



LOWELL PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Henry J. Mroz Administration Office
155 Merrimack Street
Lowell, Massachusetts 01852

Abigail Anderson
Director of Research and
Accountability

Tel: (978) 674-2164
E-Mail: aanderson@lowell.k12.ma.us

To: Linus J. Guillory, Jr., Ph.D., Chief Schools Officer
From: Abigail Anderson
RE: i-Ready Diagnostic Research Program Proposal
Date: January 11, 2021

Curriculum Associates, a vendor that the district is currently under contract with using their i-Ready assessment platform, is offering no-cost licensing for the i-Ready Diagnostic to districts across Massachusetts. As part of this offering, districts agree to take part in a collaborative research study being conducted by Curriculum Associates and Lesley University. The main objective of this research study is to better understand the overall impact of COVID-19 and school closures on student learning.

Curriculum Associates proposes that the duration of the project will be from September 2020 – August 2021 and participating districts will begin using the i-Ready diagnostic assessment beginning in the Fall of 2020 and be given three-times in the academic year, with a minimum of 12 weeks of instruction between administrations. Curriculum Associates will provide guidance related to the best assessment plan for Back to School 2020, including a tool to help determine how/when/where to test students. Lowell Public Schools has already established the three administration windows for both ELA and Math. In addition to the data from i-Ready Diagnostic assessment, stored by Curriculum Associates, student data elements that Curriculum Associates and Lesley University are requesting are data that is reported by MA DESE for accountability purposes so there is not an additional burden that is being put on Lowell Public Schools.

This research will help to determine what impact did different approaches to blended learning (e.g. in-person, online only, hybrid) have on student academic performance and what was the impact on students based on various student demographic characteristics? Which schools “Beat the Odds” in relation to their student’s academic performance compared to other schools that have similar characteristics? How were non-cognitive outcomes impacted by different strategies related to blended learning? What were school level supports (or barriers) to the use of diagnostic data to inform and guide support for addressing learning gaps? The final research report will be provided to the district with additional reports made available based on the final research questions (as listed above).

The work conforms with Policy LC. I recommend approval by the school committee.