and * § less than the FY2013 district average spending of $257 per student. * The National Association of School Psychologists recommends a psychologist-tostudent ratio of 1:1000 * G-D has two psychologists; the district’s psychologist-to-student ratio is 1: 1286. * **No past school or district plans addressed the social and emotional health of students.** | * **Increase staffing levels to meet the social and emotional needs of students and align better with recommended staff-to-student ratios.** * **Develop a district-wide Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports model, to address current and future student needs to support students’ social and emotional health.** | * **Staffing** * 1 Adjustment Counselor (FR/SU) * 1 Guidance Counselor (HS) * 1 part-time Psychologist (District) | **$65,970**  **$65,970**  **$43,582**  **\* Staffing costs include salaries and benefits.** | **Measurable Outcome:**  *Within 6 years, the district will obtain an average score of “Fully Implemented (2)” on the SWPBIS (School-wide Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports) Tiered Fidelity Inventory.*   * *The district current status is 0 (“Not Implemented”).*   ***Process Outcomes:***   * *Staffing levels will meet the recommended levels of at minimum 1:250 (counselors) and 1:1000 (psychologists)* * *Students will take the YRBS survey every other year and the results will be shared publicly.* |

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| ***Key Finding #4*: We need to improve performance of students with disabilities while meeting the needs of all learners.**   * District-wide, composite performance index scores for students with disabilities continue to decrease. State reports showed that comparable districts did not have a similar downward trend. * 2014 MCAS data for students with disabilities was below the state average and at a 5-year low. * The number of special education students at Groton-Dunstable has increased from 13.8 % in FY2010 to 14.8 % in FY2015. * Recent staff surveys and municipal and school leaders open forums identified “a need to improve intervention and support for special needs students.” | | | | |
| ***Verified Root Causes:*** | ***Corrective Actions:*** | ***Request:*** | ***Associated Costs:*** | ***Metrics of Success*** |
| * **Although the state of Massachusetts developed a blueprint for a Multi-Tiered System of Supports in October 2011, the blueprint was only integrated into the district improvement plan this school year.** * **While required IEP’s and 504 plans are being met, past cuts eliminated specialized staff who had provided intervention to students below grade level.** * From FY2009 through FY2013, the district cut 2.5 reading teachers. There are currently no math interventionists at the elementary level. * We currently only have two co-taught classes at the elementary level that offer special education and general education support in the classroom all day. * **Data is not used regularly and continuously to improve student learning because the district lacks:** * a learning management system * the resources to track assessment data over time to measure student growth. * consistent universal screening measures. * progress-monitoring tools to determine baseline needs and progress towards benchmarks. | * **Establish a functioning Multi-Tiered System of Support to meet diverse learning needs including:** * Standards-based instruction and assessment * Research-based Universal Design for Learning model * Co-teaching classrooms * Growth Mindset models * **Implement a student data management system to track performance and progress at all levels.** * **Create district-wide protocols to use instructional data.** | * **Intervention Staff** * 1 Part-time Special Education Teacher (BW) * 3 Special Education Teachers (FR, SU, MS) * 1 Reading Teacher (FR) * 1 Part-time Reading Teacher (SU) * 1 Math Interventionist (FR/SU) * 1 Part-time Speech Teacher (FR/SU) * 1 Part-time Reading Teacher (MS) * 1 Part-time English as a Second Language Teacher (District)   *Note: The Literacy Teacher (MS) and Math Teacher (MS) positions requested in Key Finding #1 will provide intervention services to students identified in Key Finding #4 in addition to decreasing class sizes.* | **$22,388**  **$197,910**  **$19,763**  **$9,161**  **$65,970**  **$43,582**  **$27,985**  **$37,985**  **\* Staffing costs include salaries and benefits.** | **Measurable Outcome:**  *Within 6 years, the district will close the achievement gap of the special needs subgroup by half as measured by the PPI score for students with disabilities.*   * + *Currently the cumulative district PPI for students with disabilities is 41 points below all students.*   ***Process Outcomes:***   * *Establish and publish the district’s plan for Multi-tiered System of Support (MTSS)* |

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| ***Key Finding #5*: We need to provide essential support services** *including kindergarten assistants, technology support staff, nursing staff, custodial and maintenance staff, business office staff, and administrative assistants.*   * Staffing reductions have limited the district’s ability to provide adequate support services in essential areas such as kindergarten assistants and nursing. * State requirements and recommendations have increased staffing needs in nursing, student information system management, and technology support. * Maintenance needs for buildings (due to age) and athletic fields (due to increased usage) have both grown during recent years, while maintenance staff reductions have occurred. * From FY2013 to FY2016, the number of student devices requiring technology support has roughly tripled; current plans to move the district to a more individualized platform will only increase the number of devices requiring support. | | | | |
| ***Verified Root Causes:*** | ***Corrective Actions:*** | ***Request:*** | ***Associated Costs:*** | ***Metrics of Success*** |
| * **Due to staffing cuts and growing needs, vital services are not being provided.** * In FY2010, kindergarten classroom assistants were eliminated. * During FY2014, the district eliminated a 0.5 Nursing Assistant position at Florence Roche. * In FY2016, the district technology department was cut from five members to four. * In FY2010, office secretarial services were reduced during the school year and completely eliminated during summer months. * In early 2014, the Records Secretary was reduced from 35 to 20 hours per week. * Presently, 18 custodians are responsible for the cleaning of our buildings. In 2009, the district employed 23 custodians. * In 2009, the district reduced the maintenance department by one person, thus providing only four people to maintain six buildings, over 90 acres of grounds, and 10 athletic fields. | * **Restore staffing cuts and build necessary systemic supports to reverse the detrimental impact such cuts have had on the overall functioning of the district.** | * **Staffing** * 1 Part-time Kindergarten Assistant (SU) * 1 Kindergarten Assistant (FR) * 1 Part Nursing Assistant (FR) * 1 Technology Integration Specialist (FR/SU) * 12 Part-time Lunch Aides (FR, SU, MS) * Restoration of Summer Months for Secretary (MS) * 1 Part-time Records Secretary (MS) * 1 Part-time Nurse (HS) * 1 Part-time Athletic Dept. Secretary (HS) * 2 Network Technicians (District) * 1 Business Clerk (District) * 2 Custodians (District) * 1 Maintenance Department Staff (District) | **$19,106**  **$28,211**  **$18,366**  **$65,970**  **$66,600**  **$8,377**  **$24,792**  **$49,179**  **$15,236**  **$120,000**  **$55,000**  **$110,397**  **$60,273**  **\* Staffing costs include salaries and benefits.** | **Measurable Outcome:**  All staffing of support services will be consistent with state recommended levels, district capacity needs for square footage, and essential support service functions.   * + Current Levels are as follows:     - 0 kindergarten assistants per half day kindergarten class     - 1 school (HS) does not meet the recommended staffing ratio and FR does not meet recommended levels for office visits     - Technician to device ratio is currently 1:2000.     - 18 custodians and 4 maintenance staff manage existing buildings and grounds   ***Process Outcomes:***   * + 1 kindergarten assistant per kindergarten classroom   + Nursing ratio of 500:1   + Technician to device ratio of 1:7000\* (The state recommends a 1:600 ratio)   + 20 custodians and 5 maintenance staff to manage existing buildings and grounds |