



End-of-Cycle Summative Evaluation Report
Superintendent of Schools
Dr. Joel Boyd
2020-2021

Indicators

U = Unsatisfactory = Performance on a standard or overall has not significantly improved following a rating of *needs improvement*, or performance is consistently below the requirements of a standard or overall and is considered inadequate, or both.

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E = Exemplary = A rating of exemplary indicates that practice significantly exceeds proficient and could serve as a model of practice district wide

Area of Responsibility		HC	AD	MD	JD	DL	JL	CM	Score
Indicator I-A.	Curriculum: Ensures that all instructional staff design effective and rigorous standards-based units of instruction consisting of well-structured lessons with measurable outcomes.	P	P	P	NI	P	NI	P	
Indicator I-B.	Instruction: Ensures that practices in all settings reflect high expectations regarding content and quality of effort and work, engage all students, and are personalized to accommodate diverse learning styles, needs, interests, and levels of readiness.	P	P	P	NI	P	NI	P	
Indicator I-C.	Assessment: Ensures that all principals and administrators facilitate practices that propel personnel to use a variety of formal and informal methods and assessments to measure student learning, growth, and understanding and make necessary adjustments to their practice when students are not learning.	P	P	P	NI	E	NI	NI	
Indicator I-D.	Evaluation: Provides effective and timely supervision and evaluation of all staff in alignment with state regulations and contract provisions.	P	P	P	NI	P	NI	NI	
Indicator I-E.	Data-Informed Decision Making: Uses multiple sources of evidence related to student learning, including state, district, and school assessment results and growth data, to inform school and district goals and improve organizational performance, educator effectiveness, and student learning.	P	P	P	NI	P	P	P	
Members Individual Ratings									

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Overall Rating: Standard I: INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP									
U: Unsatisfactory		NI: Needs Improvement			P: Proficient		E: Exemplary		
Indicator II-A.	Environment: Develops and executes effective plans, procedures, routines, and operational systems to address a full range of safety, health, and emotional and social needs.	E	P	P	NI	E	NI	P	
Indicator II-B.	Human Resources Management and Development: Implements a cohesive approach to recruitment, hiring, induction, development, and career growth that promotes high-quality and effective practice.	P	P	P	NI	E	NI	P	
Indicator II-C.	Scheduling and Management Information Systems: Uses systems to ensure optimal use of data and time for teaching, learning, and collaboration, minimizing disruptions and distractions for school-level staff.	P	P	P	NI	P	P	P	
Indicator II-D.	Laws, Ethics, and Policies: Understands and complies with state and federal laws and mandates, school committee policies, collective bargaining agreements, and ethical guidelines.	E	P	E	NI	P	NI	P	
Indicator II-E.	Fiscal Systems: Develops a budget that supports the district's vision, mission, and goals; allocates and manages expenditures consistent with district- and school-level goals and available resources.	E	P	P	NI	E	NI	P	
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Overall Rating: Standard II: MANAGEMENT AND OPERATIONS									
U: Unsatisfactory		NI: Needs Improvement			P: Proficient		E: Exemplary		
Indicator III-A.	Engagement: Actively ensures that all families are welcome members of the classroom and school community and can contribute to the effectiveness of the classroom, school, district and community.	P	P	P	NI	P	NI	NI	
Indicator III-B.	Sharing Responsibility: Continuously collaborates with families and community stakeholders to support student learning and development at home, school, and in the community.	P	P	E	NI	E	NI	P	
Indicator III-C.	Communication: Engages in regular, two-way, culturally proficient communication with families and community stakeholders about student learning and performance.	E	P	P	NI	E	P	P	
Indicator III-D.	Family Concerns: Addresses family and community concerns in an equitable, effective, and efficient manner.	P	P	E	NI	E	NI	P	
Members Individual Ratings									
Overall Rating: Standard III: FAMILY AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT									
U: Unsatisfactory		NI: Needs Improvement			P: Proficient		E: Exemplary		
Indicator IV-A.	Commitment to High Standards: Fosters a shared commitment to high standards of service, teaching and learning with high expectations for achievement for all.	P	P	P	NI	E	P	P	
Indicator IV-B.	Cultural Proficiency: Ensures that policies and practices enable staff members and students to interact effectively in a culturally diverse environment in which students'	E	P	P	NI	E	NI	P	

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backgrounds, identities, strengths, and challenges are respected.								
Indicator IV-C. Communications: Demonstrates strong interpersonal, written and verbal communication skills.	E	P	E	NI	E	P	P	
Indicator IV-D. Continuous Learning: Develops and nurtures a culture in which staff members are reflective about their practice and use student data, current research, best practices and theory to continuously adapt practice and achieve improved results. Models these behaviors in the administrator’s own practice.	P	NI	P	NI	E	NI	NI	
Indicator IV-E. Shared Vision: Continuously engages all stakeholders in the creation of a shared educational vision in which every student is prepared to succeed in postsecondary education and become a responsible citizen and global contributor.	P	NI	P	NI	E	NI	P	
Indicator IV-F. Managing Conflict: Employs strategies for responding to disagreement and dissent, constructively resolving conflict and building consensus throughout a district or school community.	P	NI	P	NI	P	NI	NI	
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Area of Responsibility	HC	AD	MD	JD	DL	JL	CM	Score
Overall Rating: Standard IV: PROFESSIONAL CULTURE								
U: Unsatisfactory		NI: Needs Improvement		P: Proficient		E: Exemplary		
Overall Summative Performance								
U: Unsatisfactory		NI: Needs Improvement		P: Proficient		E: Exemplary		

Superintendent: Dr. Joel D. Boyd _____ _____
Name *Signature* *Date*

Evaluators:
Hilary Clark _____
Andre Descoteuax _____
Mike Dillon Jr. _____
Jackie Doherty _____
Dominik Lay _____
John Leahy _____
Connie Martin _____
Signature *Date*

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Add Evaluator Comments -- [Comments and analysis are recommended for any rating but are required for an overall summative rating of needs improvement or unsatisfactory or impact on Student Learning rating of low.

COMMENTS:

JL: I would like to see more listening of the Lowell community in which you head the school district. I see a lot of reports that are generated but lack action plans. I would like to see more respect of the school committee and the institution itself.

HC: Academic year 20-21 presented challenges never seen before and the superintendent has done a good job leading our district through unprecedented events while still remaining focused on strategic goals and important initiatives. Increased communications, specifically connecting with families that speak languages other than English are major steps forward in sharing information and will be critical to the continuous effort to engage families.

AD: As I sat down to work on my evaluation of Supt. Boyd, I realized as an educator, I couldn't come up with enough anecdotal evidence to adequately do so. This nearly two year period since his hiring in 2019 has only provided us with about eight months of "normalcy" vs. fifteen months of "abnormalcy".

Significant progress has been made in maintenance of our buildings by the city; much still remains. (Fifty-plus years of neglect can't be resolved overnight.) I believe that regardless of who you're speaking to, there is a general perception that there is a severe disconnect between administration and staff. This needs to be addressed now! If we expect to achieve any hope of trying to remedy the

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educational/emotional losses from this pandemic, it is critical that all players are on the same field and that everyone has the same goal. Our children need this and we should be demanding it from all involved in this most-difficult situation that education has ever faced.

I believe that giving Dr. Boyd a “Proficient” rating is appropriate at this time and it is my hope that he will take to heart all of our evaluations and statements as a means to go forward and a way to make the Lowell Public Schools the best urban school district in the Commonwealth.

JD:

Standard 1: Instructional Leadership–NI

Fall 2020 school opening was a disaster—beyond reasonable even given the pandemic challenges, which every district faced. The overly complicated lottery for in-person seats left many families, teachers, and school leaders not knowing student placement right up to the start and even into the school year, as well as schools not having teachers for classes (STEM 6th grade example). Parent emails and calls regarding the many errors were not addressed in a timely.

Superintendent had single-minded focus on 3% in person without adequate attention to the remote environment, resulting in wasted opportunities for high-quality, consistent district-wide PD around remote learning, which left many teachers/school buildings to fend for themselves amid a school year when 97% of our students were remote for months. The 3% in-person lasted 3 weeks and then everyone was remote until the new year except for substantially separate classes. Throughout the academic year, inconsistency in class sizes persisted and deeply impacted teachers and students.

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Claiming the 2020 graduation rate increased to the highest overall 4-year cohort since 2017 is misleading at best since it doesn't factor in that passing MCAS competency was waived. More than 150 students received this waiver and without it, that number may well be lowest graduation rate in years. Reporting on the improvements to the districtwide average daily attendance rates while ignoring that chronic absenteeism soared is also misleading especially given the state only holds us accountable for chronic absenteeism. It is also misleading to claim increased enrollment by 500% in the District's Early College partnership program without mentioning students are now required to take a 1-credit MCC class.

Standard 2: Management and Operations–NI

Overall, the Superintendent does not appear to understand the benefits of executive summary and time management. He consistently abuses SC time with multiple meetings to discuss same issues with no action required, redundant presentations—from the strategic plan development, various scenarios on budget, to the 3% in-person model. He provides pages of information he wants us to have but is reluctant with facts we need to know. We lost a significant number of special education staff and are still waiting on a three-year comparison report. I had to send 2 reports back due to lacking information, one still outstanding. As this evaluation shows, the Superintendent knew his contract required an evaluation by June, yet he bombarded the board with 11 lbs of paperwork on the evening of May 21, giving us less than a week to evaluate him. We did not have a timeline that allowed us to discuss the process or the evidence in public before making the individual assessments. Not good management and shame on this committee for allowing it.

We have increased diverse hiring and that has been a good thing. But overall, there are many concerns re hiring practices under this administration. On

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several occasions, the Supt did not honor SC policy re community interview panels—hiring people without community input or disrespecting community input by hiring people not recommended by the interview panel—often with disastrous results. He has not maintained the district’s highly qualified, licensed people in positions spanning departments such as HR, Technology, and even at the top level of the organization. I checked on DESE last night and saw several people in process of certification, but one executive still not listed as having licensure. Despite the state offering emergency licensure leeway due to the pandemic, it has been nearly 2 years without certification attainment for an executive-level person on the superintendent’s team.

Standard 3: Family and Community Engagement–NI

Each school now has established SSCs as mandated by law and that is a good thing as well as the role parents are playing in determining priority spending for their schools. At my last check in late May, we still did not have contact information on the SSC members listed on each school’s websites which has been requested numerous times over the last two years.

The superintendent claims he has improved the accessibility of parental choice through the launch of an online registration process, which completely ignores the multiple issues with the platform including that it is not mobile-device compatible. Well educated, English-speaking, tech-savvy parents have had problems accessing the system with data being lost, misapplied etc. Parents of pre-school and new/re-registering kindergarten registrations are still not complete for fall. My initial concerns that those families we most want to help have been harmed by this new system appears to have occurred. While the Superintendent has increased access to information and that is a good thing, the information is not presented in a way that enables true input or even clear understanding. As we learned at the Diversity Hiring Seminar,

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our parents and especially non-native English speakers, need information presented without overuse of industry jargon, complex acronyms etc.

Standard 4: Professional Culture–NI

Superintendent claims he increased collaboration with staff but clearly it missed the mark as the recent outcry re his plans for ESSER spending demonstrates. I received emails from 18 schools (two more added this week) signed by more than 700 staff members across the district, as well as emails signed by 22 speech pathologists and 35 social workers in opposition to his spending plan and saying there was no opportunity for meaningful input.

Also of concern, the superintendent does not model the type of reflective, collaborative and inclusive culture he claims to promote for our schools. Staff are afraid to speak out, afraid to be targeted for disagreeing with the Superintendent or alerting a school board member to a concern or issue. Staff have been questioned as to who spoke to a school committee member. Staff have asked me to keep their names confidential for fear of reprisal. Staff have told me they are afraid to speak to other committee members for fear their identity will get back to the superintendent. One staff member told me they spoke to a member of this committee who told the superintendent, and the superintendent called them to task for it. The Superintendent told me himself that one of his chiefs should not have told me something. This is NOT a healthy environment for our employees. We have many excellent educators and administrators who care about this community and about our children. They are experienced, knowledgeable professionals on the front lines and back offices of this organization, and we owe it to ourselves and the community we represent to hear their concerns and not allow it to be stifled by a culture that is the opposite of inclusive and collaborative.

Final Comment—

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Moving forward, the biggest challenge facing the Superintendent is his credibility. Reframing context to always focus on the positive and ignoring real problems does not move us forward. We need transparency, relevant facts, and the information to make the best decisions for the district. We need a true partnership that respects our role by providing good information within reasonable time constraints for decision making. I believe in many ways the Superintendent and I share the same values and vision for our schools, and I want him to be successful. But there is much work to be done to improve the relationships with our parents and families, our staff, and with each other to get there.

Add Superintendent's Comments - - [Comments can be added by the individual being evaluated]

COMMENTS:

This past year was an unprecedented year of significant change due the ongoing health crisis. COVID-19 required us to rapidly redesign the entirety of the school setting on multiple occasions - from remote to in-person to concurrent environments - as we continuously adapted to the evolving health data and shifting recommendations from local and national health officials. More was asked of parents, guardians and educators in the 2020-2021 school year than ever before.

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Despite the long list of challenges school districts across the country encountered, we were able to maintain the trajectory toward long-term improvement that we established prior to the pandemic. In 2020, we achieved overall improvements in the districtwide graduation rate and a narrowing of the graduation gaps among multiple demographics, including the District's linguistically diverse populations, as well as students with disabilities. In addition, as we continued to refine the in-person and remote settings, average daily attendance continued to climb across all schools with the second and third quarter attendance rates in 2021 of 94% nearly matching the pre-COVID high of 95%.

Like the rest of the country, we also faced incredible economic uncertainty this past year with statewide revenue shortfalls in the billions that were passed along to local communities and school districts. This additional uncertainty led to an arduous month-to-month budgeting process that was drawn out from July until October and could have further disrupted the schooling experience for our students. However, we navigated the fiscal environment together with managerial prudence, leveraging savings within the FY20 budget to offset forecasted gaps in the FY21 budget while securing as many federal and state grants as possible to increase revenue.

Through the financial turbulence, we not only avoided draconian cuts but also built up our technology infrastructure which facilitated an improved learning environment for students and staff. Every student was provided with her or his own mobile device prior to the start of the school year, increasing the ratio from 1 device per every 3 students to a ratio of 1 to 1 districtwide. And every family in need of Internet access was provided with a mobile hotspot with more than 1,400 hotspots distributed across the district. In addition, despite the unprecedented nature of this past year's budget, we maintained a disciplined, long-term fiscal outlook, ensuring maximum levels of carryover funds in the District's three revolving accounts which further solidified the District's overall fiscal health.

While continuously adapting to the seemingly ever-changing COVID environment, we also remained intentional in our focus on implementation of the districtwide strategic plan that we adopted last spring. We operationalized our commitment to data-driven decision-making with the development of a school performance dashboard and adoption of districtwide Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) to monitor progress across each goal area. And we further refined our organizational model of differentiated autonomy, increasing the level of site-based autonomy across schools through a second year of implementation of Fair Student Funding while simultaneously improving our targeted support for schools within our Renaissance Network. We implemented the first phase of our diversity recruitment and hiring initiative with our Diversifying Teacher Leaders program and developed a plan for cross-disciplinary, culturally and linguistically sustaining practices which is now on track for implementation in the fall. In addition, we engaged in significant reform at the secondary level which will result in

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greater programmatic options for middle and high school students, and we are continuing to make important strides toward realizing a universal PreK model to expand access to early learning across the city.

Overall, we met or exceeded every goal and target we established at the beginning of the year. However, despite the extraordinary organizational progress that we have made so far, we still have a long way to go. The full effects of the disruption to learning that our students and families experienced this past year cannot yet be fully quantified, and those gaps in learning come on top of the opportunity gaps that our racially, linguistically and economically diverse populations have historically experienced. As we move forward into 2021-2022, we must proceed with the sense of urgency that our families expect and deserve.

At the same time, the evidence shows that we are on the right track. In an environment as demanding as this past year's has been, it is easy to lose sight of the big picture and become distracted by the challenges or unfortunate events of a single day. However, prior to the pandemic, we set a goal of becoming the highest performing urban district in the Commonwealth, and while recognizing that our work is far from complete, I am confident that if we stay the course - in a few years - we will all be celebrating LPS as a model that other urban school districts across the country seek to emulate.

Comments and analysis (recommended for an overall rating; required for overall rating of *needs improvement* or *unsatisfactory*):