



LOWELL PUBLIC SCHOOLS
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To: Liam Skinner, Chief Schools Officer
From: Abigail Anderson
RE: Doctoral Research Proposal, Susan Brassard
Date: March 8, 2023

Susan Brassard is enrolled in a doctoral program at The University of Massachusetts, Lowell in the Leadership in Schooling program. A requirement of the program is to complete a dissertation in practice study. This study's main objective is to deepen understanding of students with disabilities and their abilities to participate fully in school programs that give them an equal opportunity to excel in post-secondary paths. Through Ms. Brassard's Plan-Do-Study-Act (PDSA) cycles, she will focus on increasing cross-departmental collaboration using the tools of appreciative inquiry to identify the current exemplars of school success for students with disabilities while reducing the ableism mindset.

Ms. Brassard proposes to survey and observe roughly 35 teachers, administrators, and student support staff at Lowell High School. Participants will be exposed to a Success Analysis Protocol, Hopes & Fears Protocol and will have the opportunity to sustain the change ideas through observations of peers outside their departments. All participation is voluntary and no identifying information will be reported out on. All data will be stored on the researcher's password protected laptop in protected folders.

The results of this study will allow for increased cross-departmental collaboration amongst general, vocational, and special education teachers that will open paths to conversations regarding students with disabilities and how to overcome the barriers of the ableism mindset.

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