

## Amherst and Amherst-Pelham Regional Schools

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### Follow Up Information for Amherst Town Meeting May 12, 2014

#### 1. How many students are on the waiting list for the after school programs?

##### After School Program

The After School programs do not maintain waiting lists for students. There are slots available at each program at any given time. Fee subsidy is offered to all income-eligible families, without a limit to the number at any time during the year. There are families in the district who cannot afford to pay even the subsidized rates. If these families are identified to us, the district works with them on a case-by-case basis to try to find a way to accommodate them through further subsidy by the District. However, some families are reluctant to seek such help and make the choice not to pursue enrollment. We estimate that there are approximately 40 such families; however, this is a hard number to quantify accurately.

In terms of enrollment, the numbers were slow to build this year, particularly at Wildwood, and there was a decrease attributed to the new school schedule. Several families who needed the care in the past due to the Wednesday half-day chose to either not send their children or to reduce the number of days. Enrollment is now up again, but slightly less than last year. So far this year, Wildwood has served 104 students, Crocker Farm has served 94, and Fort River has served 96.

All three after school programs have had a busy year. Over and above the usual day-to-day activities such as homework help, art, cooking projects, games and exercise, students continue to enjoy a robust schedule of events, guests, and field trips, including:

- Rae Griffiths from Teaching Creatures presented her series on animal education, bringing her program of live animal demonstrations to the after school programs.
- Educators from the Eric Carle Museum provided their project-based art program to our students.
- Becca Greene-Van Horne is conducting her energetic and creative theater workshop series in each program.
- ELA and Math intervention programs are in full swing.
- Field trips have been taken to a newspaper production facility, performances at UMass, ice skating, the Science Museum, and many other locations.

##### New Before School Care Program

This is the first year of the Amherst Before School program, which is offered at each elementary school for grades K-6 and operates from 7:30 to 8:30 a.m. Monday through Friday. It has operated on schedule with very few glitches since the first day. Enrollment has grown through the year, and we have been able to be flexible and responsive to families' needs. Over the year, Wildwood has served 18 students, Fort River has served 21, and Crocker Farm has served 27. We also have a number of families using the service on an as-needed basis. The program:

- Is staffed by para-educators identified as the Lead Care Provider and Care Provider;
- Costs \$4.00 per day per student, with a reduced rate of \$2.00 per day for siblings;
- Provides fee reduction for income-eligible students;
- Offers basic programming including arts and crafts, playground, and board games; and
- Is now offering BOKS (Build Our Kids Success), a before school physical activity program, at Fort River. BOKS prepares children for a day of learning and is an important step in helping children gain an appreciation of the benefits of exercise and healthy choices that will last a lifetime. BOKS was inspired by Dr. John Ratey's book *Spark*. Dr. Ratey of Harvard Medical School states "Exercise is the single most powerful tool that we have to optimize the function of our brains." Classes are filled with team-oriented games and provide plenty of opportunity for play, since the program focuses on fun. We hope to expand this successful program to the other schools next year.

## 2. How much was spent in legal fees in FY13 and FY14?

Legal fees are allocated to the appropriate department based on the reason for the legal representation. As the legal entity that contracts with the districts' legal representatives, general ongoing matters are charged to the School Committee budget line. Staff arbitrations, hearings, terminations, and other HR matters related to specific employees or to contract negotiations are charged to the Human Resources line. Special Education matters are charged to that department. Fees were significantly higher in FY13 because the districts were in contract negotiations with all of the employee units.

Amherst	FY13 Expenses	FY14 YTD Expenses	FY15 Budgeted
School Committee	\$13,007	\$8,081	\$8,500
Human Resources	\$37,570	\$27,671	\$8,625
Special Education	\$5,570	\$6,501	\$12,000
<b>TOTAL AMHERST</b>	\$56,148	\$42,252	\$29,125

Region	FY13 Expenses	FY14 YTD Expenses	FY15 Budgeted
School Committee	\$13,099	\$8,081	\$10,000
Human Resources	\$43,888	\$5,916	\$20,000
Special Education	\$52,054	\$23,512	\$62,000
<b>TOTAL REGION</b>	\$109,041	\$37,509	\$92,000

<b>TOTAL LEGAL FEES</b>	\$165,189	\$79,761	\$121,125
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## 3. How have per pupil expenditures changed with declining enrollments?

### Amherst Per Pupil Expenses

Category	FY13	FY12	FY11	FY10	FY09	FY08	FY07	FY06
Administration	787	709	735	698	627	587	550	526
Instructional Leadership	1,153	1,032	965	1,079	1,134	1,086	958	1,004
Classroom and Specialist Teachers	6,804	6,963	6,355	6,213	5,944	5,859	5,566	5,578
Other Teaching Services	2,621	2,345	1,923	1,813	1,762	1,655	1,620	1,695
Professional Development	631	540	271	235	294	212	228	202
Instructional Materials, Equipment and Technology	496	391	335	312	390	256	407	254
Guidance, Counseling and Testing	469	411	362	383	396	359	317	316
Pupil Services	1,084	975	973	1,003	865	754	705	583
Operations and Maintenance	1,379	1,436	1,636	1,271	1,264	1,210	1,124	1,142
Insurance, Retirement Programs and Other	3,941	3,852	3,821	3,610	3,353	3,314	3,029	2,490
Expenditures Within The District	19,365	18,654	17,375	16,617	16,029	15,292	14,503	13,790
Expenditures Outside the District	15,022	14,532	12,580	12,663	11,586	10,932	12,624	12,780
<b>TOTAL EXPENDITURES</b>	<b>19,062</b>	<b>18,388</b>	<b>17,116</b>	<b>16,413</b>	<b>15,831</b>	<b>15,169</b>	<b>14,467</b>	<b>13,776</b>
In District Pupils	1,196	1,215	1,284	1,331	1,387	1,412	1,462	1,484
Out of District Pupils	90	84	73	72	65	41	29	20
	1,286	1,298	1,358	1,403	1,452	1,453	1,491	1,504
<b>Classroom and Specialist Teachers PPX</b>	<b>6,804</b>	<b>6,963</b>	<b>6,355</b>	<b>6,213</b>	<b>5,944</b>	<b>5,859</b>	<b>5,566</b>	<b>5,578</b>
	-2.29%	9.57%	2.29%	4.52%	1.45%	5.27%	-0.21%	
<b>Average</b>	<b>2.94%</b>							
State Average PPX	13,999	13,636	13,354	13,047	13,006	12,448	11,858	11,210
	5,063	4,752	3,762	3,366	2,825	2,720	2,609	2,567

### Regional Per Pupil Expenses

Category	FY13	FY12	FY11	FY10	FY09	FY08	FY07	FY06
Administration	987	789	687	664	652	623	582	551
Instructional Leadership	1,390	1,397	1,209	1,337	1,289	1,237	1,007	1,103
Classroom and Specialist Teachers	6,533	6,199	6,254	5,511	5,491	5,106	5,077	5,032
Other Teaching Services	1,588	1,468	1,313	1,264	1,199	1,084	1,134	1,154
Professional Development	155	156	299	227	352	335	371	330
Instructional Materials, Equipment and Technology	304	261	588	307	294	490	268	232
Guidance, Counseling and Testing	652	684	617	580	525	541	540	494
Pupil Services	1,639	1,618	1,588	1,616	1,645	1,457	1,357	1,323
Operations and Maintenance	1,481	1,468	1,559	1,416	1,459	1,678	1,337	1,145
Insurance, Retirement Programs and Other	3,526	3,811	3,673	3,636	3,305	3,112	2,984	2,468
<b>Expenditures Within The District</b>	<b>18,255</b>	<b>17,851</b>	<b>17,787</b>	<b>16,559</b>	<b>16,211</b>	<b>15,664</b>	<b>14,657</b>	<b>13,833</b>
<b>Expenditures Outside the District</b>	<b>23,457</b>	<b>19,911</b>	<b>19,239</b>	<b>24,658</b>	<b>27,611</b>	<b>23,810</b>	<b>22,401</b>	<b>20,727</b>
<b>TOTAL EXPENDITURES</b>	<b>18,688</b>	<b>18,026</b>	<b>17,904</b>	<b>17,144</b>	<b>16,908</b>	<b>16,131</b>	<b>15,154</b>	<b>14,292</b>
In District Pupils	1,519	1,536	1,573	1,659	1,712	1,784	1,830	1,885
Out of District Pupils	138	143	138	129	112	109	126	135
Total	1,657	1,678	1,711	1,788	1,824	1,892	1,955	2,019
<b>Classroom and Specialist Teachers PPX</b>	<b>6,533</b>	<b>6,199</b>	<b>6,254</b>	<b>5,511</b>	<b>5,491</b>	<b>5,106</b>	<b>5,077</b>	<b>5,032</b>
<b>Average</b>	<b>3.91%</b>	<b>-0.88%</b>	<b>13.49%</b>	<b>0.36%</b>	<b>7.54%</b>	<b>0.58%</b>	<b>0.88%</b>	
State Average PPX	13,999	13,636	13,354	13,047	13,006	12,448	11,858	11,210
	4,689	4,390	4,550	4,097	3,902	3,683	3,296	3,083

#### 4. How have out-of-district special education placement costs changed over time?

##### Amherst Out-of-District Placements

### Special Education Out of District Tuition - Amherst

	Funding Source					Total Tuition
	Circuit Breaker	Appropriation			Public Appropriation	
		Private Residential & Day	Tuition Collaborative			
FY08 Actual	76,474				-	76,474
FY09 Actual	125,641				-	125,641
FY10 Actual	163,637	5,437			5,437	169,074
FY11 Actual	112,943	887			887	113,830
FY12 Actual	104,980	91,069			91,069	196,049
FY13 Actual	201,217	85,832			85,832	287,049
FY14 Budget	215,693	127,077			127,077	342,770
FY15 Budget	140,271	-			-	140,271

### Special Education Out of District Placements - Amherst

	Private Residential & Day	Tuition Collaborative	Public	Total
FY08	2	0	0	2
FY09	2	0	0	2
FY10	3	0	0	3
FY11	2	0	0	2
FY12	4	0	0	4
FY13	3	0	0	3
FY14 Dec.	2	1	0	3
FY15 Proj	1	0	0	1

### Regional Out-of-District Placements

#### Special Education Out of District Tuition

	Funding Source						Total Tuition
	Appropriation					Appropriation	
	Circuit Breaker	Other	Private Residential & Day	Tuition Collaborative	Public		
FY06 Actual	600,000		189,784	34,382	163,422	387,588	987,588
FY07 Actual	409,929		383,512	38,347	179,777	601,636	1,011,565
FY08 Actual	359,292		468,722		98,706	567,428	926,720
FY09 Actual	291,659	163,340	544,515		68,116	612,631	1,067,630
FY10 Actual	452,488		740,978		80,673	821,651	1,274,139
FY11 Actual	283,285		845,369	23,005	97,693	966,067	1,249,352
FY12 Actual	284,748		724,740	16,946	58,030	799,716	1,084,464
FY13 Actual	433,144		699,052	-	81,996	781,048	1,214,192
FY14 Budget	495,546		997,747	45,000	151,800	1,194,547	1,690,093
FY15 Budget	534,691		997,747	45,000	151,800	1,194,547	1,729,238

### Special Education Out of District Placements - Region

	Private Residential & Day	Tuition Collaborative	Public	Total
FY06	18	1	0	19
FY07	18	1	0	19
FY08	12	0	0	12
FY09	15	0	0	15
FY10	18	0	0	18
FY11	17	1	2	20
FY12	17	2	0	19
FY13	21	0	1	22
FY14 Proj	15	0	2	17
FY15 Budge	11	2	3	16

## 5. What type of professional development has been supported through district funds?

Professional development activities in the districts are carefully designed to support teachers in their professional goals and to move the goals of the School and District Improvement Plans forward. Recent professional development has included:

- Professional Learning Communities to share teacher knowledge and expertise
- Middle School and High School late start time activities led by Department Heads and Curriculum Leaders on assessment, equity, and other topics
- Summer curriculum work with teachers to identify how to integrate Standards in an engaging educational experience for our students
- Year 1 Professional Development focused on management, family communication, and general district orientation
- Year 2 Professional Development focused on instructional unit design methodology
- Year 3 Professional Development (next year) focused on equity
- Subs hired so that math coaches (master teachers) can support their colleagues in best practices
- New Contract Language that promotes teachers to facilitate or instruct their colleagues on best practices
- Worked with UMass partners to develop clear processes for Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports, which is a framework that supports teachers to make decisions to build a safe learning environment for our students.
- Arts Integration Team has worked to identify ways to enrich the curriculum through collaboration with classroom teachers
- Calvin Terrell visited the secondary schools and worked with teachers on student engagement/equity
- ALANA staff members met as an affinity group and will continue to work together
- Co-teaching workshop to promote collaboration between staff members and to promote inclusive practices

## 6. What percentage of ALANA staff are in teaching positions?

The attached report was presented to the Amherst, Pelham and Regional School Committees in joint session in December 2013. In addition to the data included in the report, the following chart provides information about the categories in which our ALANA staff teach.

Assignment	ALANA Teachers	All Teachers	Percentage of ALANA Teachers
Mathematics	3	22	13.64%
English	3	24	12.50%
Social Studies	1	15	6.67%
Science	1	17	5.88%
Classroom	9	67	13.43%
Academic Coach	1	3	33.33%
School Psychology	3	10	30.00%
Guidance	3	12	25.00%
Dean	1	3	33.33%
ELL	6	15	40.00%
Special Education	5	55	9.09%
Music	2	10	20.00%
Physical Education	1	7	14.29%
Family Center	1	2	50.00%

November 20, 2013

TO: Maria Geryk, Superintendent of Schools  
FROM: Kathryn Mazur  
RE: Human Resources Annual Report  
CC: School Committees

This Annual Report is comprised of several components. The first and primary component is a comprehensive report on the progress of the districts in meeting the goal that the percentage of Staff of Color be “reflective of that of the community.” Accordingly, this report provides information on the proportion of African American, Latino, Asian, Native American, and Multiracial staff relative to the number of White staff and relative to the number of Students of Color and White students.

Official DESE data contained in this report reflect information for the period from October 1, 2012 through September 30, 2013; therefore, mid-school year vacancies which occurred and were filled during the prior school year are included in the data. During this 12-month period, 73 contracted staff members were hired. We have provided this official data, as well as updated, unofficial data for FY14 as of October 1, 2013 from our Human Resources database.

In 2007 the US Federal Government officially identified 62 ethnicity/racial codes. For purposes of this report however, we have collapsed these 62 codes into five racial categories; African American, Latino/a, Asian and Pacific Islander, Native American, and White.

This report also includes a comprehensive update on the work of Human Resources over the past year as well as our outlook and plans for the coming year.

**2012-2013 Teachers of Color - Official State-wide Comparison Data**

The Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education collects and posts demographic data about the staff of each school district in the state, including Charter Schools. As noted earlier, the most current information posted on the DESE website reflects information from the 2012-13 year, which is the basis for this particular component of the Human Resources Report.

Based on DESE data year 12-13, 339 districts of 403 indicate that the percentage of teachers of color is 10% or less of their total teacher FTE; thus, eighty-four percent of all Massachusetts School Districts report less than 10% staff of color. Comparing all four hundred three districts in the state (and excluding Charter Schools), Amherst and Amherst-Pelham continue to rank in the top ten districts for total percentage of Teachers of Color. The chart below illustrates the 10 districts with the highest percentage of Teachers of Color.

In terms of the percent of Teachers of Color, Amherst (15%) and Amherst-Pelham (15%) rank third and fourth in the state when the 81 Charter schools are excluded from the data. This status is consistent with that reported by the DESE in prior years. When looking at staff in all employment categories, Amherst ranks eighth and Amherst-Pelham ranks tenth in the highest proportion of employees of color throughout the state in public school districts.

<b>DISTRICT</b>	<b>African American (%)</b>	<b>Asian (%)</b>	<b>Hispanic (%)</b>	<b>White (%)</b>	<b>Native American (%)</b>	<b>Native Hawaiian, Pacific Islander (%)</b>	<b>Multi-Race, Non-Hispanic (%)</b>
Randolph	4.5	2.5	1.5	<b>88</b>	0.5	2	1
Lawrence	1.3	1.1	10.2	<b>87.1</b>	0.2	0	0.1
Newton	2.2	4.7	4	<b>87</b>	0	0.1	1.9
Somerville	4.1	2.4	6.5	<b>86.2</b>	0	0.3	0.6
Lincoln-Sudbury	2.5	3.9	3.9	<b>85.4</b>	0.7	1	2.7
Springfield	6.2	1.3	6.2	<b>85</b>	0.2	0	1.1
Amherst	3.3	3.3	2.8	<b>84.8</b>	0	1.1	4.7
Amherst-Pelham	4.3	2.4	5.6	<b>84.7</b>	0	0	3.1
Cambridge	9.1	4	6.2	<b>80.2</b>	0.2	0.2	0
Boston	24.2	5.9	10.1	<b>59.4</b>	0.3	0.1	0

**Summary Student/Staff Data**

As of October 1, 2013, our Students of Color represent 43% of the total K-12 student population, while our percentage of Staff of Color in all job categories is 17.0%. The breakdown by district is as follows:

- Amherst – 18.6% Staff of Color
- Pelham – 9.5% Staff of Color
- Region – 17.5% Staff of Color

### **Applicant Profile**

Between October 1, 2012 and September 30, 2013, 73 applicants were hired for contracted positions (teachers, paraprofessionals, clerical, administrators, custodial/maintenance) in the three districts. The total number of applications received over the 12-month period for all posted positions was 963. During the prior year, 2011-12, 1,129 applications were received by the district. Applicants have the option of declaring their race at the time of application. The distribution of applicants among self-identified race categories is reflected below:

<b>2013-14 Applicant Pool Race/Ethnicity</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percentage of Applicants</b>
Asian (03)	29	3%
African American (02)	30	3%
Latina/o (33-63)	86	9%
Native American (04)	1	0%
Multiracial (06-31)	20	2%
White (01)	636	66%
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	1	0%
Undeclared	159	17%
Total applicants	963	

### **Hiring Profile – October 1, 2012 through September 30, 2013**

Our data reflects the periods from October 1 of one year to September 30 of the subsequent year; thus, some of the positions reflected below resulted from terminations or resignations of staff during the course of the prior school year. Of the 73 contracted employees hired between October 1, 2012 and September 30, 2013, 5 (7%) were African American, 12 (16%) were Latina/o, 2 were Asian and 1 was Native American. Of the new employees, 53 (72%) were White.

### **Staff and Students of Color– FY14 Status**

A comparison of Students of Color with Staff of Color shows that these students currently comprise 43% of the district-wide student body and Staff of Color comprise 15.6% of the current employees.

The districts are disparate in the number of Staff of Color which affects the district-wide percentages reported. Please note that some staff members, approximately 50, work in multiple districts; some work in Amherst and Pelham, some work in Amherst, Pelham and Region, and some work in Amherst and Region. The total staff (head count) by district, is as follows:

<b>FY14</b>	<b>Total Staff</b>	<b>Staff of Color</b>	<b>% Staff of Color</b>
Amherst	322	60	18.6%
Pelham	63	6	9.5%
Region	349	61	17.5%
Total	734	127	17.3%

Breaking down the district data further, in aggregate by employment group, demonstrates the following:



FY14	Job Category	Staff of Color	White	Total Group	% SoC
AFSCME	Maintenance/Custodial/Transp	10	39	49	20.4%
APAA	Administrator	1	7	8	12.5%
APEA – A	Teachers	47	295	342	13.7%
APEA – B	Clerical	6	29	35	17.1%
APEA – C	Paraprofessional	39	142	181	21.6%
Non-unit	Adm + Adm Support Staff	7	25	32	21.9%
		110	537	647	17.0%

### **Racial Composition of Students/Staff: Seven-Year Summary Comparison**

The chart below provides historical information about the percentage of Students of Color relative to Staff of Color. Again, there are disparities between Amherst, Pelham and the Region. This year, these students comprise 50% of the total student body at the Amherst elementary level. Students of Color accounted for 26%% in Pelham. At the Region, 39.4% of the student body is comprised of Students of Color. As of October 1, 2013, the percentage of Students of Color in the district is as follows:

<b>2013-14</b>		<b>Students of Color</b>
Amherst	=	50%
Pelham	=	26%
Region	=	39%

	<b>Students of Color</b>		<b>Teachers of Color</b>		<b>Students of Color</b>	<b>Teachers of Color</b>
	<b>Amherst</b>	<b>Region</b>	<b>Amherst</b>	<b>Region</b>	<b>Pelham</b>	<b>Pelham</b>
2008	48%	31.6%	21%	14%	16.7%	0%
2009	48.8%	32.8%	21%	14.6%	13.7%	0%
2010	47%	35.3%	19%	14.5%	16.8%	0%
2011	47.7%	36.1%	18.5%	15.0%	20.0%	0%
2012	47.8%	36.7%	18.4%	15.3%	22.8%	0%
2013	49.3%	37.4%	16.3%	15.8%	23.7%	4.3%
2014	50.3%	39.4%	18.3%	17.5%	26.0%	9.5%

The following chart represents the FY14 percentages, by building, of Students of Color and Teachers of Color:

<b>Building</b>	<b>Students of Color</b>	<b>Teachers of Color</b>
CF	49.0%	14.3%
FR	52.9%	9.4%
WW	46.5%	13.8%
PEL	23.7%	9.1%
MS	39.2%	16.9%
HS	36.5%	13.8%

## **Recruitment**

The primary venue for recruitment of teachers of color is through participation in career fairs, personal references, online posting of employment opportunities on college and university career webpages, and professional HR organizations, followed by regular email and/or personal telephone contact.

Last Spring the district hosted the second annual on-site recruitment fair at the ARHS cafeteria. In an effort to broaden the interest in the event, the district invited all members of the Massachusetts Association of School Personnel Administrators to share in hosting the event. There was strong participation by local graduates of Educator Preparation programs and certified teachers looking for new employment opportunities. District Principals, Assistant Principals and Program Coordinators conducted personal, on-site pre-interviews of interested candidates. As a result of these pre-interviews, many candidates were invited for formal interviews for positions with the districts. Significantly, as an outcome of this fair and these pre-interviews, we hired one Teacher of the Deaf, three Classroom Teachers, one Middle School Math teacher, one High School Science teacher, and four Paraeducators, all four of which are certified teachers. The Third Annual Educator Recruitment Fair is tentatively scheduled for May 1, 2014.

Online and print recruitment efforts in the past year included:

- Higher education employment sites with Educator Prep Programs
- National and Regional Education Associations
- aMAzing Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education
- School Spring
- Nemnet
- Minority Reporter
- Teachers of Color Magazine
- Local and regional recruitment sites; bostonworks.com, monster.com
- Print media outlets to include regional, national and local outlets
- Education Week

## **Application Process**

Because of the increase in our non-English speaking students, most of which are Spanish speakers, we posted all of our positions for the current year with a statement addressing our preference for bilingual/bicultural applicants. Further, we initiated a component of the interview process that insures when an applicant self-identifies as being proficient in a language other than English, a member of the interview team, fluent in the identified second language, is part of the interview team. Then this bilingual interview team member is assigned a set of questions to ask the interviewee in the identified second language. This team member is responsible for assessing the proficiency of the applicant. In this first year, this practice was highly successful in identifying authentic bilingual applicants. During the 2013-2014 hiring season, 34% of new hires in all job categories were bilingual and/or bicultural hires, all with a primary first or second language in Spanish.

## **Teacher Orientation/Induction/Mentorship**

### **Teacher Mentorship/Induction**

Our negotiated Unit A contract provides for two additional, unpaid days at the start of the school year to acclimate new teachers to our district. These New Teacher Orientation days, planned by the Office of Teaching and Learning under the direction of Dr. Rhonda Cohen, are used to introduce new or returning teachers to the district, to district administrators, and to provide training in district procedures in the unique requirements of our special education and English language learner student population, to provide

training in safety procedures, and to acclimate new teachers to district technology and other important information. This two-day training provides a foundation for getting new staff members positioned well for beginning their employment with the district. In addition, it provides a venue to make strong connections with other new peers.

In the first year of employment, teachers are assigned a mentor by the Office of Teaching and Learning. Mentors receive a stipend, participate in an orientation session, and are provided written guidelines to support establishment of an ongoing relationship and to support their mentee during their first year of employment.

Throughout a teacher's first two years, they are required to participate in an Induction Program. This formal, structured program is conducted during the school year and focuses on planning, teaching, and creating a culture and environment conducive for learning. Through the induction program, teachers new to our district form and work in collaborative, professional learning communities. Using protocols to support teacher collaboration, teachers explore texts together, learn from looking at student work, and bring dilemmas in their practice to the group for feedback. In addition, teachers work the new MA Curriculum Frameworks, learn about the Educator Evaluation Model and district initiatives such as PBIS and RTI.

Year 2 of the Induction program focuses in depth on the components of Understanding by Design, an approach to standards-based units, assessments, and lesson plans. Topics include Common Core State Standards, Essential Questions, Enduring Understandings, Transfer Goals, Performance Tasks, Formative Assessments and Lesson Design.

Throughout the program attention is placed on the issues related to equity including access, participation in a multicultural society, and closing the achievement gap.

### **Retention, Development and Succession Planning**

#### **Paraeducator Professional Development Plan**

In addition to licensure and career support of staff, Rachel Bowen has been directed by Superintendent Geryk to work on a **Paraeducator Professional Development Plan** with our Five College partners in order to create formal pathways for existing Paraeducators to earn MA DESE educator licensure. One plan that is being explored focuses on pairing Amherst, a suburban district, with Holyoke, an urban district, for the purpose of creating a "Paraeducator to Teacher" cohort group. We are in the initial stages of identifying paraeducators in Amherst who meet specific educational criteria and who have expressed interest in becoming teachers.

Paraeducators are often experienced staff, deeply committed to improving the educational outcomes of the students they serve. Paraeducators can be significantly more successful in the transition from a paraeducator position to a teacher position than a brand new teacher who lacks experience in the classroom. We expect to launch this initiative in the coming months, and we are deeply grateful to the Five College Partners for their enthusiastic support of this venture.

#### **Student Teachers/Interns**

Rachel Bowen, Assistant HR Director, is currently working with representatives from Mt. Holyoke College, Five Colleges, Inc., and UMass to deliver a comprehensive Student Teacher/Intern online application which will be operational for all Fall 2014 placements. To date, placements have occurred through direct contact

with teachers and building administrators. This change is being made so that the district can track all of the placements throughout our district and so that Human Resources has direct access to those students emerging as licensed teachers for recruitment purposes.

### **Teachers of Color Professional Network**

The Five College Consortium is also working with us to explore the creation of a formalized **Professional Network for Teachers of Color**. The network is expected include current, retired and future educators of color from Hampshire, Hampden and Franklin counties. As well, the partnership envisions that the network will include educators from the public, charter and private elementary, secondary and higher education establishments. When launched, this initiative will be part of an overall development, recruitment and retention effort in response to the MADE (Massachusetts Advocates for Diversity in Education – see below) goal of increasing the recruitment, retention and development of teachers of color throughout the region.

### **Board Certified Behavior Analyst Education**

Working with Dr. Faye Brady, the district successfully launched a partnership with Elms College to offer BCBA (Board Certified Behavior Analyst) graduate coursework. In the inaugural cohort of the program, which meets after the work day here in our Middle School, there are nine staff members (paraeducators and teachers) enrolled in the program. One course of the total of six courses will be offered each semester at a significantly reduced tuition rate.

Currently, there are fewer than 3 staff members certified in BCBA in the districts. This initiative will result in an increase in the number of professionals trained to work effectively with an increasing population of students challenged by autism and developmental disabilities. Applied Behavior Analysis provides an approach for developing, implementing, and evaluating practical strategies to produce changes in socially significant behaviors of individuals in a variety of contexts. As an incentive for staff, we are offering a 50% reimbursement of the total cost of training if individuals are able to pass the rigorous BCBA certification examination at the conclusion of the 6-course sequence.

### **Orton-Gillingham Certification**

Under Dr. Brady's direction and guidance, there are six staff members being trained in the Orton-Gillingham approach of tutoring children with dyslexia. This training is being offered free to our staff, and through the Western Massachusetts Learning Centers for Children.

### **Amherst-Pelham Human Resources Collaboration with DESE**

#### **DESE Racial Imbalance Advisory Council**

In October 2011 Rachel Bowen was re-appointed by the Massachusetts Board of Education to serve a second, three-year term on the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education Racial Imbalance Advisory Council (RIAC). This advisory council advocates for the importance of diversity in the education of children of the Commonwealth. The Council's primary goal is to *"...respond to significant changing demographic needs, changing student needs, changing district needs, changing desegregation plans, and to ensure that districts adhere to the tenets of the Racial Imbalance Law... understanding that the legacy of racial discrimination in our society carries long-term consequences."* Ms. Bowen recently completed her second year as the Co-Chair of this Committee.

#### **DESE MADE Task Force**

As an outgrowth of her work with RIAC, in June 2013 Rachel Bowen was appointed by MA DESE Commissioner Mitchell Chester to the Massachusetts Advocates for Diversity in Education Task Force (MADE) established to support the DESE's Race To The Top Diversity Initiative project. In framing the charge to the MADE Task Force, the Commissioner stated the following: *"Massachusetts has earned and rightfully maintained recognition as a leader in education across the nation. While this achievement reflects highly of the Commonwealth, it is our commitment to continuously enhance our public school system that places Massachusetts at the forefront of education. Most recently, through our ESEA waiver, we have established an aggressive yet attainable state goal of cutting our state's proficiency gaps in half by 2017<sup>1</sup>. To this end, we are engaged in several reform efforts including the roll-out of the new statewide educator evaluation system, the development of college and career-ready Common Core State Standards, and a concerted approach for turning around our lowest performing schools and districts<sup>2</sup> to support the attainment of this goal.*

*As we work towards this goal, we are keenly aware of population trends that indicate our society is growing increasingly diverse<sup>3</sup>. As such, the ability of our teachers and school leaders to effectively implement our reform efforts to teach and promote success for all students will rest upon their ability to work with and respond positively to the diverse needs of the student population. The Department has identified 2 specific targets around diversity aimed at strategically supporting our educators and helping achieve the ambitious 2017 goal outlined in the ESEA waiver. "*

The MADE Task Force was divided into two sub groups. Ms. Bowen was assigned to the Teacher Recruitment and Retention sub group. One of the targets of the assignment is to make recommendations to the Commissioner on how to increase the diversity of minority educators from 7.1 percent (2012) to 10.2 percent (2017). The Recruitment and Retention Task Force group will finalize five recommendations to the Commissioner on November 22, 2013. The recommendations will be considered by DESE during the months to follow. The Commissioner may choose to bring one or more of the recommendations to the Board of Education for action. The draft recommendations, yet to be finalized or submitted may include but are not limited to the following:

- Targeted teacher and administrator recruitment events sponsored by DESE.
- Enhanced pathways to teacher certification for paraeducators.
- DESE recognition of districts who are successfully recruiting and retaining teachers of color.
- DESE and district partnerships that support high school students who aspire to become teachers.
- Revising MA educator license requirements for valid out-of-state educator license holders.
- Review of and MA DESE response to the 2008 MTEL Review Task Force report.
- Data collection/reporting requirements for state higher education institutes for recruitment and retention of teacher candidates of color enrolled in and completing educator preparation programs.

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<sup>1</sup> Massachusetts Board of Elementary and Secondary Education (2010). *A Roadmap to Closing the Proficiency Gap*: <http://www.doe.mass.edu/boe/news/0410PGRoadmap.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> Massachusetts Board of Elementary and Secondary Education (2012). *ESEA Flexibility Request Massachusetts January 18, 2012 Resubmission*: <http://www.doe.mass.edu/apa/titlei/esea/?section=ESEA>