Introduction

This plan serves as the "inclusion" deliverable to DESE to address the Least Restrictive Environment for Students with Disabilities as part of the Systemic Improvement Plan and is a deep reflection and plan for the foundational and systemic changes we must make so that every Boston Public School is inclusive. This plan goes beyond the narrow definition of inclusion, usually referring to students with disabilities. We recognize our responsibility is to ensure that all students feel included. To make that a reality, the work required, specifically for Students with Disabilities and Multilingual Learners, must shift from our current practices that serve some students to practices that provide all our students with *"the same opportunity to achieve the greatness within them as anybody else."*

This work is complex as well as urgent. We must confront more than 100 years of history rooted in systemic racial disparities that historically limited equitable access and outcomes for our Black and Brown students, students with disabilities, and multilingual learners with and without disabilities.[1] We are not alone in this work. These disparities exist across the country in every school system.[2] If we want to make lasting change, we must understand the systemic root of the problems and tackle the larger systems and practices that lead to our current realities of relegating students to being sorted into "categories" and "labels" while failing to provide the appropriate services.

Our approach to planning and implementation must be aligned across the organization. Currently, we are building intentional coherence across separate deliverables. For example, in addition to the Inclusion Plan, we are submitting the district's revised Office of Multilingual and Multicultural Education (OMME) Strategic Plan and Continuous Improvement and Monitoring Plan (CIMP). These separate deliverables make clear the complexity of the urgent work ahead. We know what we write today must provide the district with the ability to monitor both the implementation and the impact of the work so we have the flexibility to make adjustments informed by continuous improvement cycles. This careful progress monitoring and adjusting must occur so we do not repeat our historical practices of working in silos and being focused on technical tasks. That approach has not served all our students well and has contributed to our current state.

The days of saying "*this type of student does not belong in this school*" or *"we don't serve students with that specific disability"* are over. All of our schools must recognize the abilities, languages, cultures, and life experiences of our students to teach them and help them reach their individual and diverse needs. Both student data and the lived experiences of our students, families, and staff prompt the urgent need to deliver on a promise and mandate of inclusion and the right of every student's preparedness for college, career, and life.

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[1] Multilingual Learner (ML) is a more inclusive term for the students we serve. However, English Learner (EL) is used in state and federal regulations and we use this term when we describe how we are addressing legal requirements.

[2] Marzano, R. J. (2003). What works in schools: Translating research into action. ASCD. Fullan, M. (2010). Motion leadership: The skinny on becoming change savvy. Corwin.

In this plan you will find:
- **Section 1: The Overview**
  - The Current State of BPS
  - Root Cause Analysis
- **Section 2: How BPS will Transition to a Desired State**
  - Shift 1: Increase Access to Grade-Level Learning
  - Shift 2: Ensure the Inclusive Delivery of Interventions, Supports, and Services
  - Shift 3: Engage in Team-Based Planning and Collaboration
  - Shift 4: Reset District Infrastructure with Systems of Support and Accountability
- **Section 3: Monitoring Implementation and Impact**

Section 1: Overview

District Landscape

Boston Public Schools (BPS) is the largest school district in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. We serve more than 48,000 students across 119 schools in nine different regions. Our regions are largely organized by grade span in Early Learning Centers, Elementary Schools grades K-6 or K-8, and High Schools grades 7-12 or 9-12. Our goal is to move towards a mostly PreK-6 and 7-12 grade configuration to ensure only one point of transition for students. However, the district has the flexibility to maintain some Early Education Centers (EECs), K-8 and 9-12 schools.

The students we serve are 69.8% low income. The majority of our students are students of color with: 43% Latinx; 28.4% Black; 15% White; 8.7% Asian; 3.6% Other; 0.3% Native American; 0.2% Native Hawaiian. In addition, 31.5% of our students are English Learners, 21.5% are Students with Disabilities, and 7.9% are English Learners with disabilities. To reflect the rich diversity of our students in BPS, OMME has shifted to nationally adopted, asset-based terminology by referring to our English-learner students as Multilingual Learners throughout this document. English Learners is also a designation that we use throughout this document to align with State and Federal terminology.

The current BPS assignment system offers districtwide choices to families based on quality schools close to home. The system's goal is that all students attend the school their family has chosen. Unfortunately, students with disabilities and multilingual learners, in particular, have not effectively been able to participate in the choice system given the way schools have been assigned specific programming "strands." Thus, families are presented with fewer school options and funneled only to the schools with the programs that align with their child's needs. Presently, being able to offer a full continuum of services in every school is challenging given our declining enrollment and our limited physical spaces that do not afford the diversity of services otherwise needed.

The district's physical footprint must shift to enable our inclusive education vision. Decades of deferred maintenance and decision-making around facilities has meant that the district's physical footprint does not support a high-quality student experience. Sixty percent of our buildings were built before 1950. Some of our elementary schools have only 100 students and, because of limited space, cannot expand beyond having one classroom for each grade, making inclusive opportunities challenging at those schools.

As part of the Green New Deal for Boston Public Schools, we are currently planning to shift the district's physical footprint to support the educational experiences all students should have access to. At the same time, BPS is moving towards PK-6 and 7-12 grade spans across the district. The driving purpose of capital planning investments is to support a high-quality student experience. These investments cannot be separated from the educational standards. Operations and Academics must work together over the next several decades to renovate and build schools that can better support inclusive education.

Student Outcome Data

Our data tells why we must shift our current practices to better support our Black and Brown students, students with disabilities, and multilingual learners with and without disabilities. The district has a rate of students in substantially separate classrooms that is more than twice as high as state and national rates[3]. Black male students are 3.13 times more likely to be identified with an emotional impairment and placed in a substantially separate setting than their peers, and Multilingual Learners are 2.5 times more likely to be identified with a communication disability and be placed in a substantially separate setting[4].

The table below summarizes the percentage of students assigned to substantially separate classrooms by primary disability, race/ethnicity, and English Learner status, as compared to the overall student population of BPS. Students assigned to substantially separate classrooms are separated from their typically developing peers and with other students with similar disabilities.

| Student Group	BPS Enrollment (N=46,001)	Emotional Impairment (N=351)	Intellectual Impairment (N=535)	Specific Learning Disabilities (N=458)	Communication Impairment (N=107)
Black	28.4%	44.7%	48.0%	39.7%	35.5%
Latino	43.8%	44.2%	41.1%	50.4%	51.4%
White	15.1%	7.1%	5.0%	4.1%	4.7%
Asian	8.7%	<1%	2.1%	<2%	7.5%
English Learners	31.9%	19.9%	42.1%	40.4%	56.1%

Source: Enrollment as reported to MA DESE, October 2022. Includes SWD ages 6-21

[3] Source: Enrollment as reported to MA DESE (district and state); US DOE (national). Data as of 2020-2021 school year. Includes students with disabilities ages 6-21 only.
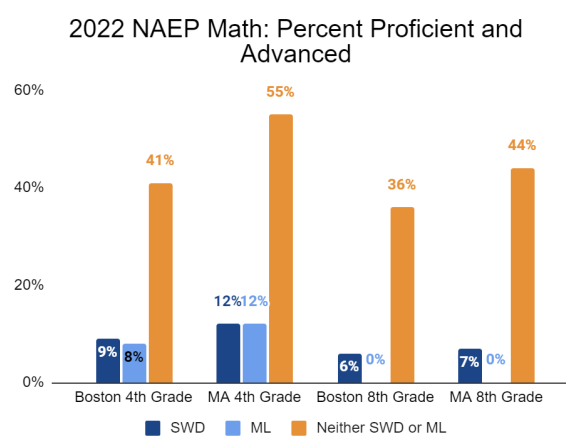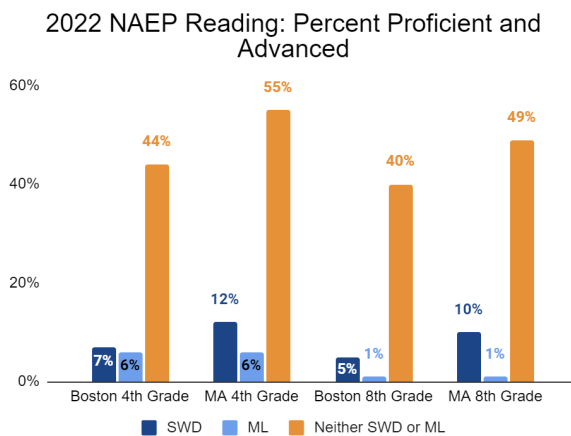[4] Source: Enrollment as reported to MA DESE. Data as of 2021-2022 school year. Data excludes students in Horace Mann charter schools and includes students in out of district placements. Includes students with disabilities ages 6-21 only.

In addition to the high special education identification rates and disproportionality in substantially separate settings, our attendance and academic data indicate that our current systems and structures are not providing the academic support necessary for our students with disabilities and English Learners to achieve academic success:

- Students with disabilities, English learners, Black students and Hispanic/Latino students have higher rates of chronic absenteeism than the district[5] -- the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated these gaps.

2018-2019 Chronic Absenteeism Rates

2022-2023 Chronic Absenteeism Rates
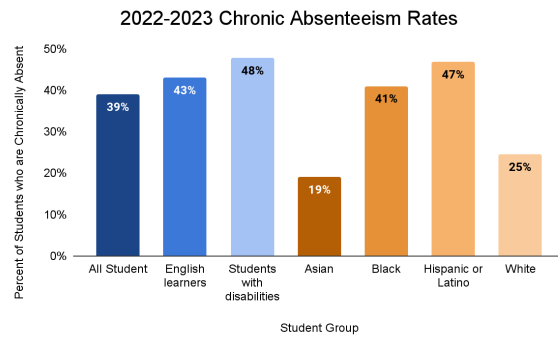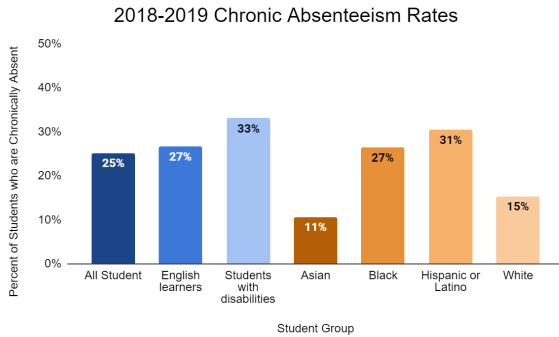
- Students with disabilities and English learners in BPS have achievement levels that are below grade level expectations and well below their peers identified as neither a student with a disability or an English Learner.[6] These patterns mirror gaps at the state level, as you can see from these graphs below:

2022 NAEP Reading: Percent Proficient and Advanced

2022 NAEP Math: Percent Proficient and Advanced

- Performance on MCAS reflects similar trends. Students in grades 3-8 identified as English learners with disabilities had an average scaled score that was 22.5 points lower than all students in ELA and 16.6 scaled score points lower in math.
- Students in less restrictive environments also graduate at higher rates within four years: In SY 2020-2021, the district's 4-year graduation rate was 78.8%. The graduation rate

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[5] Chronic absenteeism data accessed from
https://profiles.doe.mass.edu/profiles/student.aspx?orgcode=00350000&orgtypecode=5&leftNavId=16817&
[6] 2022 NAEP data accessed from https://www.nationsreportcard.gov/ndecore/xplore/NDE

for students in full and partial inclusion settings was 76.8% and 72.2%, respectively, compared to only 42.2% for students in substantially separate settings.
- Multilingual learners are making limited progress in English language acquisition, with only 34% of students in 2023 making progress, according to the ACCESS for English Learners assessment. This differs by grade level, with approximately 50% of students in grades 1 through 4 making progress, compared to approximately 15% of students in grades 5 through 10. Additionally, progress rates differ by program types.

The BPS must take responsibility for the students we have failed. This is not one person's fault–there are good intentions from past and current BPS staff. Still, we must recognize our responsibility to urgently and thoughtfully shift our practices to produce stronger student outcomes. And those practices must be consistent and sustainable. There have been strong examples of inclusive practice in BPS' history, but if that good work is not rooted in a system that sustains it, then the cycle of failure will continue.

A critical part of our success must be how we use data to measure our work's implementation and impact. We will not see change overnight, but we must use data to monitor progress and dig into that data down to the individual student level to ensure we are shifting our practices to get the results our students deserve.

Programs and Assignments
In BPS, our complex history has created the complicated structures we have today that relegate students to being sorted in "categories" and "labels" while failing to provide the appropriate services they need. Inclusion opportunities at schools have been driven either through a school community choosing to become an inclusive school or a district initiative expanding "inclusion seats" at certain schools. While this approach appears to have expanded inclusive opportunities in some schools, it has not resulted in inclusive opportunities in every school cascading from a clear and intentional district strategy.

Special education or language-specific programs at schools are called "strands." These are individual classrooms that serve only students with specific disabilities or students who are identified as English Learners. When students are in a specific strand they are separated from their "general education" peers and are not provided with or have limited access to inclusive opportunities. Families also have limited choices depending on the program a specific school may provide. Some "inclusion" schools only serve one disability or language type of students who need inclusion.

After a student is evaluated and determined to be eligible for services, IEPs are written to identify services and placements. The lack of systemwide programming means that students needing services in a substantially separate classroom often move schools for a disability-specific or language-specific strand. This results in less school choice for families and unnecessary movement of students (usually by yellow bus transportation) across the district and a disproportionate number of students with high-needs disabilities attending only a certain number of schools. This is not only unfair and disruptive to the individual student, but it also contributes to our complex transportation and assignment systems.

There is a similar structure for our English Learner students, with some schools having program strands designed only for students with further developed English skills. There are five English Language Development (ELD) levels. A student's level is determined through screening and depending on their language acquisition determines their ELD level. If a student is screened and found to be at a foundational level (commonly understood as students in English development levels 1 and 2) in their English language acquisition, they are recommended to go into a program not currently available at every school. While parents of English Learners have full school choice, specific programming for English Learners is not available at every school. Two programs that serve most of our English Learner students are Sheltered English Immersion Language Based (students grouped together by language) and Sheltered English Immersion Multilingual Programs (many languages represented). BPS currently refers to SEI as the program where students identified as English Learner level one, two, or three receive both content and ESL instruction for the duration of the school day, often with minimal interaction with their English proficient peers. These programs are also referred to in this document as "Language Based SEI and Multilingual SEI" to indicate whether the makeup of students in the room speak the same home language. We refer to the state's definition of SEI as state SEI or DESE SEI and that model is defined as English Learners in classrooms learning content and ESL alongside their English proficient peers.

BPS's Language-Based SEI and Multilingual SEI are designed for English Learners at English Language Development (ELD) levels one, two, and three and currently deliver instruction to students in a separate setting from their English-speaking peers. BPS also has a SLIFE (Students with Limited or Interrupted Formal Education) Program. SLIFE programs are designed for students who enter U.S. schools with gaps in their educational history and focus on accelerated learning and intensive literacy development while providing intensive social-emotional support. BPS SLIFE programs do not currently include clear exit criteria and transition plans for students exiting into mainstream classes. This lack of planning for SLIFE students causes them to stay in these programs and away from their grade-level peers for longer than necessary.

Newcomer services are designed for English Learner students who are new arrivals to the U.S. and include native language support. Lastly, the district offers Dual Language programs that support English learners through native language literacy and content instruction as well as English instruction to develop bilingualism and biliteracy leading to the attainment of the MA Seal of Biliteracy. DESE regulations require students in Dual Language programs also to receive ESL direct instruction, and currently, not all students identified as English learners in Dual Language programs receive all their ESL services.

BPS values native language access for students, and we must ensure that any shifts we make for our English Learners increase their opportunities to access those funds of knowledge. Based on our data and evidence-informed best practices, we can no longer isolate our English Learners in separate classrooms. We must provide them with inclusive opportunities with their English-speaking peers while maintaining their access to their native language. There are

tremendous benefits to all students when there are more inclusive opportunities for our multilingual students.

The dispersed location of programs for students with disabilities and our English Learners impacts the experiences for our students: (all data below from SY22-23)
- School populations have a wide range of students with disabilities, multilingual learners, and multilingual learners with disabilities:
  - Schools range from having 3% of students identified as having a disability to 57.9%[7];
  - From 0% of students identified as a multilingual learner to 81%[8];
  - From 0.1% of students identified as a multilingual learner with a disability to 74.3%.
- Programmatic offerings are not evenly distributed across schools:
  - 50 schools have one or more BPS-defined Sheltered English Immersion programs, and seven schools have one or more SLIFE programs.
  - 16 schools have over 40% of their multilingual learners placed in BPS SEI programs
  - 46 of our schools currently have no substantially separate program strands
  - 24 schools have over 50% of their students with disabilities placed in substantially separate programs
  - 53% of students with disabilities requiring substantially separate settings, and 61% of students in Sheltered English Immersion (SEI) or SLIFE programs, are concentrated in 5 high schools[9]

The location of these programs and the high levels of students with disabilities and English learners at certain schools impact educational services to students, family choice, and student movement within the district. These realities in disparate academic outcomes and programming challenges indicate the need for change. We must ensure that all Boston Public Schools can provide a continuum of services to serve any student attending their school. Substantially separate classrooms for students with specific needs will still exist based on student needs, but most students must be served at all schools. In particular, we must invest resources and change outcomes by disrupting practices and reviewing and rewriting some district policies that have resulted in the over-representation of Black and multilingual students in special education that has persisted for decades.

<u>Root Cause</u>
Historically, BPS has struggled to provide equitable access to our most marginalized students. There is a history of legal interventions that still have negative and positive implications in our district many years later. Our analysis of the root causes is a combination of institutional racism, complex legal rulings, and mandates as well as a lack of equitable and high-quality systemwide materials, resources, planning, and training across all of our schools.

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[7] Excludes special education public day schools where all students are identified as having a disability
[8] Excludes Boston International Newcomers Academy where all students are MLs
[9] Excludes special education public day schools where all students are identified as having a disability and Boston International Newcomers Academy where all students are MLs

In the 1970s, Boston was the subject of a desegregation order aimed at addressing the segregation of white and Black students across the district, and the intentional practice of underfunding BPS schools that were in Black neighborhoods.[10] In 1993, Massachusetts passed the Education Reform Act. The essence of this legislation required the establishment of high standards for every student, a statewide assessment system, and an accountability system to hold schools and districts responsible for progress. In addition, it mandated a new school finance system designed to make available an adequate level of resources to each school district irrespective of each community's fiscal capacity.[11] However, despite a commitment to equally fund every school, BPS schools with lower enrollments also have higher percentages of Black and Latinx students. Under our Weighted Student Funding formula, this means that these schools receive less cumulative funding than schools that are fully enrolled.

In 2002, Massachusetts passed a ballot question that required most English Learners to be placed in Sheltered English Immersion (SEI) classrooms where books and lessons are in English only. This resulted in low academic and graduation outcomes for English Learners across the state. In 2017, the Language Opportunity for Our Kids (LOOK) Act was adopted. It aimed at providing increased access to high-quality English Language Instruction, including sheltered English immersion, transitional bilingual education, dual-language education, or other instructional methods and programs in compliance with federal and state laws to teach English.[12]

This historical context will guide us as we confront past trauma, examine the root causes of the inequities in our systems, and address the current state of our students' academic outcomes. The root cause of the disproportionality in special education identification and low academic outcomes for our students with disabilities, multilingual learners with and without disabilities, is multifaceted. Historically, BPS has had inconsistent use of grade-level high-quality instructional materials and variability of instructional practices across the district. Schools have used various curricula in all content areas not consistently evidence-based, making it difficult to ensure access for all students resulting in disparate results. This resulted in lost opportunities to provide district-wide capacity building and requisite monitoring for the curriculum and instructional support.

In addition, BPS has not built a consistent multi-tiered system of support (MTSS) with strong Tier I instructional capacity across all schools and staff that reflects universally designed instruction and culturally and linguistically affirming practices for all students. MTSS tailors instruction based on student needs and promotes all children's academic and behavioral success.

- Tier 1: All Students
- Tier 2: Small groups of students who need additional support
- Tier 3: Intense instructional support for students with the greatest needs

[10] Boston Research Center: Desegregation Busing. https://bostonresearchcenter.org/projects_files/eob/single-entry-busing.html
[11] DESE: Building on 20 Years of the Massachusetts Education Reform, Mitchell D. Chester, Ed. D. Commissioner, Nov. 2014
[12] https://ballotpedia.org/Massachusetts_English_in_Public_Schools_Initiative,_Question_2_(2002)#cite_note-hb4032-2

As a result, universal design for learning (UDL) practices are inconsistently implemented within and across schools. The historic approach to professional development has not been focused and strategically designed, resulting in the lack of coherence around quality curriculum and strong Tier 1 instructional delivery. This has impacted the academic performance of our students across the district.   BPS has also struggled to establish a consistent Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS) in all schools, leading to a lack of tiered support for struggling students to access Tier 1 instruction. We see these impacts in our academic indicators and in other areas, such as progress for Multilingual students in acquiring English language skills needed to become proficient in all subject areas.

Furthermore, the eligibility process for identifying if a student requires specially designed instruction varies within schools, and this directly impacts the over-identification of students with a disability. Accordingly, students who may have successfully accessed the curriculum with strong UDL practices in the classroom or a referral to a tier 2 or 3 academic or behavioral intervention are left to find needed support through an IEP.   In some cases, once a student is identified as needing specialized services, if a school does not offer substantially separate services, or the school does not have an "inclusion seat," the student, as we identified above, has to move to another school, disrupting the support systems and relationships the student and family have built.

Finally, as a district, we have inconsistently addressed systemic bias and practices that have led to disproportionate identification of Black boys into substantially separate settings and identification of our English Learners with communication disabilities. In addition to the required content training, we must also continue to provide and build upon individual and systemic bias training. This is critical to creating an inclusive and equitable educational environment for students. Educators and staff will engage in Equity and Diversification professional learning communities using Restorative Justice modules to address biases and discriminatory practices to promote a school culture that values and supports all students, regardless of their backgrounds. Until we address this directly, we will fail to see movement in our disproportionality in specific disability areas and overall in data-based special education identification.

As you can see from this overview, our challenges are complex but clear. Now the question becomes what are we going to do about it? *How will we make the necessary changes? Who needs to be involved? When will we make the changes? And how will we measure implementation and the impact of the work?* Our next two sections aim to answer these questions.

Section 2: How BPS Will Transition to a Desired State

Inclusive Education goes beyond *where* students are learning and reimagines *how* students are learning and *what* they are learning. The programmatic and placement data we reviewed reflect the symptoms of our core problem: the type of learning and services students need to progress based on their learning, disability, and language needs. Rather than focusing on a particular program or placement, inclusive education provides all learners with equitable, rigorous access to high-quality grade-level aligned curriculum and instruction with individualized support for those that need it throughout their educational experience.

In part, we've laid the foundation for the deep, systemic changes ahead through our collaborative and detailed negotiations with the Boston Teachers Union outlined in the Collective Bargaining Agreement, which informs our system-approach to inclusion: *Inclusion is fully delivered when all students are educated in the least restrictive environment and are provided access to a full continuum of services that meet their individualized and special needs. Inclusion is not a place or a program. All classrooms in the Boston Public Schools must be inclusive.*[13]

Through an enhanced focus on inclusive education, BPS is charting a new course that ensures educational equity is central to district-level decision-making and school leader and educator practices -- namely focusing our efforts on evidence-based specially designed instruction aligned to student assets and needs, including English language development and IEP goals and objectives. Additional detail on the research behind inclusive education, community input on this plan's development and leveraging current funds of knowledge within BPS can be found in the appendix.

Transition to Desired State: Shift Current Procedures and Practices

In order to transition to an inclusive district we must change classroom, school, and district practices. BPS is committed to engaging in the following practices that shift the work and ultimately lead to stronger student outcomes:

- Shift 1: Increase Access to Grade-Level Learning
- Shift 2: Ensure the Inclusive Delivery of Interventions, Supports, and Services
- Shift 3: Engage in Team-Based Planning and Collaboration
- Shift 4: Reset District Infrastructure with Systems of Support and Accountability

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[13] "*Inclusive practice refers to the instructional and behavioral strategies that improve academic and social-emotional outcomes for all students, with and without disabilities, in general education settings. The parties are committed to increasing inclusive practices and opportunities for all students regardless of their level of need. The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) requires that students with disabilities are educated in the least restrictive environment with specially designed instruction, given appropriate supports necessary to implement their IEP and make effective progress on their IEP goals, in light of their circumstances. It is our belief that all students should be full and accepted members of the school community and students with disabilities placement should first consider the right to be educated in the general education setting alongside their typically developing peers. Effective inclusive education requires a high level of collaboration among general education, special education, related service providers and support staff to implement and model an inclusive community. Every student in BPS is a general education student first. We also share a common belief that the achievement and opportunities of our students is our collective responsibility. We also agree that we will follow all federal and state statutes, regulations, and guidelines with regard to special education.*" Memorandum of Agreement for Successor Collective Bargaining Agreement, September 2021-August 2024 between Boston Teachers Union and City of Boston

This section provides detail to answer the following questions for each of the four shifts:

1. What does this mean?
2. What needs to change?
3. Why does it matter?
4. Who needs to be involved?
5. How and when will this happen?

In the section to follow, we will share how we are monitoring implementation and measuring the progress and impact of this plan.

Shift 1: Increase Access to Grade-Level Learning

All students must have access to grade-level learning every day with responsive support and services tailored to their assets and needs so they can attain proficiency and beyond in all subject areas.

What does this mean?

➔ **All students feel included**. This begins with all students feeling truly welcomed the moment they begin their day, whether on the bus or cafeteria or as they make their way to the classroom. They feel a sense of belonging because educators prioritize knowing and building relationships with them; center their lived experiences; ensure instructional materials reflect their abilities and native languages; and understand and share their identity culturally and linguistically. Social-emotional learning is supported both in the classroom through culturally responsive practices, but also through the support of social workers including those who specifically support newcomer multilingual learners in students' native language and students who experience housing instability.

➔ **Families are partners in their students' learning.** The team supporting student learning (teachers, paras, social workers) work in collaboration with students' families through engagement practices that provide opportunities for their understanding and partnership in acquiring strategies to support their students' access to grade-level materials.

➔ **Classroom spaces that welcome diverse students.** Both physically and culturally, all BPS classrooms will be ready to welcome students with disabilities and multilingual learners with and without disabilities so that they have opportunities to learn alongside their grade-level peers and interact with high-quality instructional materials and enriching learning experiences. This includes facilities that support inclusive and collaborative learning with spaces that are welcoming for families and communities to gather as a hub for learning.

➔ **Language acquisition support for multilingual learners (ML).** In SEI classrooms, where possible, MLs also benefit from having access to native language supports that help students connect to ideas being taught (e.g., where applicable the use of cognates, prior knowledge activation, etc.). Native language access will be available through the incorporation of trained bilingual paraprofessionals, trans-adapted instructional materials, and ESL teachers' strategic use of native language. To support academic learning, MLs receive social-emotional learning support with access to bilingual social workers.

➔ **Specially designed instruction for students with disabilities (SWD).** Strategies[14] aligned to students' Individualized Education Program (IEP) goals, which can include

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[14] https://highleveragepractices.org/store/books/high-leverage-practices-special-education

accommodations and/or modifications to ensure access to grade-level curriculum and learning opportunities. This federally mandated expectation is required for all SWDs regardless of the type of program in which they are enrolled (general education with resource room, partial/full inclusion, or substantially separate) across all subject areas. Special educators and general educators must work together as a team to plan, design and implement specially designed instruction strategies for those students who require it.

➔ **Daily access to grade-level curriculum.** Students can only meet grade-level proficiency if they have access to high-quality, standards-aligned curriculum every day in every subject area. This means that *all - not some-* students are engaging in grade-level reading and writing - beyond listening to texts being read to them and having conversations - and instead are truly being able to grapple with knowledge and critical thinking. Simply put, students cannot perform at grade level if they spend little time on grade-level work.

➔ **Access for all learners.** Because all students learn differently, the materials and ways instruction happens need to be delivered in different ways (e.g. the use of language scaffolds, pre-teaching vocabulary, larger print, graphics, auditory, and visuals) for students to access that knowledge. In turn, students will also be provided with different opportunities to demonstrate their learning (e.g. the use of speech-to-text, oral expression, illustrations, and acting out concepts).

What Needs to Change?

Currently, 71% of students in grades 3-8 in Boston schools are not reading at grade level[15]. English Learner students and students with disabilities trail their peers on state assessments. In order to close this gap, we must change the way all students are receiving instruction. By changing instruction delivery for all students, we will be able to identify and better meet the needs of the students who need more support. This can include but is not limited to our Black and Brown students, students with disabilities, multilingual learners with and without disabilities who are newly arrived immigrants, have not yet made adequate progress in acquiring English (long-term ELs) and students with limited or interrupted formal education. BPS will implement a multi-tiered system of support (MTSS) to tailor instruction, including evidence-based reading instruction, to eliminate disparities and accelerate academic achievement and promote behavioral success of all children.

- Tier 1: All students
- Tier 2: Small groups of students who need additional support
- Tier 3: Intense instructional support for students with the greatest needs

Why does this matter?

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[15] As measured by the percentage of grades 3-8 students meeting or exceeding expectations on the 2023 ELA MCAS. https://profiles.doe.mass.edu/mcas/achievement_level.aspx?linkid=32&orgcode=00350000&orgtypecode=5&

If we want our students to graduate ready for college, career, and life we must center a sense of belonging in how we differentiate instruction so they can reach their full potential. If students do not feel a sense of belonging and don't have daily access to grade-level curriculum that affirms and sustains their identities, they will not achieve proficiency.

Who must be involved?

There are many different steps (outlined below) that we must take to increase access to grade-level learning for all students. Every member of the BPS community has a role to play in achieving this goal:

- **District Staff**: Set up the structures to ensure systems of communication exist to inform and empower school leaders to lead the work at the school level. This includes programmatic shifts, creating professional development and coaching opportunities for educators to increase their capacity to educate culturally and linguistically diverse students and provide funding and an implementation plan for high-quality instructional materials. Regional School Superintendents provide intentional support to coach school leaders to provide direct feedback to educators on the implementation of inclusive practices to ensure all students access grade-level learning. They also provide direct feedback to School Leaders on their ability to create conditions for inclusive practice.

- **School Leaders:** Implement professional development/training for educators; use equitable literacy walkthrough tools aligned with goals during classroom visits; monitor implementation and quality of instruction with specific focus on MLs and students with disabilities; collect and analyze student data; ensure students are programmed for inclusive instructional services they need. Work with district staff and educators to continuously monitor and assess student outcomes so resources can be shifted as needed. School leaders provide frequent feedback to educators about the implementation of grade-level curriculum for all students using inclusive practices in the classroom.

- **Educators:** Implement district supported curriculum and access coaching support when needed to differentiate content and instruction for diverse learners; utilize culturally inclusive teaching practices; honor and include individualized learning needs; create a welcoming classroom environment for all students and continuously monitor and assess the student outcomes with the teaching team.

- **Families:** Schools must work in partnership with families to learn about each child's learning needs, communicate and provide opportunities to fully understand programming options, and include families in decision making. School-based family liaisons and social workers monitor and ensure family engagement in the academic progress of their student. Additionally, both school-based and districtwide opportunities for families to learn and engage in dialogue about the importance of access to grade-level learning, and the home-school partnership will be available to families. Families are essential to supporting student learning and can do so both within schools and at home.

How and when will this happen?

Below is a list of major milestones for SY23-24 that must be completed for our work to be fully implemented.

Shift 1: Drive Equity for ALL Learners by Increasing Access to Grade-Level Learning and High Quality Instructional Materials		
Time Period	**Action Step**	**Status**
July to August 2023	Distribute High Quality Instructional Materials (HQIM) orders to schools	Complete
	Communicate expectation of additional 8 hours of Professional Development (PD)	Complete
	Design readiness assessment for schools	Complete
	Align professional learning with instructional focus/ Quality School Plan (QSP)	Complete
	Analyze student-level data to inform QSP	Complete
	Create content for 4 modules of 8 hours of mandatory PD	Complete
September 2023 to January 2024	Schools complete readiness assessment	In Progress
	Create module for educators on Specially Designed Instruction	Not Started
	Revise Equitable Literacy classroom walkthrough tool	Complete
	Office of Family and Community Advancement (OFA) and Office of Teaching and Learning (OTL) trains Family Resource Specialists and Family Liaisons in engaging families around BPS instruction and access goals	Not Started
	Provide district-level family and community program offerings awareness sessions	Not Started
	Review Equitable Literacy walkthrough trends to provide feedback and targeted professional learning	Not Started
February to June 2024	Educators complete additional 8 hours of PD	In Progress
	Produce videos to share best practices with educators	Not Started
	OTL, Office of Specialized Services (OSS), and Office of Multilingual and Multicultural Education (OMME) creates resources to help families understand importance of grade-level HQIM and access to Tier 1 instruction	Not Started
July to August 2024	Educators complete required module on Specially Designed Instruction	Not Started
	Host summer professional learning on Universal Design for Learning (UDL) and differentiated instruction for all educators	Not Started

Shift 2: Ensure the Inclusive Delivery of Interventions, Supports, and Services

Some students will require additional services and support to get what they need.

What does this mean?

Within every classroom in BPS, each child's academic, behavioral, and social-emotional needs are met. For this to be true every teacher must be an expert in delivering Tier 1 instruction that is differentiated to meet the diverse needs of our students. This includes schools' accountability measures to ensure that English as a Second Language (ESL) and Special Education educators can deliver evidence-based Specially Designed Instruction (SDI) and ESL instruction at the school level.

At every school, the MTSS coordinator will assist school-based teams in analyzing and tracking student data and services in order to support the classroom teacher in differentiating learning to meet the needs of all students. There is ongoing progress monitoring through the Student Support Team (SST) to review student data and deploy resources for Tier 2 and 3 interventions. Strengthening the MTSS model within all BPS schools will build school capacity to make evidence-based decisions, develop high-quality intervention plans, and implement those with fidelity. This will build an understanding of developing MTSS structures of accountability in schools.

This process will also ensure that if a student is not making effective progress through these tiered supports, a referral is made to special education after the SST has done a thorough review of student-level data. The outcome of this process will allow the IEP team to analyze the referral intervention data available in order to make an informed decision regarding eligibility for special education.

➔ **Universal supports.** To provide all students with targeted evidenced-based interventions to allow for access to high-quality differentiated Tier 1 instruction, we must implement strong MTSS and tiered interventions in every single school. This work will center on data review, identification of evidence-based interventions, monitoring implementation, and reflecting on impact. An MTSS model will work to build schools' capacity to make evidence-based decisions, develop high-quality intervention plans, implement those with fidelity, and build an understanding of developing MTSS structures in schools.
   ◆ Every school has an MTSS coordinator and the district is using Panorama and the systems to capture student-level data interventions and outcomes. In addition, every region has Inclusion, Equitable Literacy, Science, and Multilingual coaches to support quality instructional practices.
   ◆ All students are screened in ELA and Math (MAP Growth) as one measure to determine their progress toward grade-level standards. Additionally, the district

      implements early literacy universal screening (MAP Fluency) for all students in grades K2-3 to identify dyslexia related concerns that must be addressed.

◆ Some students may not yet demonstrate the progress needed to attain grade-level proficiency and need additional support to help them accelerate specific skills that will achieve grade-level progress during grade-level instruction alongside their peers. These students (including multilingual and students with and without disabilities) may require additional behavioral and academic services, most typically in evidence-based structured reading interventions and ongoing behavioral supports.

➔ **Required services for English learners (ELs) based on ELD levels.** All ELs must receive state-required English as a Second Language (ESL) services based on their English language development (ELD) needs (Levels 1-5). As part of being fully included, ELs must learn alongside their peers and have access to grade-level materials in their native language while acquiring English proficiency. They are separated only as needed to receive direct ESL instruction that cannot otherwise be received within their class, typically for Multilingual Learners that reflect foundational ELD levels, but not for the entire day. In addition, some MLs who have either recently arrived in the U.S. or have experienced limited or interrupted formal education may need specific programming (Newcomers or SLIFE) to support their transition into a more typical English development instructional setting. These Newcomer services and SLIFE programs will have clear criteria to exit students and transition plans will be in place for every student to ensure that they are successful in the SEI classroom.

➔ **Native language access for multilingual learners.** Being immersed in a learning environment where other adults speak the same language helps affirm and sustain the identities of multilingual learners, impacting their success. Native language access for multilingual learners helps to foster learning spaces where students feel empowered to draw upon their linguistic and cultural assets to enhance their overall academic experience. Multilingual Learners will spend more time engaging with and learning alongside their grade-level peers while receiving the language acquisition instruction they need, including increased opportunities for native language access and participation in dual language programs. Language acquisition research promotes using multilingual learners' (MLs) native language to facilitate second language development and skills transfer. However, it is essential to note that the sole use of the native language does not guarantee academic English learning or academic achievement in grade-level core subjects. The strategic use of native language in conjunction with explicit English language scaffolded instruction leads to bilingualism, biliteracy, and sociocultural competency and English language proficiency.

➔ **Identification of the Development Process for Determining Specialized Services.** Students who have received differentiated support[16] in accessing grade-level content standards given Tier 1 interventions as well as receiving targeted Tier 2 and 3

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[16] https://highleveragepractices.org/store/books/high-leverage-practices-special-education

intervention(s), and presenting as not making progress, can be considered for a referral for special education evaluation to determine eligibility for specially designed intervention services.[17] The eligibility evaluation process must include academic and, if relevant, behavioral data analysis, samples of student work, and evidence from students' progress in grade-level learning using targeted interventions, as additional evaluations are used to determine students' present level of performance and to what degree a disability is present. With their expertise and knowledge of the student, this process requires the child's family and all educators to convene as a team to determine eligibility methodology, performance criteria, and specific target areas of specially designed instruction and/or related services as needed. The IEP team should write measurable goals and objectives that align with grade level and content standards to promote access and learning opportunities with their peers.

To ensure all students with disabilities have relevant and rigorous IEPs that are tailored to student's individual learning needs, the Office Specialized Services (OSS) will develop training modules and coaching to support COSE and school-based teams to increase their capacity to ensure that IEPs are quantitative and qualitative in development, focused on the use of data, as considerations to provide SDI services within a general education setting must be considered in order to ensure LRE. In addition, OSS will be conducting quarterly IEP quality reviews to monitor and guide training and inform targeted coaching.

➔ **Specialized Instruction for students with disabilities.** IDEA regulations clarify that: Specially Designed Instruction (SDI) means adapting, as appropriate to the needs of an eligible child with a disability to address the unique needs of the child that result from the child's disability; and ensure access to the child to the general curriculum, so that the child can meet the educational standards within the jurisdiction of the Boston Public Schools. The assurance of this mandate within our schools, given the implementation of the district Inclusive Plan, will promote learning opportunities for students with disabilities to access core instruction to make progress in the general education curriculum to close the gap in academic performance as compared to their peers. Through evidenced-based methodologies of SDI, teachers will adapt the content, and align the delivery of instruction and methodology to strategies that are evidenced-based and targeted to align their delivery of instruction and/or scaffold learning opportunities to meet the unique learning needs of our students to be successful.

Levels of support in BPS classrooms will align district initiatives of MTSS, UDL, and SDI to enhance teachers' practices to provide differentiated instruction by analyzing student learning through the instructional process of accommodations and/or modifications. General education classroom settings will be structured to promote various models of teaching and learning:

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[17] There will be students with significant presenting needs that may require a more immediate referral for a special education evaluation to determine eligibility.

- Consultative model of collaboration between classroom teacher(s), special education teacher and/or specialized support specialists
- Team Teaching - General/Special Educators or Specialist are both in the classroom and may take turns teaching the whole class or small groups
- Parallel Teaching -The classroom is divided into two groups and each teacher is teaching the same information as this works well to differentiate instruction when the content being taught is challenging and/or given the language needs of our ELs and MLSWD
- Station Teaching - The classroom is divided into three or more groups and the students are taught in multiple learning centers and rotates through the stations as the same curriculum materials is taught differently to each group teachers, as this should also provide a center for students to work independently
- Alternative Teaching - Teacher provides small intensive instruction in a group, smaller learning center and/or 1:1 to pre-teach and scaffold lesson to develop mastery and skills

➔ **Multilingual learners with disabilities**. English learners who have been identified as students with a disability must receive both language acquisition support, required English as a Second Language (ESL) instruction, and specialized services as prescribed on their IEP as part of an integrated approach that takes into account students' comprehensive needs. Inclusive education for multilingual learners with disabilities occurs when students are educated in a learning environment that integrates the two required components to their education: meaningful access to content learning and language development. The learning environment meets their needs at their level of English language proficiency and affirms their primary language and cultural identity while providing individualized instruction, support, accommodations, and modifications. District scheduling will ensure that students with disabilities will also receive their ESL services per Federal and State compliance mandates.

➔ **Team-based approach to teaching.** To best meet the needs of all students, staffing plans must shift from fixed individual classroom-based models to flexible, agile teams that support each student in accessing grade-level learning. The above services are scheduled based on student needs and can include specialists who might provide students services within their classroom or outside of their classroom for a period of time; in some cases, there are two teachers or a teacher and a paraprofessional providing instruction and services together all day or part of the day; students may also be in various small group instruction groups at the same time for one block of the day.

What Needs to Change?

We must ensure that students' individual learning needs are being met, regardless of the classroom setting they are assigned to. Students must have access to tiered interventions to support access to grade-level content, schools must build the practice of frequent review of student-level data to the interventions, and the district must provide the resources so schools have access to materials and staff to deliver the interventions. Our Els must have access to

ESL instruction and native language resources to support their learning and our MLWDs must have access to this and SDI. All referrals to special education must be based on qualitative and quantitative data to build IEPs that serve the individual needs of;[our students in the least restrictive environment and allow them to access grade-level content.

Why does this matter?
When students get their individualized services to support their needs they will be able to make progress and meet grade level expectations, therefore we are preparing students for their life after graduation.

Who must be involved?
There are many different steps (outlined below) that we must take to make a shift from our current practice to increasing our capacity to meet every students' individualized needs in inclusive classrooms. Every member of the BPS community has a role to play in achieving this goal.

- **District**: The district must develop systems of communication to inform school leaders of programmatic shifts; create professional development opportunities for educators to provide individualized instruction in inclusive settings; provide funding for additional learning and resources; and create an implementation plan for improved specialized service delivery. District will work with school leaders to ensure that the Coordinators of Special Education - or COSE- who primarily facilitate all IEP meetings, and evaluators receive ongoing training and support to address the alignment of IEP goals and objectives to grade-level content standards and monitor performance criteria and strategies to track student progress and the attainment of skills taught. Provide current school-based staff with instructional guidance to effectively leverage the use of native language in classrooms, creating learning spaces where students feel empowered to draw upon their linguistic and cultural assets to enhance their academic success.

- **Regional Teams:**
  - Assistant Directors of Special Education and Multilingual Instructional Coaches actively partner with Regional School Superintendents to assess inclusive delivery of specialized services for students with disabilities and Multilingual Learners.
  - Regional School Superintendents provide direct feedback to School Leaders based on observations of inclusive practices and deploy resources through the quarterly review process when more support is needed. Direct feedback is provided to school leaders about their application of PLC learning which focuses on implementation of HQIM and inclusive specialized services.

- **School Leaders:** Implement professional development/training for educators, use evaluation walk-through tools aligned with goals during classroom visits, collect and analyze student data, recruit and hire diverse staff, utilize multi-tiered systems of support to meet a variety of student learning needs. School leaders partner with district liaisons and Regional Superintendents to provide and document feedback on implementation at

school level and provide additional coaching and support as needed and determined through quarterly review process.

- **Educators:** Differentiate instruction for diverse learners, utilize culturally inclusive teaching practices, honor and include individualized learning needs, create a welcoming classroom environment for all students, and utilize multi-tiered systems of support to meet a variety of student learning needs.

- **Families:** Schools must ensure that families understand they are an integral part of the team while developing their student's IEP. In addition, they must fully understand the IEP process and how an IEP is written. The same is true for the programs that are available for our English learner students. We then must ensure families understand the decisions about their students' individual learning needs and those needs must be clearly communicated and accessible to all families (translation, consistent-two way communication about student data and goals). Most importantly, family voices must be included and respected in the decision-making. Every student and family is different. The district must make sure they understand all their options and recommendations for their students.

How and when will this happen?

Below is a list of major milestones for SY23-24 that must be completed for our work to be fully implemented.

Shift 2: Ensure the Inclusive Delivery of Interventions, Supports, and Services		
Time Period	**Action Step**	**Status**
July to August 2023	Finalize Multi Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS) guidance	Complete ▼
September 2023 to January 2024	Schools identify MTSS coordinator	In Progress ▼
	Conduct IEP Audit	Not Started ▼
	Develop scope and sequence for Coordinators of Special Ed (COSE) Professional Development (PD) related to improving Individualized Education Program (IEP) quality	Complete ▼
	Release guidance for moving students from Sheltered English Immersion (SEI) to general education	Complete ▼
	Create SEI PD for teachers (scope and sequence)	In Progress ▼
	Create guidance for use of goalbook	In Progress ▼
	Implement COSE PD scope and sequence	In Progress ▼
	Create/update tools for family communication and engagement re MTSS	Not Started ▼
	Create resources and workshops to build families' understanding of interventions and rights regarding their role in pre referral processes and supports, such as Student Support Team participation	Not Started ▼
	Create resources and presentations for the family resource team to use during ELAC and DLAC regarding new program options	In Progress ▼
	Update guidance and trainings to provide more specific expectations and resources that ensure student information is accessible to families (translation, jargon-free materials and dialogue)	Not Started ▼
February to June 2024	Teachers participate in SEI Professional Development (PD)	Not Started ▼
	Create resources and workshops to build families' understanding of interventions and rights regarding their role in the IEP process	Not Started ▼
July to August 2024	Implement new Massachusetts Department of Secondary and Elementary Education (DESE) IEP Template	Not Started ▼

Shift 3: Engage in Team-Based Planning and Collaboration

In order to provide every student with what they need, collaboration and team-based approaches to teaching and service delivery are required.

What does this mean?

➔ **School-based collaboration.** The Inclusion Planning Team (IPT), a collaborative process established in partnership with the Boston Teachers Union (BTU), is largely school staff, as well as family and administrators, charged with creating a multi-year plan to create a fully inclusive school community with the goal of all students having access to grade-level learning alongside their peers to the full extent possible. Representation of the lived experiences of our most historically underserved students and educational expertise is critical to the success of this team. Given the change management needed to embrace shifts in critical mindsets and practices, it must come through shared understanding, desire to change, and different perspectives that guide the path forward. Other school-based teams are also critical to providing the IPT with the information and perspectives needed that are reflected in the school's Quality School Plan (QSP) and aligned budget.

Strong Student Support Teams (SST), Language Acquisition Teams (LAT) and IEP teams are equally critical to strong implementation of inclusive practice. These teams must have strong partnership with families and prioritize a problem-solving approach to increase access to the least restrictive environment for students, remove barriers that limit student access, and monitor student progress toward language development, IEP goals and improved student outcomes.

➔ **Regional team coordination.** A central focus of the regional teams is to provide support and accountability for ensuring all students have access to grade-level learning and individualized support as needed. Regional liaisons support the specific areas delineated in Shifts 1 and 2, including implementation of the curriculum and the instructional practices that help students access grade-level learning. Each region conducts progress monitoring reviews, led by each school, that identify the supports needed based on student progress. The Regional School Superintendents direct the support provided by liaisons to schools and hold school leaders accountable for overall progress, leveraging those supports.

➔ **Central office coordination and execution that prioritizes schools.** Similar to school teams, the central office will also establish a Central IPT that collaborates to create expectations, systems, structures, and continuous improvement mechanisms for instructional shifts and operational shifts required to ensure system-wide inclusive education is realized. Teams work together to ensure coherent messaging of expectations, coordination of supports, consistent progress monitoring, and continuous improvement.

What needs to change?

To ensure that all schools can support any student, we must take a team-based approach to teaching and service delivery. The inclusion planning teams in partnership with school administration and the instructional leadership team must shift staffing plans from fixed individual classroom-based models to flexible, agile teams that support each student in accessing grade-level learning. Services must be scheduled based on student individual needs and should include specialists who provide students services within a classroom or outside of a classroom for a period of time in alignment with the services written in a student's IEP and/or English learner services as determined by multilingual learners' development level.

Through the use of targeted professional development, BPS must build the internal capacity of schools and leadership teams to intentionally design and create opportunities for students to be educated in settings aligned with their IEP services and English language development needs as monitored by the school's language proficiency committee, both inclusive and in pull-out/substantially separate settings. The goal is to use a team based approach to understand every student and their needs. This informs how that team should work together to differentiate instruction, assessment and materials in order to create a flexible learning environment.

Why does this matter?

Collaborative structures within schools cultivate collective responsibility for all students in the school. They strengthen educators' capacity to better understand the multiple facets of the students they serve, develop shared knowledge, skills, and strategies needed to improve teaching and service delivery, and work in tight coordination to provide seamless, joyful, and impactful student experiences for all students to meet grade-level expectations.

Who must be involved?

While there is a focus on the school-level IPT and the nine regional model teams, every member of the BPS community has a role to play in achieving this goal:

- **District**: The district and the BTU work in collaboration to support and monitor the implementation of the IPTs, including with the joint Inclusion Working Group. Central office divisions are responsible for identifying regional liaisons to support schools through the regional model (see Appendix 4 for a full list of regional liaison roles). District staff will also convene a District Inclusion Planning Team to guide and monitor implementation.

- **School Leaders:** Working in partnership with the BTU representative, establish the composition for the team, and identify a facilitator that is the key contact to the regional Inclusive Education Coach. Ensure the team works together to accomplish the goals and timelines. Propose a staffing and resource allocation model that aligns to those goals and objectives and leverage district support for professional learning for self and for school community. Ensure program placement (ensure compliance) and instruction (fidelity of implementation and access to Tier 1 instruction for all MLs) are part of the work.

- **Educators:** Whether elected or appointed to the IPT, it is important to have a diverse representation of roles (e.g. general ed, special ed, ESL, para, SEL support), perspectives, and lived experiences that reflect the students and families of the school. All educators in the school are informed and provide feedback on the work of the IPT, particularly those who are on other collaborative teams that support the IPT work.

- **Families:** Family engagement with the IPT is critical to understanding what inclusive education is, and to ensuring their perspectives and experiences are shared that guarantee plans reflect their students' assets and needs. While not currently required, parent membership and representation on the IPT is strongly encouraged. Family representation is required for other critical teams including Student Support Teams (SST) and School Site Council (SSC).

How and when will this happen?

Below is a list of major milestones for SY23-24 that must be completed for our work to be fully implemented.

Shift 3: Engage in Team-Based Planning and Collaboration to Ensure Cohesive Implementation		
Time Period	**Action Step**	**Status**
July to August 2023	Establish Inclusion Planning Teams (IPTs) at all schools	In Progress ▾
	Establish critical educator teams (Instructional Leadership Team (ILT), Student Support Team (SST), etc)	In Progress ▾
September 2023 to January 2024	Review Readiness Assessment & Draft Quality School Plan (QSP) with ILT	In Progress ▾
	Hold School Site Council (SSC) elections	In Progress ▾
	IPT: Convene IPT for first meeting	In Progress ▾
	IPT: Develop school vision, informed by data	In Progress ▾
	Create family engagement plan that reflects updates about IPT process and awareness sessions for inclusive education	In Progress ▾
	IPT: Analyze data to understand student and programmatic strengths and needs	In Progress ▾
	Launch Central IPT	In Progress ▾
	IPT: Analyze the Readiness Assessment with a lens of inclusive education and access	Not Started ▾
	IPT: Ensure alignment and integration including Tier 1 Access and Multi Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS) with the QSP	Not Started ▾
	IPT: Identify, map and analyze current service delivery for students with disabilities and multilingual learners	Not Started ▾
	IPT: Make recommendations for realignment of resources	Not Started ▾
	IPT: Create recommendations for staffing and implementation at the school level	Not Started ▾
	SSC approves IPT recommendations	Not Started ▾
February to June 2024	IPT and/or ILT will develop a plan for implementation	Not Started ▾
September 2024 to January 2025	Begin IPT plan development for grades 1, 2, 5, 6, 8 and 10	Not Started ▾

Shift 4: Reset District Systems of Support and Accountability

In order for every student to be fully included, the district will need to make significant shifts in instructional and operational infrastructure and implement progress monitoring at both the school and district levels.

What does this mean?

➔ **Instructional Expectations and Supports.** Instructional infrastructure shifts include selection, distribution and implementation of high-quality instructional materials; professional learning; IEP development; English Language Education (ELE) program development and service delivery; and implementation of a full continuum of services.

➔ **Operational Infrastructure.** Operational changes must occur across the central office to ensure systems are in place for EL and Special education program options including enrollment projections, placement and assignment processes; transportation services, space planning; strategic staffing; budgeting and progress monitoring.

➔ **Progress Monitoring.** All schools are expected to make continuous improvement toward the outcome and practice goals outlined in the district's Universal Expectations, consisting of outcome and practice evidence. Cross-functional regional teams are expected to provide direct support to schools focused on progress toward the Universal Expectations. Schools' goals in their QSP are reviewed quarterly with regional teams and adjustments in support and resources are made if necessary. This collaborative effort includes the identification of regional supports, their impact, and any adjustments that need to be made as a result of that quarter's review. Further details follow in the next section.

What Needs to Change?

Instructional Expectations and Supports

- **Selection, distribution and implementation of high-quality instructional materials:** BPS is committed to ensuring that all students have access to high-quality instructional materials. In each content area, the district engages in collaborative processes to select high-quality instructional materials, guided by external reviews, such as EdReports and CURATE; current state analysis of academic outcomes; and reviews for alignment to standards, evidence of inclusive and culturally and linguistically responsive pedagogy, and bias in the materials. Instructional materials are then ordered according to the needs of schools, and delivered directly to schools.

  Annually each spring, each core content department in the Office of Teaching and Learning completes the Racial Equity Planning Tool process. The goal of this process is to review strengths and areas for improvement of curricula and related materials with a focus on ensuring that each is research-based, standards-aligned and includes grade-level content that includes culturally and linguistically sustaining practices. This

will allow the district content teams to make midcourse corrections to the curricula and materials when necessary and inform the curriculum vendor of any shifts we'd like their support in making to the materials and/or learning platforms.

- **Professional learning:** It is essential that the district designs and provides explicit opportunities for educators to improve practices to support specially designed instruction and language acquisition, as well as provide guidance and support in improving the IEP process, including eligibility, and identification. Instead of offering professional learning opportunities through each department, going forward Specialized Services, Multilingual and Multicultural Education, and Teaching and Learning will collaboratively craft professional learning opportunities that include the implementation of HQIM, UDL, specialized instruction strategies and culturally and sustaining practices in every opportunity, and not separate sessions that promote each of these aspects. The district is in the fortunate position of securing an additional 8 hours of mandatory professional learning for all educators to engage in requisite anchor knowledge to support inclusion. This is made possible by a long-standing provision of the BTU-BPS collective bargaining agreement which provides for additional, compensated, required professional development hours above the base contractual 30 hours. The focus of these sessions include, but are not limited to, understanding; 1) disability types and leveraging the assets of our SWDs to access Tier 1 instruction; 2) language acquisition and leveraging the assets of our MLs to access Tier 1 instruction; 3) the components of MTSS including the role of the universal screener and other data to support and track student progress, and; 4) how to provide access to content through UDL.

  Additionally, every month School Leaders engage in day-long Professional Learning Communities (PLC) led by their Regional School Superintendent and regional team. The vast majority of this PLC time continues to focus on the implementation of High Quality Instructional Materials, access and specially designed instruction for students with disabilities and Multilingual Learners, and the change management required to support effective shifts in practice.

- **ELE program development and service delivery:** All MLs must receive state-required English as a Second Language (ESL) services based on their English language development (ELD) needs. As part of being fully included, MLs must learn alongside their peers. They are separated only as needed to receive direct ESL instruction that cannot otherwise be received within their class, most typically for MLs that reflect foundational ELD levels, but not for the entire day. In addition, some MLs who have either recently arrived in the United States or those who have experienced limited or interrupted formal education may need specific services (Newcomers or SLIFE) to support their transition into a more typical English development instructional setting. This transition will happen for K-8 in the 2024-2025 school year and for grades 9-12 in the 2025-2026 school year.

- **Full continuum of services:** The district will transition to an assignment system that supports a fuller, more consistent continuum of services at the school of families' choice to the greatest extent possible. This system will allow for students with disabilities and multilingual learners with and without disabilities to have the same options as other students to appropriately meet their individual needs, with only limited exceptions for students with the highest needs. In order to address this challenge, BPS must establish a full continuum of services for our SWD and our MLs, with every school providing services to students based on family choice.This continuum is illustrated in the below graphic. The placement and services provided are determined through the individualized education program (IEP) process. It's important to remember that the continuum is flexible, and students' placements can change based on their progress and evolving needs.

Setting	General Education [No Services]	Full Inclusion	Partial Inclusion	Substantially Separate*	Intensive Substantially Separate	Public Day Schools
Percentage of Time Definition	No special education services	special education services outside the general education classroom less than 21% of the time	special education services outside the general education classroom 21% to 60% of the time	special education services outside the general education classroom more than 60% of the time	special education services outside the general education classroom more than 60% of the time	100% of special education services in separate school
Description	Full day in the general education classroom	Push in or pull out special education services	Push in or pull out special education services	Special education services in separate cross-categorical classroom, with inclusive opportunities.	Special education services in separate classroom focused on specific needs, with inclusive opportunities.	Special education services in separate school focused on specific needs

*If there are needs, within a school for students with cross-categorical disabilities that are low incidence, there should be available special classes as needed and as space permits.

← All Schools →

← Regional / Citywide →

Operational Infrastructure

- **Enrollment projections, placement and assignment processes:** BPS currently uses an assignment process focused on specific programs and limits the choice of students based on their disability and definition of "level of need." This process limits the choice of schools students with disabilities may be assigned to and places them in a particular program at an individual school. Students' access is limited based on capacity and they may not enroll in schools without the particular program identified for that student. As inclusive education is implemented across the district, this should result in increasing school assignment based on family choice close to their home. This will reduce the number of students who have to travel far distances to get the services they need.
- **Space planning:** Sixty percent of school buildings in BPS were built before 1950, and the physical spaces we have do not meet the minimum standards to provide the inclusive educational environments described in this plan. A design study that defines the educational specifications and design standards for future buildings in BPS is underway and will be included with a decision-making rubric in the district's long-term

facilities plan. These educational specifications and design standards will ensure that all future buildings have sufficient push-in and pull-out space for students to receive specialized services.

- **Strategic staffing:** In order to best meet the needs of all students, staffing plans must shift from fixed individual classroom-based models to flexible, agile teams that support each student in accessing grade-level learning. Services should be scheduled based on student needs and can include specialists who might provide students services within their classroom or outside of their classroom for a period of time; in some cases, there are two teachers or a teacher and a paraprofessional providing instruction and services together all day or part of the day; students may also be in various small group instruction groups at the same time for one block of the day. To ensure robust staffing, the district will explore strategies to increase recruitment and retention of key staff, which may include pipeline programs, career pathways and financial incentives.
- **Budgeting:** For more than 10 years, BPS has allocated its public funding to schools using a "Weighted Student Funding" (WSF) model. WSF factors in each school's projected enrollment and the levels of need for each projected student to determine school budgets. We recognize that the WSF model does not support our new vision for inclusion and too narrowly constrains school funding in ways that may be counter to the community's values. In recent budget cycles, the district invested over $50M to hold schools "harmless" from the financial implications of enrollment declines, which prioritizes stability over innovation and equity. To address these concerns, the district is undertaking a "Reimagine School Funding" project to change the ways in which we distribute funding to schools.
- **Substantially separate strand placement:** The 2022 Council of Great City Schools report on Special Education noted, "There are several significant and atypical components of BPS's current special education configuration that require immediate attention," including a recommendation to transition to a "substantially reduced number of substantially separate strands." The current configuration and location of programming across the city results in students having to travel across the city, rather than being able to attend a school close to home. This year, the district will begin to conduct a program evaluation of the current substantially separate program strands; establish entrance and exit criteria for programs; and conduct an analysis of students currently placed in the substantially separate strands, student mobility, and placement practices. This process will inform future decisions regarding the number and types of substantially separate program strands.

Progress Monitoring

Before SY23-24, BPS lacked a systemwide continuous improvement process that grounds decision-making in data review to direct support, interventions, and accountability for school improvement. More detail on the progress monitoring work is in section 3.

Why does this matter?

The absence of a systemwide continuous improvement process perpetuates lack of clarity around expectations for the district, schools, and leaders at all levels and contributes to

continued systemic inequities in student outcomes. Without clear expectations, support and accountability, schools are left to implement materials and programs of their own choosing, resulting in varied student experiences and outcomes across the district. Additionally, the district's rigid structures contribute to restrictive placements and limited opportunities for our most marginalized students.

Who must be involved?

Changing district infrastructure will take focused effort every several years with buy-in and involvement from every member of the BPS community:

- **District**:The district infrastructure changes described in this section must be coordinated across all divisions across central office: Specialized Services; Multilingual and Multicultural Education; Teaching and Learning; Schools and Accountability; Community Engagement; Family Advancement; Equity, Strategy and Opportunity Gaps; Finance; Human Capital; Operations; Capital Planning; and Student Support. To ensure successful implementation, the district will also form strategic partnerships and leverage external support as appropriate. Leadership from the Division of Schools will ensure school leaders and their leadership teams have opportunities to observe effective continuum of services practices in and outside of the BPS. Personnel from the Office of the Superintendent will monitor implementation of the district infrastructure adjustments, including ensuring any relevant policies are updated to reflect the changes necessary to implement inclusive education.

- **School Leaders:** With support from Regional School Superintendents and their teams the role of the School Leaders will continue to evolve to expertly focus on: facilitating and learning from progress reviews, leveraging data to identify support systems, and organizing their teaming structures to utilize continuous improvement practices and regional supports to improve learning environments and outcomes for all students. Observe continuum of services practices in and outside of BPS alongside IPT members.

- **Educators:** Educators must participate in teaming structures such as the school's ILT, IPT and CPTs. These teaming structures intentionally create spaces for educators to analyze formal and informal data to differentiate Tier 1 instruction. This is an essential element of a strong MTSS system. These teams can also be leveraged as professional learning spaces. Within these spaces and outside of these spaces, educators will need to take into account school wide QSP, professional practice and student learning goals within the evaluation and feedback process to determine professional learning opportunities that will provide the most relevant learning towards these goals.

- **Families:** Through shared-decision making bodies such as School Site Council (SSC) and School Parent and Family Councils (SPC) families can discuss and give input on school goals, including Quality School Plans (QSPs) with educators in their school. Schools currently host curriculum nights and other academic events where families have the opportunity to learn more about how they can support their students and schools'

goals. This practice will be amplified to support the goals of inclusive education where they can engage in conversations about what they can expect from central office and their schools as a result of Universal Expectations.

How and when will this happen?

The implementation of instructional expectations and progress monitoring is underway and will continue to be refined over the next five years. The district will implement structural changes according to the multiyear and multigrade structure in all schools visualized below to align with the recommendation put forth by the 2022 Council of Great City Schools report on Special Education.[18]
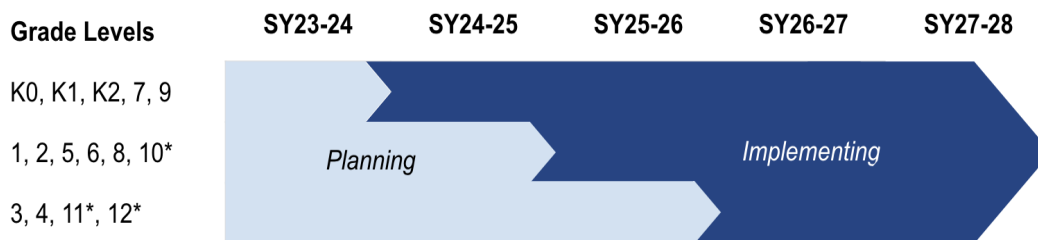
Below is a list of major milestones for SY23-24 that must be completed for our work to be fully implemented.

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[18] *Recommendation 6.2. Phased-in Inclusion Planning and Implementation: To address the complexity of transitioning to inclusive practices and unified system of service delivery upon which inclusive education is founded, a phased in school-based planning and implementation approach is necessary.* Building a Unified System: Inclusive Education Designed to Improve Outcomes for All Students *p. 90*
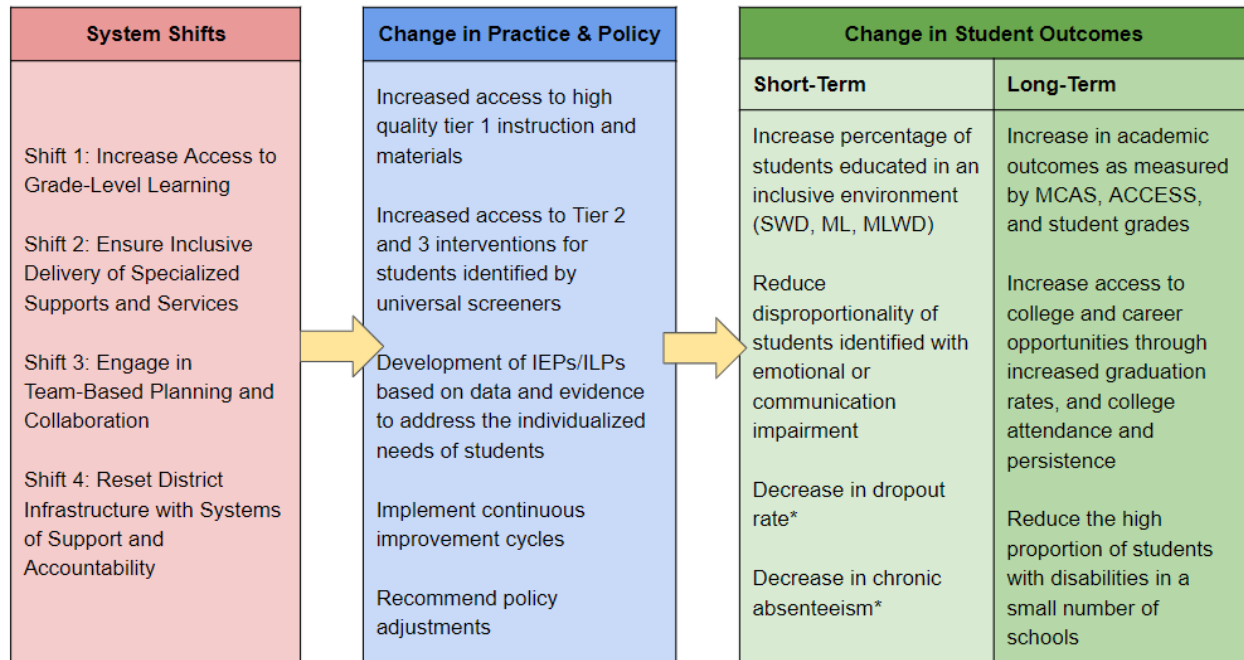
Shift 4: Reset District Infrastructure with Systems of Support and Accountability		
Time Period	**Action Step**	**Status**
July to August 2023	Hold Quarter 1 Progress Reviews	Complete ▼
	Communicate universal expectations to schools	Complete ▼
September 2023 to January 2024	Create guardrails for Inclusion Planning Team (IPT) recommendations	In Progress ▼
	Finalize Quality School Plan (QSP)	In Progress ▼
	Create communication plan around inclusive ed roll out	In Progress ▼
	Determine review and approval process for IPT recommendations	Not Started ▼
	Determine communications for families ahead of school choice season	Not Started ▼
	Review and approve school IPT recommendations	Not Started ▼
	Hold Quarter 2 School and Central Progress Reviews	Not Started ▼
	Determine how classrooms will be coded for new program types	Not Started ▼
	Update school capacities and program codes in Aspen for school choice season	Not Started ▼
	Determine communications for families ahead of school choice season	Not Started ▼
	Conduct evaluation of substantially separate program strands	Not Started ▼
	Hold monthly Professional Learning Communities (PLC) for school leaders	In Progress ▼
	Finalize education specifications for long-term facilities plan	In Progress ▼
	Finalize prioritization rubric for long term facilities plan	In Progress ▼
	Reimagine School Funding project: Submit funding policy recommendations to Superintendent	In Progress ▼
	Develop revised entry and exit criteria for Students with Limited Interrupted Formal Education (SLIFE) and newcomer programs.	In Progress ▼
	Conduct an audit of teacher licensure including English as a Second Language (ESL), Sheltered English Immersion (SEI), and Bilingual Education Endorsements.	In Progress ▼
February to June 2024	Determine seat capacity for SY24-25 classrooms	Not Started ▼
	Define entrance and exit criteria for substantially separate programs	Not Started ▼
	Hold Quarter 3 and Quarter 4 School and Central Progress Reviews	Not Started ▼
	Post positions for SY24-25 based on IPT plans	Not Started ▼
	Hold monthly PLCs for school leaders	Not Started ▼
September 2024 to January 2025	Implement structural changes in K0, K1, K2, 7 and 9	Not Started ▼
	New English Learning Education program models have been implemented for K-8	Not Started ▼

Section 3: Monitoring Implementation and Impact

Ensuring we create an effective and accurate system-wide monitoring process is a crucial aspect of increasing inclusive opportunities for students with disabilities and multilingual learners in BPS. By using data-driven strategies and measuring the effectiveness of inclusive practices, educators and stakeholders can ensure that students receive the support they need to thrive in general education settings.

If the district implements with fidelity the above-described actions over the next five years, then BPS will finally deliver on the promise of an inclusive education across all regions and all schools, improvements in outcomes for all students, especially for students with disabilities, multilingual learners and multilingual learners with disabilities, the reduction of racial disproportionality and the narrowing of racial and linguistic achievement and opportunity gaps.

The following logic model outlines the changes in practice and changes in student outcomes the district anticipates seeing over the next five years of implementation of inclusive education:

System Shifts	Change in Practice & Policy	Change in Student Outcomes	
		Short-Term	**Long-Term**
Shift 1: Increase Access to Grade-Level Learning Shift 2: Ensure Inclusive Delivery of Specialized Supports and Services Shift 3: Engage in Team-Based Planning and Collaboration Shift 4: Reset District Infrastructure with Systems of Support and Accountability	Increased access to high quality tier 1 instruction and materials Increased access to Tier 2 and 3 interventions for students identified by universal screeners Development of IEPs/ILPs based on data and evidence to address the individualized needs of students Implement continuous improvement cycles Recommend policy adjustments	Increase percentage of students educated in an inclusive environment (SWD, ML, MLWD) Reduce disproportionality of students identified with emotional or communication impairment Decrease in dropout rate* Decrease in chronic absenteeism*	Increase in academic outcomes as measured by MCAS, ACCESS, and student grades Increase access to college and career opportunities through increased graduation rates, and college attendance and persistence Reduce the high proportion of students with disabilities in a small number of schools

This document outlines milestones within each shift above for the next school year (SY23-24). Because of the complexity of these systemic shifts, the district recognizes a need for flexibility in implementation planning to allow us to make adjustments as we learn from implementation. The district will also implement the following progress monitoring structures, and use these structures to inform planning of milestones for SY24-25 during the spring of 2024.

Progress monitoring structures:
Below are the formal structures and review periods the district, schools, and individual student support teams will use to ensure all students, especially those who need specially designed instruction, are getting what they need. Ultimately, these structures must allow us to look at student level data to inform changes in district and educator current practices.
- **Formal Observations in Schools:** Regional teams in collaboration with school leaders and their teams, make formal observations in schools using the district's Equitable Literacy Observational tool. The tool has been specifically designed to measure evidence of key literacy practices across disciplines, assess student access to specially designed instruction and culturally and linguistically sustaining practices. The district examines and shares the data from this tool at the school, region and district level and uses it to plan professional learning and assess continuous improvement. The tool collects data in the following eight areas:
    - Description and rigor of task observed
    - Culturally Responsive Classroom Relationships & Cognitive Demand

- ○ Culturally Responsive Instructional Practices
- ○ High-Quality Instructional Materials
- ○ Grade Level Standards
- ○ Design for Access for Multilingual Learners and Students with Disabilities (Language Acquisition strategies/Explicit Instruction)
- ○ Instruction in Function of Language
- ○ Engaging with Complex and Enabling Text

- **Monthly Implementation Reviews:** The District Inclusion Planning Team will conduct monthly progress monitoring towards the implementation milestones laid out in the plan, with particular focus on operational infrastructure changes. This team will utilize project plans that delineate roles and responsibilities within this complex, cross-functional work, which the Office of the Superintendent will monitor. These monthly reviews will be a forum to iterate on the implementation plan as necessary and address any barriers that are arising, with particular attention to:
  - ○ Reviews of enrollment projections vs actual enrollment by school and region
  - ○ Operational challenges arising at the school level relative to projections, enrollment, budget, space and staffing, with oversight and support from Operational Leaders
  - ○ Recruitment and retention of staff to support the implementation of inclusive education

- **Quarterly IEP Quality Reviews:** Regional Assistant Directors of Specialized Services will conduct quarterly reviews of IEPs. These reviews will look for eligibility based on data, quality and measurability of goals, focus on access to grade-level content and individualized services.

- **Quarterly School Reviews:** To review progress toward Universal Expectations and QSP goals, regional teams convene with each school leader and their teams once a quarter to review quantitative and qualitative data and assess progress and improvement toward the universal expectations and QSP goals listed in Appendix 6. The data each school is expected to review as part of the Universal Expectations can be found in Appendix 5. Regional liaison deployment plans have been developed to increase targeted support in schools and/or areas where acceleration and improvement is needed.

- **Quarterly Central Reviews:** Coinciding with quarterly school reviews, the central team conducts a systems-level review of progress towards Universal Expectations and QSP goals, including progress monitoring the work of school-based IPTs. These central reviews also include a focus on compliance measures, such as referrals to special education, compliance with IEP and 504 plan timelines, appropriate ESL service delivery, and student assignment and placement.

Appendix 1. Bright Spots: Leveraging Current Funds of Knowledge

Dr. Thomas Hehir's (2012) text, *Effective Inclusive Schools: Designing Successful Schoolwide Programs*, centers the effective inclusive practices of three schools: Mason, O'Hearn (now Henderson Inclusion School) and Boston Arts Academy (BAA). BPS operates from a position of strength in that we have long-supported pockets of effective inclusive practice. We highlight the funds of knowledge and practice upon which we will draw as we take a more systems approach in the following areas: 1) strong Tier 1 instruction; 2) teaming structures; 3) addressing mindsets and leveraging staff, and; 4) specially designed instruction.

The **John F. Kennedy Elementary School (JFK)**, Pre-K-6 is a bright spot in the district of strong implementation of Tier 1 instructional practices. In 2018, JFK was among the lowest ranked schools in the Commonwealth. In collaboration with the community, the school leader made three important instructional moves to prioritize improvements in Tier 1:

1) **High-Quality Instructional Materials**: Adopt high-quality, highly-rated instructional materials in ELA and Mathematics.
2) **Professional Learning**: Provide additional Professional Development time (both job-embedded and beyond the school day) to support the implementation of new curricular materials. This included support to unpack units, setting goals and benchmarks for student achievement at the unit and lesson level and collaboratively planning to achieve those benchmarks, and leveraging central office resources to support coaching cycles.
3) **Support and Accountability**: The school leader distinguished between coaching and evaluation. As educators ramped-up with new curricular material, she instituted a "safe practice" period for 4 weeks. This provided educators four weeks of side-by-side coaching and support before formal evaluative sessions happened for educators. The goal here was to lead with high levels of support before introducing formal accountability structures.

JFK was recently named as a School of Recognition and the community continues to thrive.

The **Haley K-8 Pilot School** is an example of strong execution of specially designed instruction.

1) **Consistency in Classroom practices:** Consistent teaching and pre-teaching of explicit academic vocabulary, the intentional grouping of peers in a classroom, presented text and content is chunked for students, the teachers draw on consistent sentence stems and visuals to support student access into text and discussions
2) **Use of Data**: Leveraging strategic use of data to track access to content and determine supports.
3) **Reading Instruction:** There is school-wide use of evidenced-based interventions using multisensory reading instruction.

The **Boston Arts Academy 9-12** is an exemplar for addressing mindsets and leveraging staff. The long-serving former school leader attributes this to:

1) **Centering the arts:** We've learned that many of our strongest inclusive communities center the arts, and BAA integrates the arts across the curriculum. The arts curriculum includes career and technical education pathways related to the arts. For many students

who struggle academically or suffer from social/emotional challenges, the arts become a pathway to success.

2) **Building community**: The school exudes a spirit of working and problem-solving together and centers its work and shared values around the importance of the arts. They also live out an important value of honoring and centering the importance of diversity and addressing and discussing race and what it means to work toward racial equity.

3) **Providing PD**: In deep partnership with BTU, the school leader provided opportunities for educators to take graduate courses with Dr. Hehir and on the importance of literacy practices across all disciplines. All educators, irrespective of discipline, were expected to be teachers of reading and were provided with the training to do so.

4) **Leveraging scheduling and adult expertise**: Students needing the most support access are scheduled first. Adults are then deployed to match the needs of students. To the maximum extent possible, special educators "push-in" to content classrooms by team teaching with the classroom teacher. All students can access the same academic courses without regard for prior grades or test results. Faculty use data to analyze lower-achieving student patterns and drive interventions. Teachers examine a range of data for individual students, leading to tailored interventions.

Boston International Newcomers Academy (BINcA) has a long history of creating inclusive environments by centering the unique talents of the multilingual community. They focus on team structures as an important lever for delivering on a promise of inclusive practice in the following ways:

1) **Professional values on teaming**: BINcA's strategic approach and prioritization of teamwork is evident in how they have scheduled the work of teams into their weekly schedule. The teaming structure also reflects a collaborative approach to distributed leadership. All teachers participate in two content area meetings and one grade-level team meeting per week, facilitated by teacher leaders and supported by an administrative team member. Content team facilitators represent that team on the Instructional Leadership Team.

2) **ILT as Instructional Governance Team**: The ILT plans professional development consistent with the school's QSP goals, often giving teachers opportunities to engage in professional learning as part of their content area/grade level team.

3) **Teaming structures reflect QSP priorities:** BINcA leverages additional teams supporting their Climate and Culture and Attendance efforts. BINcA integrates the following teams into their core work to focus on QSP priorities two and three: Family Engagement, Attendance, Wellness and Climate.

Appendix 2. Research Behind Inclusive Education

Beyond the legal requirements under IDEA that state students must be educated in the least restrictive settings, it is well established through research that students educated in inclusive settings have better in-school academic outcomes and improved post-graduate outcomes than their similar disabled peers educated in a non-inclusive setting. In "A Summary of the Evidence on Inclusive Education," a team of researchers reviewed studies from across the United States and the globe on the impact of inclusive settings on students with and without disabilities. The team noted the following from findings from numerous research studies: "Students with disabilities who spent a larger proportion of their school day with their non-disabled peers performed significantly better on measures of language and mathematics than students with similar disabilities who spent a smaller proportion of their school day with their non-disabled peers… were almost 5 times more likely to graduate on time than students in segregated settings… included students were nearly 2 times as likely as their non-included peers to enroll in post-secondary education."[19]

The research team noted a study from the National Longitudinal Transition Study (NLTS) that followed 11,270 13 to 16-year-old United States students over ten years and found that students with disabilities who took more academic classes in general education settings experienced greater growth on measures of academic skills than peers who spent more time in separate special education programs.[20] Further research showed that students with disabilities in inclusive settings attended school an average of three more days per year, were eight percentage points less likely to receive a disciplinary referral, and were four percentage points more likely to belong to school groups such as clubs.[21] Included students with mild disabilities (learning disabilities, serious emotional disturbances, speech impairments, and mild intellectual disabilities) were 10 percentage points more likely to live independently than otherwise similar students who spent 50 percent or less of their school time in general education.[22]

The research team also reviewed findings on the impact of inclusion on non-disabled students and found that "in most cases, the impacts on non-disabled students of being educated in an inclusive classroom are either neutral or positive. Drawing on research from 26 studies conducted in the United States, Australia, Canada, and Ireland, the authors found that the vast majority (81 percent) of study findings indicated that nondisabled students either experienced no effects (58 percent of studies) or experienced positive effects (23 percent of studies) on their academic development as a result of being educated alongside students with disabilities.[23] (Kalambouka, Farrell, Dyson, & Kaplan, 2007).[24]

Based on our experience and the current research, BPS believes that Inclusive Education will benefit all students in academic growth and social-emotional development through a sense of belonging, as this approach encourages friendships, empathy, acceptance, increases self-esteem, teaches cooperation and conflict resolution. All students also benefit from access

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[19] "A Summary of the Evidence on Inclusive Education." pgs. 14-15, Dr. Thomas Hehir; Dr. Todd Grindal; Brian Freeman; Renée Lamoreau; Yolanda Borquaye; Samantha Burke. August 2016

[20] Id. pg. 15; https://www.nlts2.org/

[21] Id. pg 15; Marder, C., Wagner, M., & Sumi, C. (2003). The social adjustment of youth with disabilities. In The Achievements of Youth With Disabilities During Secondary School: A Report From the National Longitudinal Transition Study-2 (NLTS2). Menlo Park, CA: SRI International.

[22] Id., pg. 15; Wagner, M., Blackorby, J., Cameto, R., & Newman, L. (1993). What Makes a Difference? Influences on Postschool Outcomes of Youth with Disabilities. The Third Comprehensive Report from the National Longitudinal Transition Study of Special Education Students. Menlo Park, CA: SRI International. Retrieved from http://eric.ed.gov/?id=ED365085

[23] Id., pg. 15; Kalambouka, A., Farrell, P., Dyson, A., & Kaplan, I. (2007). The impact of placing pupils with special educational needs in mainstream schools on the achievement of their peers. Educational Research, 49(4), 365–382. http://doi.org/10.1080/00131880701717222

[24] Id., pg. 7

to specialized teaching strategies, special educators, ESL teachers and related service personnel through team-based approaches to learning. Specifically, multilingual learners have access to grade level, Tier 1 curriculum that is linguistically scaffolded for their language proficiency, use their funds of knowledge (including their first language) to create meaningful connections to content, have access to language-rich environments and are encouraged to use all four domains of language, and teachers are linguistically, culturally, and pedagogically prepared to meet the academic and sociocultural needs of MLs. Specifically, students with disabilities have access to learning settings with their grade level peers, access to Tier 1 instruction through specially designed instruction (SDI) aligned to IEP goals and objectives that are evidenced based and aligned to content standards, opportunities for generalization of skills to group settings and for learning in a naturalistic setting, as well as incidental teaching opportunities for social skills and independent life skills.

Appendix 3. Community Input

Over the past five months we have engaged with multiple members of the BPS community to hear concerns and hopes of what they want to see in the inclusive education plan. This feedback and continued communication with our community is critical to a strong plan and implementation. The District will continue to plan feedback sessions with these collaborators through implementation while simultaneously engaging with additional groups, such as the Citywide Parent Council. To date, the following groups have engaged in planning conversations to inform this plan:

- Boston Mayor's Office
- Department of Elementary and Secondary Education Staff
- District English Learners Advisory Council (DELAC)
- English Learners Task Force
- Inclusion Working Group
- School Leader Cabinet
- Special Education Parent Advisory Council (SpEdPAC)

Several central office departments have advised and contributed at multiple points in the planning process, including engaging in feedback alongside some School Leaders through the BPS Racial Equity Planning Tool (REPT) reflecting on how to better ensure each decision we make is aimed at closing opportunity gaps and advancing racial equity.

In our conversations with DESE, they provided the following feedback regarding areas of improvement to the plan:
1) Data Analysis: develop baseline data, date regarding the current state, placement data by program, and determine potential enrollment shifts through the timeline.
2) Contributions to Disproportionality: Access to HQIM with an emphasis on individualized supports; anti-bias training; utilize funds of knowledge and best practices; and revisions to the IEP process and identification process for multilingual learners.
3) Role Clarity: Differentiation of capacity building and expectations for each role in the District; emphasis on preparation and support for School Leaders; and clarify expectations for providing language services to students in inclusive settings
4) Emphasis on Services**:** Focus on services and specially designed instruction rather than disability categories and placement; how will specially designed instruction be prioritized within the general education classroom
5) Structural changes and improvements to SEI and ELE services and increased native language access
6) Clearly identified approaches to services for students with disabilities, multilingual learners, and multilingual learners with disabilities
7) Timeline and Engagement: Plan for engagement with local stakeholders around goals and plan development, and how the REPT will be used and timeline and monitoring for each aspect and milestones for the duration of the plan.

DESE released its BPS Tiered Focused Monitoring report in June 2023 that had specific findings regarding ELE 5. Specifically, the report stated the following that we are looking to address through the inclusion plan: 1) students in "language-specific" SEI and "multilingual" SEI are grouped together both for English as a Second Language (ESL) and content instruction and have no or minimum opportunity to interact and learn with their English-speaking peers. In some cases, students remain in these classrooms for five (5) or more years; 2) the district is "not carrying out its chosen program in the least segregative manner and maintains students in self-contained classes longer than necessary."; Level 4 students in "general education" classes

do not always receive explicit ESL instruction, and ELs with disabilities do not always receive ESL instruction.

In September 2023, BPS retained SPED Strategies to provide expertise and support with finalizing school resources for communication and implementation. This plan was also informed by their resources and collaboration.

Appendix 4. Regional Liaisons

Liaison Role	Department
Accelerated Improvement & Inquiry Manager	Office of Data and Accountability
Equitable Literacy Coach	Office of Teaching and Learning
EC Equitable Literacy Coach	Office of Teaching and Learning
Inclusive Education Coaches	Office of Specialized Services
Multilingual Instructional Coaches	Office of Multilingual and Multicultural Education
Telescope Networkers	Office of Teaching and Learning
ELA Program Directors	Office of Teaching and Learning
Math Program Directors	Office of Teaching and Learning
Science Program Directors	Office of Teaching and Learning
History Program Directors	Office of Teaching and Learning
OMME Equity & Accountability Managers	Office of Multilingual and Multicultural Education
Special Ed Assistant Directors	Office of Specialized Services
SEAD (SEL) Coaches	Office of Health and Wellness
Operational Leaders	Division of Schools
Supervisors of Attendance	Division of Student Support
Community Connection Coordinators	Office of Safety Services
District Social Workers	Division of Student Support
Engagement Facilitators	Office of Family Advancement
Safe & Welcoming Schools/RP Specialists	Division of Student Support

Appendix 5. Universal Expectations Data Review Aligned to Shifts

1. **Drive Equity for ALL Learners by Increasing Access to Grade-Level Learning**
   - Outcome Evidence: MCAS, ACCESS; MAP Achievement and Growth (Fluency, Reading, Math); Course performance; Climate survey (Student- sense of belonging; Teacher- rigorous expectations); Chronic absenteeism; Hiring (reflects the racial, ethnic, linguistic and cultural diversity of our schools)
   - Practice Evidence: Classroom implementation of high-quality instructional materials (HQIM) as evidenced in the Equitable Literacy (EQL) Tool
2. **Ensure Inclusive Delivery of Specialized Supports and Services**
   - Outcome Evidence: Student progress in MAP (Fluency, Reading, Math); Students progress in evidence-based reading interventions
   - Outcome Evidence: Student progress towards IEP goals and objectives as reflected in data collection and progress reporting.
   - Practice Evidence: Students receiving interventions, IEP and ILP reviews; Multilingual learners receiving appropriate ESL services (minutes, grouping, licensure); Students with disabilities receiving appropriate IEP services (minutes, grouping, licensure, ratio)
3. **Engage in Team-Based Planning and Collaboration to Ensure Cohesive Implementation**
   - Outcome Evidence: Climate Survey (Teacher- professional learning; Family-family-school partnerships)
   - Practice Evidence: IPT Progress; Engage in inquiry processes to examine outcome evidence and practices
4. **Reset District Infrastructure with Systems of Support and Accountability**
   - Outcome Evidence: Instruction - HQIM in every school; required professional development modules and hours; placement processes; baseline and progress distribution of SWDs by setting;
   - Practice Evidence: Registration and assignment processes

Appendix 6. Quality School Plan (QSP) Goals

QSP Metrics (SY23-24)		
	Metric	**State Category**	**Grades**
1	**MAP Fluency:** Percent of K2 students that meet or exceed expectations within phonics/word recognition or test up to literal comprehension	Developmentally appropriate child assessments from pre-kindergarten through third grade, if applicable	**K2-2**
2	**MAP Growth Reading**: The median student Conditional Growth Percentile (**CGP**) at each grade level	Development of college readiness, including at the elementary and middle school levels	**3-11**
3	**MAP Growth Reading**: The **achievement percentile** at each grade level	Development of college readiness, including at the elementary and middle school levels	**3-11**
4	Percentage of students meeting expectations on the **BPS Science interim assessments**	Student acquisition of twenty-first century skills	**3-6**
5	**Course Performance:** Percent of students passing all coursework	Development of college readiness, including at the elementary and middle school levels	**1-12**
6	**MassCore:** Percentage of high school graduates completing the MassCore requirements	Student acquisition of twenty-first century skills	**12**
7	Percent favorable student responses on the Student Climate Survey around **Rigorous Expectations**	Building a culture of academic success among students	**3-12**
8	Percent favorable student responses on the Student Climate Survey around **Sense of Belonging**	Building a culture of academic success among students	**3-12**
9	Percent favorable student responses on the Student Climate Survey around **School Safety** (students) and **School Climate** (staff and families)	Student safety and discipline	**ALL**
10	Chronic Absenteeism: Percent of students with less than or equal to 90% attendance	Student attendance, dismissal rates, and exclusion rates	**K0-12**
11	Retention rate (decrease): Percentage of enrolled students repeating the grade in which they were enrolled the previous year (as of October 1)	Student promotion and dropout rates	**ALL**
12	Graduation Rates (HS)	Graduation rates (high schools only)	**12**