

To: Glenn Brand  
 From: Larry Dorey  
 Re: Discipline Report for October, 2015  
 Date: 10/31/2015

There were 22 discipline referrals to the administration during the month of October, 2015. This total is up from 17 last year. Nine students were suspended this month, while four students were suspended during October, 2014.

Suspensions for October, 2015

Referral	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Abusive Language			1		
Alcohol Use					5
Assault					2
Disruptive/Uncooperative Behav		2			1
Harassment		2			
Insubordination	1				
Leaving School Grounds		1			
Stealing				2	
Threatening					1
Truancy Issues			1	1	
Vandalism				1	
<b>Totals</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>9</b>

A list of all infractions for the month of October, 2015 appears on the backside of this page.

c: JoAnn Campbell

Other Infractions for October, 2015

<b>Referral</b>	<b>2011</b>	<b>2012</b>	<b>2013</b>	<b>2014</b>	<b>2015</b>
Abusive/Obscene Language		1	2		1
Alcohol Use					5
Assault					2
Bullying	1				2
C.H. Alcohol	1	1	1	3	
C.H. Drugs			1		
Disrespectful	2				1
Disruptive/Uncooperative	3	4			1
Forgery	1				2
Harassment	3	5	1		
Leaving School Grounds	3	13	6	4	
Noncompliance of School Rules	5	1	1		
Other	3	2	2		2
Out of school issue	2	14	8		
Parking Violations			1		
Physical Aggression			1		
Sexual Harassment		1			
Stealing				2	
Tardy to class		9		2	
Threatening					1
Truancy	2	13	5	5	5
Vandalism				1	
Weapons Possession		1			
<b>Totals</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>65</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>22</b>

## *R.J. Grey Junior High School*

To: Dr. Glenn Brand  
 From: Allison Warren and James Marcotte  
 Re: Discipline Report for October 2015  
 Date: November 2, 2015

There were 14 discipline referrals/concerns (including requests from teachers for assistance) reported to the Administration during the month of October.

	<u>Oct-11</u>	<u>Oct-12</u>	<u>Oct-13</u>	<u>Oct-14</u>	<u>Oct-15</u>
<i>Total Discipline Referrals Reported</i>	27	10	18	28	14

	<u>Oct-11</u>	<u>Oct-12</u>	<u>Oct-13</u>	<u>Oct-14</u>	<u>Oct-15</u>
<b>Total Suspensions</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>
Fighting					
Harassment (non-sexual)					
Inappropriate/disruptive/disrespectful behavior	1				
Physical aggression			1		
Sexual harassment	1			1	
Stealing					
Truancy Issues					
Threatening Physical Attack					
Non-compliance with school rules			2		

	<u>Oct-11</u>	<u>Oct-12</u>	<u>Oct-13</u>	<u>Oct-14</u>	<u>Oct-15</u>
<b>Total Other Infractions</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>14</b>
Abusive language/profanity					
Academic Integrity					
Bus discipline	1	3	1	1	
Class/school truancies		2			
Disruptive behavior (classroom, cafeteria, hallway)	6	1	11	12	8
Harassment (non-sexual)/bullying/teasing	2			1	1
Non-compliance with school rules	3		2	6	2
Other					
Physical aggression	2			1	1
Sexual harassment					
Tardy to class	3			1	

Threatening					
Uncooperative/disrespectful behavior	8	4	1	5	2
Vandalism					

The referrals/concerns generally were quickly resolved and no further intervention was required.



November 6, 2015

Dear Parents & Guardians,

Welcome to the 2015-2016 school year! As we start out this school year, I wanted to take the time to send you my first quarterly newsletter. The focus of this on-going newsletter will be to inform and update you on what is happening in special education across the school district.

This year we have a new structure within Pupil Services and I am very excited to tell you about it. Marilyn Bisbicos, the Interim Director of Pupil Services, will supervise the many departments that make up Pupil Services (Health and Nursing, Counseling and Psychological Services, English Language Education, and Special Education). Due to regionalization in the 2014-2015 school year, our district is now required to have a Special Education Director designated to all aspects of special education programming. I am pleased and proud to be the person who will support and direct the special education department as we move forward continuing to provide outstanding services to your children. The needs of your children are at the center of everything we do within the special education department and their needs inform decision making related to programming and services. Special Education mandates require that students be educated within the least restrictive environment and have access to learning within the general education classroom as appropriate. Through my 20 years in the district as a teacher and administrator, developing inclusive opportunities and a continuum of services has been a professional and personal priority.

The administrative/supervisor structure within the Special Education Department includes the following staff members:

Matt Kidder, Out-of-District Coordinator (PK-22)

Joe Gibowicz, Early Childhood Coordinator/Carol Huebner Early Childhood Program

Lynne Laramie, Elementary Special Education Coordinator (K-6)

Lannon Twomey, Speech and Language Coordinator

Tara Kirousis, Educational Team Leader, RJ Grey JHS

Louise Provan, Educational Team Leader, ABRHS



In addition, Kate Sullivan is the full-time Transition Coordinator at ABRHS. Kate was previously our part-time Transition Coordinator and is full time in this role to address transitional services for students preparing for the next steps after high school. She will support students with vocational/employability opportunities as well as conduct assessments related to transitional planning.

At the RJ Grey JHS Karoly Baglio will be supporting transition from the elementary to junior high school and will attend transition meetings as well as manage scheduling for students moving to the junior high school.

In our Pupil Services office we are fortunate to have wonderful supports from Debbie Sye, our Office Manager, and our Administrative Assistants; Corinne DiPietro (Pre-school and Out-of -District) and Linda Blanco (RJ Grey JHS and ABRHS). Diane Bomba (Elementary) has left the district to pursue other opportunities. She will be truly missed. We recently hired Paula Conquest to replace Diane and we welcome her to Pupil Services. In addition, Mary Ellen Guditiz has joined us part-time to support the Pupil Service staff with special projects and clerical tasks. We welcome Mary Ellen to the department as well!

In our schools, the Special Education Department includes Special Educators, Speech & Language Therapists, Occupational Therapists, Physical Therapists, Board Certified Behavioral Analysts, and assistants. Our Counselors/Psychologists support students with emotional and social issues. All of these staff members, in addition to contracted providers in the areas of vision, mobility and hearing support students in accessing their education.

Instructional practices across the district vary and directly relate to individual student needs in the areas of reading, writing, math and executive functioning. In my quarterly newsletters I will be providing you with information about instructional practices within special education.

The first area I would like to highlight is reading assessment and instruction. Specific Learning Disabilities in the area of reading include a range of issues related to comprehension, vocabulary and decoding. Within a Specific Learning Disability some students may display characteristics of Dyslexia. Please be assured I am confident in the district's ability to address the needs of students with characteristics of dyslexia both in the ability to assess as well as to provide a wide range of instructional practices to address learning and remediation. According to the National Institute of Health (NIH), "Dyslexia is a brain-based type of learning disability that specifically impairs a person's ability to read. These individuals typically read at levels significantly lower than expected despite having normal intelligence. Although the disorder varies from person to person, common characteristics among people with dyslexia are difficulty with phonological processing (the manipulation of sounds), spelling, and/or rapid visual-verbal responding".



While dyslexia is not recognized as a “disability” within the DSM V or within the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) categories, the district does recognize dyslexia as a type of reading disability under Specific Learning Disability. Students demonstrate weaknesses in phonological processing, decoding, fluency, and phonemic awareness. Students with significant weaknesses in these areas struggle to “break the code” and this struggle to decode/encode will impact comprehension of text and spelling skills. To address the needs of students with significant weaknesses in these areas it is essential to provide research-based direct instruction that is structured and sequential in nature. The essential components of reading instruction include phonemic awareness, phonics (encoding and decoding), vocabulary, previous experience, comprehension, and fluency instruction. I am very passionate about ensuring students have direct instruction in phonemic awareness and decoding/encoding skills. Reading acquisition was the focus of my graduate Thesis, and while I believe accommodations are necessary to support students with accessing grade level concepts, direct instruction is the only way to remediate skills. In my previous position as the Secondary Special Education Coordinator I was committed to ensuring students of all ages had the opportunity to “learn” to read and implemented Wilson and Just Words reading tutorials and fluency programming at the RJ Grey JHS and ABRHS.

The following demonstrates the types of assessments, screening tools, curricula and technology currently used in our schools across the district to identify areas of concern and progress of students in the area of reading.

**Assessments/Screening that may indicate areas of concern in reading:**

- Components of Kindergarten screening (Dial 4) to include rapid naming, letters/sounds, rhyming
- Kindergarten Literacy Assessment based on Marie Clay’s “Observation Survey of - Early Literacy and Achievement and includes letter identification and sounds, phonemic awareness, rhyming. Blending segmenting & phoneme deletions (Rosner) and recording sounds in words (writing)
- Regular education/Reading specialist assessments include Fountas and Pinnell Benchmark Assessment System, Developmental Reading Assessment 2, Running records, Yopp-Singer Test of Phoneme Segmentation, Dynamic Indicators of Early Literacy Skills, on-going writing samples, and Words Their Way Spelling Inventory (Bear & Ivernizzi)
- Standardized testing conducted by Special Educators-WIAT III, WJ IV, CTOPP, TERA, WADE, Ran/Raz, TOWE, GORT, GSRT, DRA and DIBELS
- Standardized testing conducted by Speech & Language therapists-CTOPP, Test of Phonological Awareness (PAT) and portions of the CELF

**Reading Curriculum used to address reading difficulties/disabilities:**

- Lexia
- RAVE-O (Retrieval, Automaticity, Vocabulary, Engagement with Language Orthology)



**Technology used to address reading/writing disabilities:**

- Lexia
- Learning Ally
- Bookshare.org
- Dragon
- Individually identified technology as appropriate for accommodations/access

Last school year Pupil Services wrote and received the DESE 274 Special Education Program Improvement Grant to address professional learning in the area of social emotional development. I am very pleased to report this grant was used across the district for training and practices to support our students. This focus in the area of supporting students with developing emotionally healthy strategies is a district-wide commitment.

Partnerships with administration across the district are essential to providing the best instructional practices and supports to your students. Through a partnership with Deborah Bookis, Director of Curriculum, we are embarking on a yearlong professional learning opportunity. Self-Regulated Strategy Development (SRSD). All special educators working with 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grade students are partnering with regular educators to implement instruction to our students that will support development of writing strategies. Many Research and Development partnerships between special educators and regular educators took place over the summer to further support modifications to the curriculum to increase greater accessibility to learning within the general education setting.

In addition to school-based partnerships, we are very fortunate to have a wonderfully collaborative relationship with our Acton-Boxborough Special Education Parent Advisory Counsel (SpEd PAC). They were essential in collecting and presenting data related to our high needs population within the district, increasing awareness and facilitating discussions that were essential during the budgetary process. If you are not currently involved, I would encourage you to become part of the SpEd PAC. We will be planning and co-hosting events with speakers on topics that will be relevant to students and their families. This year I will be joining the SpEd PAC at the monthly meetings and look forward to our continued collaboration.

As we enter the budget process, our partnerships across the district will focus on continued incremental supports for all students at risk. The goal of increasing special education supports in our schools will remain my focus and the focus of the Special Education department. In addition, we are looking at programmatic needs and will be conducting an independent program review throughout this school year to further identify ways in which we can improve or enhance our current programs and/or to identify additional programming that may be needed.





My commitment to you and your children is to continue to build trusting relationships between the special education department and families, to provide transparency to processes and discussions, and to keep your child at the center of everything we do within the Special Education Department. While our work with your child is focused on skill building through identified goals and benchmarks within the IEP, it is also important to celebrate the many strengths your child demonstrates and to approach student learning from a strength-based model.

Looking forward to our work together!

*Mary Emmons*

Special Education Director

Acton-Boxborough Regional School District



# High Needs Population Trends: An Update

Acton-Boxborough Consolidated\* District 2004 - 2015

October 29, 2015

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\* The term "AB" or similar refers to the consolidated district of public schools of Acton, Boxborough, and Acton-Boxborough. Prior to FY 2015 "AB" data is an aggregate of the three districts.

## **PURPOSE AND BACKGROUND**

This paper is to update the key findings of our September 2014 report on population trends within the special education and other High Needs subgroups for the Acton-Boxborough consolidated school district with FY 2015 population data (as of October 1, 2014). Data used in this paper is drawn from reports the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) publishes on its website each year.

DESE defines the High Needs group as students classified as Students with Disabilities (SwD), Economically Disadvantaged, previously called Low Income (LI), and English Language Learners (ELL). The state tracks the performance of this High Needs group each year to determine whether or not each individual school and school district has met annual state and federal education requirements. In our view, tracking trends in the High Needs group is important because the number of High Needs students will impact the overall financial resources necessary to educate students with special education needs and other High Needs in Acton and Boxborough. Within the special education subgroup (SwD), this report looks at both change in the number of students with special needs and the change in distribution of primary disabilities since the type and severity of students' special needs directly impact the budget by driving the type and intensity of services needed to address individual educational needs.

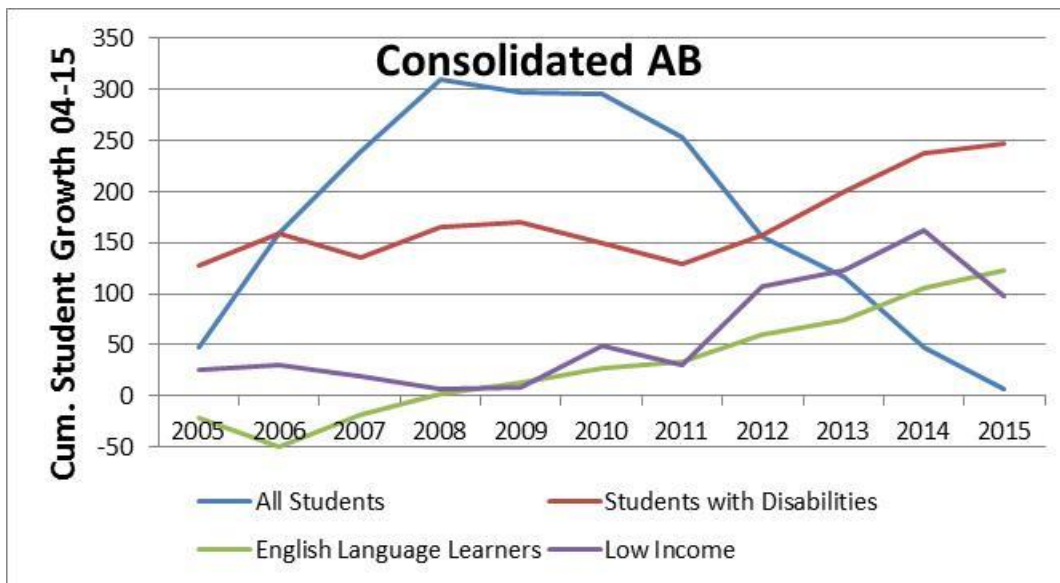
The Economically Disadvantaged definition used for the first time in the 2014-2015 school year results in fewer students being classified in this category versus the Low Income definition used in prior years. The reduction noted in this category therefore is not indicating a change in families' economic situations. The new and old definitions are discussed at the end of this report.

## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

In our 2014 report we concluded that growth in the numbers of High Need students in A-B would drive district per pupil spending faster than inflation. In our view, the 2015 data reinforces this conclusion. In FY 2015, the number of special education students (SwD) and English Language Learners (ELL) increased. Due to a new, more restrictive definition, the Low Income/Economically Disadvantaged total declined by 64.

In FY 2015 the consolidated district total student population declined by 128 (-2.2%) while the number of High Needs students declined by 29 (-2.1%). The Low Income definitional change disguises the continuing growth of students requiring additional support to succeed. We suggest that the 2013 to 2014 trend is intact. FY 2014 experienced an overall population decrease of 65 students in contrast to an increase in the High Needs group of 80 students in comparison with FY 2013. In FY 2015 the SwD subgroup grew by 10 students (+1.0%) to 989 and the ELL subgroup grew by 16 (8.6%) to 202.

The following chart tracks the change in High Needs students by category since FY 2004. Since 2004, the Students with Disabilities subgroup has increased by 247 students (+33.7% since 2004), the English Language Learners subgroup has increased by 122 students (+152.5%), and the Low Income/Economically Disadvantaged subgroup has increased by 98 students (+77.8%). During the same period total enrollment has been flat (increase of six students).



The following table shows the changes in the Students with Disabilities, English Language Learners, Low Income/Economically Disadvantaged, and total enrollment over the last two years.

Despite the large decrease in the Low Income/Economically Disadvantaged subgroup (down 64 students), the number of High Needs students decreased more modestly (down 29 students). This anomaly almost certainly is due to the number of Low Income students who were also classified as either SwD or ELL. The High Needs total counts an eligible student once.

The decline in total student enrollment over the last year has the arithmetic effect of increasing the per pupil expenditure (by lowering the denominator) assuming no change in overall spending. A lower total student headcount also has a real effect on budgets as subsidies from the state (e.g., Chapter 70) and federal government are often based on student headcount. Students classified as High Needs receive costly supplementary services above and beyond those received through general education. Therefore, the increase in High Needs students is likely to lead to an increase in absolute spending and a higher per pupil expenditure to maintain the same level of education we currently provide district students.

The table below tracks the changes in the LI, ELL, SwD, and HN population in the last two years. The All Students data is the Adjusted Total count as provided by DESE.

## Two-Year Change in High Needs Population at Consolidated A-B

School Year	All Students	Students Classified as High Needs:				
		Low Income*	English Learners	Special Education	Total High Needs	Multiple Classified
2015	5,750	224	202	979	1,326	79
2014	5,878	288	186	969	1,355	88
2013	5,943	248	154	931	1,275	58
<b><u>Change 2014 -2015</u></b>						
# Students	-128	-64	16	10	-29	
% Yr-to-Yr	-2.2%	-22.2%	8.6%	1.0%	-2.1%	
<b><u>Change 2013 -2014</u></b>						
# Students	-65	40	32	38	80	
% Yr-to-Yr	-1.1%	16.1%	20.8%	4.1%	6.3%	

*\* As of FY 2015 there was a name and definition change of the Low Income sub-group. It is now titled "Economically Disadvantaged."*

### CHANGE IN COMPOSITION OF SPECIAL EDUCATION STUDENTS

As the number and proportion of special education students has increased, the mix of students' primary disabilities has changed in meaningful ways. Over the last eleven years the number of students classified with a primary disability of Autism has exploded, up by 86 students (a 307% cumulative increase) while the number of students identified with Specific Learning Disabilities has declined by 101 over the same period. Students with disabilities like Autism tend to be more expensive to educate than students with a Specific Learning Disability because their disability impacts multiple areas of learning, e.g., social, emotional, academic, sensory, gross and fine motor skills.

## SwD by Primary Disability

	Cost Weight	Count 2015	Change since:		
			<u>2014</u>	<u>2011</u>	<u>2004</u>
Sensory Deaf					
Blind	3.1	0	0	-1	0
Multiple Disab	3.1	18	-7	-13	-12
Sensory Vision	2.9	3	-1	0	0
Autism	2.9	114	4	29	86
Neurological	2.5	78	0	21	13
Sensory Hard					
of Hearing	2.4	10	0	0	3
Intellectual	2.3	30	4	9	-6
Physical	2.3	39	4	-5	24
Emotional	2.2	116	3	17	30
Health	2.0	120	7	32	42
Communication	1.7	230	-4	43	65
Specific					
Learning Disab	1.6	133	6	-15	-101
Development					
Delay	1.6	88	-6	1	8
<b>Total</b>		<b>979</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>118</b>	<b>152</b>

The “Total Expenditures for Students with Disabilities, 1999-2000: Spending Variation by Disability” study developed a cost index for each disability category used by the federal government. We have used judgment to attach the cost index to each primary disability used by Massachusetts. The table above shows growth in the high-cost category of Autism and a decline in the high-cost category of Multiple Disabilities. The largest decrease occurred in the relatively low-cost category of Specific Learning Disability.

### CHANGE IN AGE DISTRIBUTION OF SPECIAL EDUCATION STUDENTS

Over the eleven years 2004-2015 there have been material shifts in the age distribution of the SwD population. As noted last year, the growth among high school students (14-17) is much faster than for the SwD group overall. In the eleven-year span the number of high school students in the subgroup increased by 70 students (+32%) as compared with the total SwD increase of 152 students (+18%). We also note that the number of 5-year-olds in the subgroup has decreased by 20 students (-44%). In a growth trend environment, a decline of this size may have an underlying cause beyond normal random volatility.

### A-B SPECIAL EDUCATION STUDENTS BY AGE

Age	Number of SwD by Age by Fiscal Year						Change 2004 - 2015	
	2004	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	#	%
3	14	17	13	13	17	16	2	14.3%
4	14	17	23	18	17	24	10	71.4%
5	45	36	28	32	31	25	-20	-44.4%
6	34	51	50	49	51	43	9	26.5%
7	47	49	61	61	63	64	17	36.2%
8	62	51	56	71	70	66	4	6.5%
9	82	58	59	63	81	88	6	7.3%
10	70	64	61	60	61	93	23	32.9%
11	54	71	76	71	80	68	14	25.9%
12	77	73	69	76	76	80	3	3.9%
13	70	70	80	81	77	77	7	10.0%
14	58	76	65	80	81	71	13	22.4%
15	49	63	73	71	76	84	35	71.4%
16	60	73	64	73	72	71	11	18.3%
17	53	47	73	58	70	64	11	20.8%
18	28	29	22	34	30	22	-6	-21.4%
19	4	7	8	10	9	11	7	175.0%
20	3	6	5	6	5	7	4	133.3%
21	3	3	3	4	2	5	2	66.7%
<b>Total</b>	<b>827</b>	<b>861</b>	<b>889</b>	<b>931</b>	<b>969</b>	<b>979</b>	<b>152</b>	<b>18.4%</b>

Another approach for looking at age group changes is to compare changes within an age cohort. The table below shows the one-year increase in the SwD students by age cohort. So, for example, you can see that the four-year-average increase in SwD students from age 8 to 9 is 10.8 students. In FY 2015 the number of 9-year-olds in the subgroup grew by 18 versus the 8-year-olds the prior year. Each year's change reflects move-ins/move outs, new members, and "graduates" or those who no longer require services. It is not possible with public data to determine what is driving a change in numbers. The green highlights the two age groups with the largest positive difference of change in FY 2015 to the four-year average. Growth among the 8-9 and 9-10-year-olds (roughly fourth and fifth graders) of 18 and 12 students respectively exceeded the four-year average by 7.2 and 8.5 students respectively. The yellow highlights reflect the largest negative difference versus the average. The 5-6-year-old increase of 12 was 4.5 below average and the 10-11-year-old increase of 7 was 5.3 below average.

### YEAR BY YEAR CHANGE IN AGE COHORT

<u>Age Group</u>	<u>2011-12</u>	<u>2012-13</u>	<u>2013-14</u>	<u>2014-15</u>	<u>Average</u>
3 to 4	6	5	4	7	5.5
4 to 5	11	9	13	8	10.3
5 to 6	14	21	19	12	16.5
6 to 7	10	11	14	13	12.0
7 to 8	7	10	9	3	7.3
8 to 9	8	7	10	18	10.8
9 to 10	3	1	-2	12	3.5
10 to 11	12	10	20	7	12.3
11 to 12	-2	0	5	0	0.8
12 to 13	7	12	1	1	5.3
13 to 14	-5	0	0	-6	-2.8
14 to 15	-3	6	-4	3	0.5
15 to 16	1	0	1	-5	-0.8
16 to 17	0	-6	-3	-8	-4.3
17 to 18	-25	-39	-28	-48	-35.0
18 to 19	-21	-12	-25	-19	-19.3
19 to 20	-2	-2	-5	-2	-2.8
20 to 21	-3	-1	-4	0	-2.0

We note that the FY 2015 outliers just discussed represent sharp changes (up and down) from the changes seen in the prior three fiscal years. We therefore believe these trends may be due to more than normal random volatility and merit exploration given the importance of early intervention on long-term student outcome as well as its cost efficiency for school districts.



As recommended last year, we continue to see value in using a “ground up” approach to annual budgeting of special education expenditures. This would entail determining the resources (and costs) necessary for the current group of students to achieve their goals, including an MCAS Student Growth Percentile in ELA and Math of 51-60 per federal and state standards. Our current budget process is more top down—e.g., last year’s budget plus 2%—which does not take into account the increasing numbers of students with High Needs or the change in the type and intensity of special needs represented within the student population.

#### **COMPARISON OF A-B TO PEER DISTRICTS’ AND STATE HIGH NEEDS POPULATIONS**

A-B’s 2015 percentage composition among the High Needs subgroups is about in the middle of the peer districts (Concord, C-C, Lexington, and Westford) we use for comparison.<sup>1</sup> This was true in 2014 as well. However, over the last two years A-B had the largest increase in the ELL and SwD percentage among the peer districts and over the last year A-B was the only peer district that experienced a higher percentage in both the ELL and SwD subgroups as a percentage of the overall student population. As mentioned earlier, the total number of High Needs students decreased in 2015 due to a more restrictive definition of the Low Income category. However, the percentage of High Needs students inched up to 13.1% from 13.0% due to the faster decline in A-B’s total enrollment.

A-B and all of the peer districts have a substantially lower percentage of students in the Economically Disadvantaged/Low Income and English Language Learner subgroups while A-B and the peer districts are much closer to the state average percentage of Students with Disabilities. Of the peer districts, Westford’s percentages are the lowest or close to it among the peer districts. In prior analyses Westford has had the lowest spending per student among the peer districts.

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<sup>1</sup> We are aware of the new peer districts the School Committee has adopted and will bear them in mind moving forward. Concord, Concord-Carlisle, and Westford appear in our previous analysis, this update, and on the new peer district list.

**Students Classified as High Needs  
as a % of All Students**

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	<b>Low Income</b>	<b>English Learners</b>	<b>Special Education</b>	<b>Total High Needs</b>
<b>2015</b>				
Acton Boxborough	4.0%	3.6%	17.0%	23.1%
Concord	4.4%	2.6%	18.3%	23.4%
Concord-Carlisle	3.2%	0.7%	18.2%	21.2%
Lexington	4.6%	6.1%	13.6%	24.2%
Westford	3.3%	0.7%	12.3%	16.0%
State	26.3%	8.5%	17.1%	42.2%

**2014**

Acton Boxborough	5.0%	3.2%	16.6%	23.0%
Concord	3.9%	2.8%	17.7%	22.5%
Concord-Carlisle	4.2%	1.1%	19.2%	22.8%
Lexington	7.1%	5.5%	14.2%	26.2%
Westford	4.2%	1.1%	11.7%	16.3%
State	38.3%	7.9%	17.0%	48.8%

**One Year Change 2014 - 2015**

Acton Boxborough	-1.0%	0.4%	0.4%	0.1%
Concord	0.5%	-0.2%	0.6%	0.9%
Concord-Carlisle	-1.0%	-0.4%	-1.0%	-1.6%
Lexington	-2.5%	0.6%	-0.6%	-2.0%
Westford	-0.9%	-0.4%	0.6%	-0.3%
State	-12.0%	0.6%	0.1%	-6.6%

	<b>Low Income</b>	<b>English Learners</b>	<b>Special Education</b>	<b>Total High Needs</b>
<b>2013</b>				
Acton Boxborough	4.2%	2.6%	15.7%	21.4%
Concord	4.9%	2.6%	17.9%	23.1%
Concord-Carlisle	4.5%	0.2%	17.1%	20.8%
Lexington	6.8%	5.3%	13.8%	25.3%
Westford	4.1%	0.9%	11.3%	15.6%
State	37.0%	7.7%	17.0%	47.9%

**Two Year Change 2013 - 2015**

Acton Boxborough	-0.2%	1.0%	1.3%	1.7%
Concord	-0.5%	0.0%	0.4%	0.3%
Concord-Carlisle	-1.3%	0.5%	1.1%	0.4%
Lexington	-2.2%	0.8%	-0.2%	-1.1%
Westford	-0.8%	-0.2%	1.0%	0.4%
State	-10.7%	0.8%	0.1%	-5.7%

**DEFINITIONS: ECONOMICALLY DISADVANTAGED AND LOW INCOME**

Beginning in FY 2015 the former Low Income subgroup was redefined and renamed Economically Disadvantaged. Following are the definitions of each group from the DESE website:

Economically Disadvantaged: based on a student's participation in one or more of the following state-administered programs: the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP); the Transitional Assistance for Families with Dependent Children (TAFDC); the Department of Children and Families' (DCF) foster care program; and MassHealth (Medicaid).

Low-income: Indicates the percent of enrollment who meet ANY ONE of the following definitions of Low-income:

- The student is eligible for free or reduced price lunch; or
- The student receives Transitional Aid to Families benefits; or
- The student is eligible for food stamps.



Actual  
Acton-Boxborough Grade K-6  
November 1, 2015

Grade	Blanchard			Total			Conant			Total			Douglas			Total			Gates				Total				McCarthy-Towne				Total				Merriam				Incoming	Total	#Sec.	Avg. Size
K	33 ADK 14 AM			23 ADK 13 AM			19	17	36	19	17	18	54	18	17	18	53	19	19	19	57	18	18	19	55	0	302	16	18.9													
Rm	216	218	2	2	1	1	2	1	44	0	4	2A	2P	2	111	110	112	1	132	131A	131P	0	6																			
Gr. 1	24	25	49	22	22	44	22	22	22	66	23	23	22	68	21	22	22	65	21	22	22	65	0	357	16	22.3																
Rm	213	211	7	5	4	1	5	4	3	0	3	5	6	1	310	312	311	2	231	133	334	2	13																			
Gr. 2	23	22	45	24	22	22	68	24	23	24	71	23	25	48	23	23	22	68	24	24	24	72	0	372	16	23.3																
Rm	227	219	4	6	8	7	0	7	6	8	0	8	10	0	301	302	303	2	234	224	323	1	7																			
Gr. 3	20	21	21	62	25	23	23	71	24	24	24	72	24	23	47	24	24	24	72	24	24	24	72	0	396	17	23.3															
Rm	229	226	231	8	9	10	20	0	9	10	11	0	7	9	2	313	314	315	3	230	330	331	0	13																		
Gr. 4	24	23	24	71	23	22	23	68	24	23	23	70	22	22	23	67	21	21	23	65	22	22	22	66	0	407	18	22.6														
Rm	245	243	247	6	17	19	18	1	12	14	13	1	18	19	20	0	213	214	215	2	223	322	233	0	10																	
Gr. 5	22	22	22	66	23	24	24	71	25	24	24	73	24	25	23	72	24	25	24	73	22	23	23	23	91	0	446	19	23.5													
Rm	118	130	128	8	16	15	14	0	21	20	19	0	11	15	17	0	210	211	212	2	232	333	135	235	0	10																
Gr. 6	20	23	22	65	25	24	25	74	24	25	25	74	24	25	25	74	24	23	25	72	24	23	23	24	94	0	453	19	23.8													
Rm	110	112	108	9	13	12	11	2	16	17	15	0	12	13	14	1	113	114	115	0	321	332	335	324	3	15																
	44			5			1			6			12			6			74																							
<b>Total</b>	18 Sec. Average 22.5			405			19 Sec. Average 24.0			432			21 Sec. Average 26.7			480			19 Sec. Average 23.8			429			21 Sec. Average 26.2			472			23 Sec. Average 28.6			515			0	2733	121	22.59		
Range	20	25		17	25		17	25		17	25		17	25		19	25		18	24																						

44 Acton residents attend Boxborough  
30 Boxborough residents attend school in Acton

**EARLY CHILDHOOD STUDENT POPULATION  
MONTHLY REPORTING & PROJECTIONS**

Acton-Boxborough Regional Schools  
November 1, 2015

	October 1, 2015	Additions/ Subtractions October 1, 2015	Final Total As of October 1, 2015	November 1, 2015	Additions/ Subtractions November 1, 2015	Final Total As of November 1, 2015	End of Year Projection**
<i>SPED (In-District) 3-5 Year Olds - Acton</i>	34	0	34	34	-1	33	48
<i>SPED (In-District) 3-5 Year Olds - Boxborough</i>	7	0	7	7	+3	10	15
<b>SPED Students In Class TOTAL</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>63</b>
Itinerant - Acton	13	0	13	13	+2	15	22
Itinerant - Boxborough	1	0	1	1	0	1	5
OOD - Acton Preschool	1	0	1	1	0	1	2
<b>SPED TOTAL</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>+4</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>88-92</b>
<i>*TYPICAL - Acton 3-4 Year Olds (In-District)</i>	47	0	47	47	+1	48	49
<i>*TYPICAL - Boxborough 3-4 Year Olds (In-District)</i>	22	0	22	22	0	22	24
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>125</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>125</b>	<b>125</b>	<b>+5</b>	<b>130</b>	<b>161**</b>

The school district must ensure that programs are available for eligible students 3 and 4 years of age. The programs must be developmentally appropriate and located in a setting that includes students with and without disabilities (State Requirement 603 CMR 28.06 (7) and Federal Requirement 34 CFR 300.101 (b); 300.124(b); 300.323(b))

\*\*Projections may be impacted by move-ins and/or Department of Public Health referrals

**MONTHLY REPORTING OF  
ELL STUDENT POPULATION BY SCHOOL**  
Acton-Boxborough Regional School District  
November 1, 2015

Category	Total as of 10/1/2015	Additions	Subtractions	Total as of 11/1/2015
ABRHS	16	+2	0	18
Blanchard	9	+1	0	10
Conant	46	+2	0	48
Douglas	34	+1	0	35
Gates	45	0	0	45
McCarthy-Towne	37	0	-1	36
Merriam	28	0	0	28
RJG JHS	7	0	0	7
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>222</b>	<b>+6</b>	<b>-1</b>	<b>227</b>

*Office of the Superintendent*  
Acton-Boxborough Regional Schools  
16 Charter Road  
Acton, MA 01720  
978-264-4700 x 3206  
[www.abschools.org](http://www.abschools.org)

TO: All Schools  
FROM: Superintendent Glenn Brand  
DATE: November 5, 2015  
RE: **Dismissal Schedule for November 25, 2015**

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On Wednesday, November 25, the day before Thanksgiving, dismissal times for the schools will be as follows:

<b>Junior High:</b>	<b>10:40 a.m.</b>
<b>Senior High:</b>	<b>10:45 a.m.</b>
<b>Conant/McT/Merriam</b>	<b>12:20 p.m.</b>
<b>Blanchard/Douglas/Gates</b>	<b>1:00 p.m.</b>

Please note: Elementary dismissal follows the usual Thursday schedule.



# Acton Fixed Route

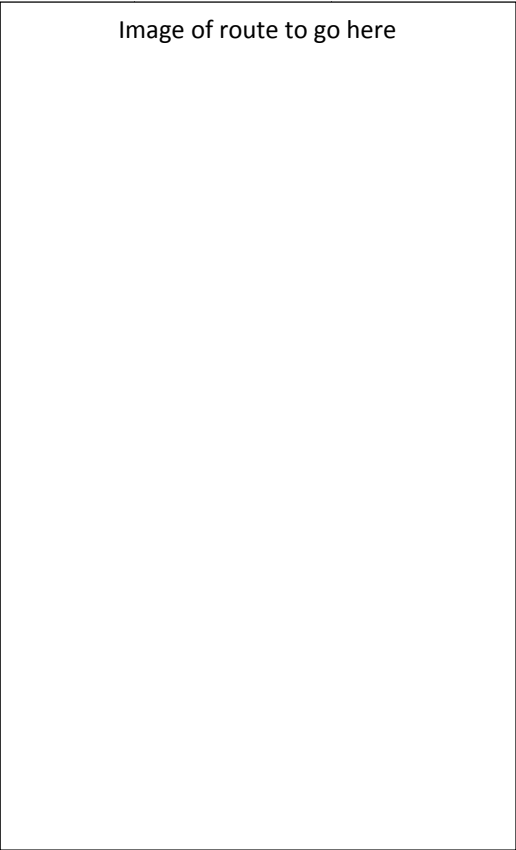


**Serving:**

- Sachem Way
- Nagog Woods
- Avalon Drive
- Gould's Plaza
- Acton Plaza 1 & 2
- Acton Pharmacy/West Acton
- Windsor Ave
- South Acton MBTA
- Council on Aging/Audubon Drive
- Kmart Parking Lot
- Town Hall
- Library

**All Fares \$1.00**  
**Exact change required**

**For more information:**  
Please contact CrossTown Connect Dispatch  
978-844-6809



- ⇒No service on Weekends or Holidays.
- ⇒All times are approximate due to traffic conditions.
- ⇒Bus will stop at designated stops.
- ⇒ Stand on side of road bus travels.



## Live Shuttle Tracker

[www.crossactontransit.com](http://www.crossactontransit.com)



Download the Ride Systems App

**NOTE:**

- All times are approximate due to traffic conditions in the area.
- Please be at your stop five minutes before the scheduled time.



Vehicle Operated by:  
TransAction Corporate Shuttles  
5 Wheeling Avenue, Woburn, MA  
781-895-1100 [www.tcshuttles.com](http://www.tcshuttles.com)

Sachem Way	Nagog Woods (Postal Kiosk)	Avalon Drive (front gate)	Gould's Plaza (Donelan's in front between two entrances)	Acton Plaza 1 & 2 (stop at Crosswalk on No Name Street)	Acton Pharmacy (563 Massachusetts Avenue)	Windsor Green (68 Windsor Avenue)	S. Acton MBTA Station (stop on Central Street at Entrance)	Council on Aging/Audubon Drive	Kmart Parking Lot	Town Hall/Library
8:00 a	8:04 a	8:09 a	<b>No stops</b>				8:25 a	8:30 a	8:40 a	8:48 a
9:00 a	9:04 a	9:09 a	9:16 a	9:24 a	9:28 a	9:30 a	9:35 a	9:39 a	9:44 a	9:50 a
10:00 a	10:04 a	10:09 a	10:16 a	10:24 a	10:28 a	10:30 a	10:35 a	10:39 a	10:44 a	10:50 a
11:00 a	11:04 a	11:09 a	11:16 a	11:24 a	11:28 a	11:30 a	11:35 a	11:39 a	11:44 a	11:50 a
12:00 p	12:04 p	12:09 p	12:16 p	12:24 a	12:28 a	12:30 a	12:35 a	12:39 a	12:44 a	12:50 a
1:00 p	1:04 p	1:09 p	<b>No stops</b>							
2:00 p	2:04 p	2:09 p	2:16 p	2:24 p	2:28 p	2:30 p	2:35 p	2:39 p	2:44 p	2:50 p
3:00 p	3:04 p	3:09 p	3:16 p	3:24 p	3:28 p	3:30 p	3:35 p	3:39 p	3:44 p	3:50 p
4:00 p	4:04 p	4:09 p	4:16 p	4:24 p	4:28 p	4:30 p	4:35 p	4:39 p	4:44 p	4:50 p
5:00p	5:04 p	5:09 p	5:16 p	5:24 p	5:28 p	5:30 p	5:35 p	5:39 p	5:44 p	5:50 p
6:00 p	6:04 p	6:09 p	<b>No stops</b>							

***Don't see your stop on the route? Give us a call to see if we can accommodate your request.***

Connect to MBTA Services at the  
South Acton Commuter Rail Station  
Schedule at [www.mbta.com](http://www.mbta.com)



Vehicle Operated by:  
TransAction Corporate Shuttles  
5 Wheeling Avenue, Woburn, MA  
781-895-1100 [www.tcshuttles.com](http://www.tcshuttles.com)

For more information on regional programs go to [www.crosstownconnect.org](http://www.crosstownconnect.org)

**For immediate release**

**November 17, 2015**

**Contact: Jacqueline Reis 781-338-3115**

### **Board of Elementary and Secondary Education Approves Path to Next-Generation MCAS**

MALDEN – The Board of Elementary and Secondary Education today voted 8-3 to transition to a next-generation MCAS that would be given for the first time in spring 2017 and would use both PARCC and MCAS items, along with items developed specifically for the Massachusetts tests. The vote followed many of the recommendations that Elementary and Secondary Education Commissioner Mitchell D. Chester made last week.

"Massachusetts is a national leader in education, and today's vote gives our students, families and educators a better measure of student achievement while maintaining state control over our assessment system," said **Secretary of Education James A. Peyser**. "I would like to thank my fellow Board members for the many hours they spent listening to public comment and reviewing materials over the last six months."

"I am grateful to the Board for their thoughtful review of my recommendation and all of the input and materials they received," **Commissioner Chester** said. "Their vote paves the way to a next-generation assessment that will be a better reflection of student achievement and, at the high school level, of readiness for college and a career."

For spring 2016, districts that administered PARCC in spring 2015 will do so again, and the remainder of districts will continue with MCAS unless they affirmatively choose to administer PARCC. The MCAS tests in spring 2016 will be augmented with a limited number of PARCC items in order to help make statewide comparisons easier and to offer students and staff the opportunity to experience PARCC items while the new assessment is being developed.

As a result of the vote, the state will:

- Award a new MCAS contract to include a next-generation assessment for English language arts and math using both PARCC items and items specific to Massachusetts;
- Commit to computer-based state assessments with the goal of implementing this statewide by spring 2019;
- Remain a member of the PARCC consortium with access to high-quality assessment development, cost-sharing with other states and the ability to compare next-generation MCAS results with those of other states' assessments; and
- Convene groups of K-12 teachers, higher education faculty and assessment experts to advise ESE on the content, length and scheduling of statewide tests; testing policies for students with disabilities and for English language learners; the requirements for the high school competency determination (currently the 10<sup>th</sup> grade MCAS); and the timeline for reinstating a history and social science test.

Any districts that administer PARCC in spring 2016 will be held harmless for any negative

changes in their school and district accountability levels, a policy which is a continuation of the state's approach to districts that used PARCC in spring 2015. The Board also voted to hold all districts harmless on the basis of test scores in 2017, when all of the state's districts would use a single test.

Massachusetts has just completed a unique two-year tryout of PARCC (Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers), an assessment developed by a consortium of states of which Massachusetts is a founding member. The commonwealth's participation allowed Massachusetts to pool its expertise with other states, share the costs of test development and realize economies of scale in test administration.

In spring 2014, approximately 81,000 Massachusetts students participated in field tests, and in spring 2015, more than 220,000 students in [more than half](#) of the state's districts took complete PARCC tests. Parents of children who took PARCC in spring 2015 will receive their child's test scores in late November or early December. The state will release accountability determinations for schools and districts in December.

For more information on Massachusetts' two-year tryout of PARCC, please see <http://www.doe.mass.edu/parcc/>.

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