

SOA Plan

Section 1: Summarize your district's plan

Please write 1-2 paragraphs summarizing your 3-year SOA plan.

Manchester Essex Regional School District (MERSD) is committed to identifying, developing, and implementing the following evidence-based programs to address disparities in performance between student groups in our district, specifically our students with disabilities students:

1. Curriculum Review, Adoption and Implementation process in Mathematics (K-12)
2. Curriculum Review, Adoption and Implementation process in Secondary Literacy (6-12)
3. Training to support the teaching of all learners. (Universal Design for Learning -UDL Training & Strategy Implementation and IEP Improvement Project)
4. Academic MTSS Program development and expansion

All expenditures within our plan have to be fiscally supported within the operating budget due to no additional external funding provided to support these identified SOA goals which are aligned with and in support of our broader District Strategic Plan as well as district and school improvement plans.

These investments are as follows: \$153,000 in high quality curriculum review and adoption processes, \$33,610 to support high leverage teaching practices, and \$1,300,500 in effective student systems. The total investment from the MERSD Operating Budget to support evidence-based strategies over the next three years will total **\$1,487,100**

Section 2: Analyze Your Data and Select Student Groups for Focused Support

In conducting your data analysis, where did you observe the most significant disparities in student learning experiences and outcomes? On which measures and for which student groups?

MERSD is a regional district made up of the coastal towns of Essex and Manchester-by-the-Sea. Our district includes 4 schools with a preK-12 enrollment of 1,200 students. Our district population is 29.3% high needs, which has increased significantly over the last ten years. Our district population currently includes 13.4% low-income, 19% students with disabilities, and 3% Multilingual Learners. Based on our district's data trends, we have the opportunity to improve achievement for all students while targeting the needs of specific levels and demographic groups.

We find a significant area of disparity in our district data in comparing our aggregate student results vs. the demographic group of students with disabilities. We find this consistent across data sets including MCAS and internal district diagnostic assessments. Data from the 10th grade 2023 MCAS show 77% of all students meeting/exceeding in ELA, whereas only 18% of students with disabilities scored

meeting/exceeding. Similarly, on the 2023 Math MCAS, 70% of all students received meeting/exceeding, whereas 18% of students with disabilities scored meeting/exceeding.

During the same year, the ELA MCAS results for grades 3-8 had 60% of all students meeting/exceeding, with 25% of students with disabilities meeting/exceeding. For the 2023 Math MCAS, 57% of all students scored meeting/exceeding, 21% of students with disabilities scored meeting/exceeding.

What does your deeper analysis (including the triangulation of multiple types of data) suggest are the best ways to address these disparities across student groups?

Our analysis has indicated a need in the areas of Mathematics and Literacy. Our goals focus on the three key components of instruction: Students (MTSS), Teachers (Professional Development) and Content (Curriculum Reviews.) Specifically, we will focus on our inclusive instructional practices within the general education classroom setting and just-in-time intervention support, and our curriculum materials. We believe that targeting these areas will help address this disparity.

1. Complete a Curriculum Review process in mathematics and secondary literacy to identify current curriculum practices and consider acquiring high quality curriculum materials as appropriate.
2. Provide quality professional development to support inclusive practices, with specific focus on Universal Design for Learning (UDL) and to support the IEP Improvement Project.
3. Launch MTSS structure at middle school level with the goal of decreasing academic gaps and providing effective support just-in-time and ongoing data analysis and instructional adjustments.

Based on your identification of the greatest disparities in outcomes, which student groups will require focused support for rapid improvement as you implement your evidence-based programs over the next three years?

- Students with Disabilities

Section 3: Set Ambitious Three-Year Targets for Improving Student Achievement

Confirm that your district will use DESE's three-year targets for increasing performance for the "Lowest Performing Students" group in ELA and math.

Yes. We will adopt the three-year improvement targets established by DESE for the "Lowest Performing Students" group as our district's SOA plan improvement targets.

Section 4: Engage Families/Caregivers and other Stakeholders

Describe the approaches your district uses to regularly engage with families/caregivers. In your response, please be sure to address what steps you will be taking to meaningfully engage with families/caregivers of student groups you are targeting for accelerated improvement as this plan is implemented.

Manchester Essex Schools strongly value the partnership between our schools and families. We work hard to engage with families at the individual student level, as well as building and system levels. Family collaboration efforts include:

- Engagement with Parent/Family Teacher organizations
- School Councils - including partnerships with families and community members
- School Committee meetings and subcommittee meetings
- Family/Community members on hiring committees
- Family/Community input into creation of district strategic plan
- Community connected committees, including: Wellness Committee, school building committees, Arts Council, and more
- Family Education series: opportunities to engage community with ongoing school initiatives
- Family Conferences: school days dedicated to time for families in K-8 to meet and collaborate with educators
- Special Education targeted support and family training

How do you plan to measure increased family engagement with parents/caregivers of students in targeted groups in your district over the next three years?

As a district we will identify our family engagement opportunities and continually monitor and evaluate parent/caregiver participation. These measures may include:

- Documentation of attendance rates at family conferences
- Measures of community participation during district events
- Feedback rates on surveys
- Notes and artifacts from family engagement structures (PTOs, School Councils, School Committee, etc.)

Describe the ways in which you engaged different stakeholder groups in the development of your three-year SOA Plan. How have you integrated the perspectives of those groups into the three-year plan? How will you continue to engage stakeholders throughout the implementation of your plan?

Stakeholder input was included in this SOA plan through integration of input from the community from the following sources:

- Input from priority topics identified by school councils (through SIP goal development)
- School Committee: Open community questions, sessions, and input

- Site-based feedback surveys

Confirm you engaged with the following stakeholder groups in the development of this plan: parents/caregivers, special education and English learner parent advisory councils, school improvement councils, and educators in the school district.

Yes

Confirm that your school committee voted to approve this plan and provide the date of the vote.

Our School Committee will have the opportunity to vote on this plan on April 2.

Section 5: Select Evidence Based Programs to Address Disparities in Outcomes

Select the Focus Area that your district will prioritize over the next three years to address the academic disparities identified in your data analysis.

FOCUS AREA 2.1 Select and skillfully implement high-quality and engaging instructional materials that support culturally and linguistically sustaining practices and foster deeper learning

Which EBPs will your district implement within this Focus Area?

EBP 2.1A Inclusive Curriculum Adoption Process

Provide a short description of what your district has in place now related to this EBP and what you anticipate will be in place by the conclusion of the plan's implementation (by June 2027).

Our district will implement both the focus areas of curriculum adoption and curriculum implementation by June 2027. We will engage with DESE's IMplement MA process in the areas of Mathematics and Secondary Literacy. The work of engaging in a curricular landscape analysis, leading to curriculum selection and adoption will begin in the 2025-2026 school year.

This work was scheduled to occur within our Curriculum Review Process that identifies areas that need review and evaluation of alignment. The high school level (grades 9-12) completed a review as part of NEASC accreditation. Literacy at the middle school level (grades 6-8) were originally included in literacy review work back in 2020, but the need and attention required at the elementary level took priority. Mathematics has not undergone a district-wide curriculum review in more than 10 years. Our mathematics curriculum at the elementary and middle school levels do not meet High Quality measures on EdReports or

Curate. The middle school literacy curriculum is homegrown. The High School math and literacy curriculum are homegrown.

We adopted a high quality curriculum resource, "Wonders 2020" for grades K-5 in the 2020-21 school year, as was identified in our previous SOA plan.

Which schools will be impacted by these efforts (answer can be district-wide)?

We expect a district-wide impact.

What is the anticipated amount of funding that will be allocated to this EBP over the next three years (FY25 + FY26 + FY27), across all funding sources? Total should be cumulative.

Anticipated Funding: \$153,000

Describe the anticipated allocation of funds to this EBP in more detail.

Stipends for teachers on Curriculum Review Team - \$1,500 per curriculum review (x2)

Curriculum Adoption: \$150,000

Which budget foundation categories (G.L. c. 70) will be included in this anticipated annual allocation?

Classroom & Specialist Teachers, Instruction Leadership, Instructional Materials, Equip, and Tech.

What metrics will your district use to monitor progress on this EBP? Please keep in mind that you will be asked to report on progress against these metrics in your annual update to DESE starting next year.

We will monitor the curriculum adoption and implementation process through public presentations to our school community. This step will include communication through district newsletters, presentations to MERSD School Committee, and communication with staff through Curriculum Leadership Structures. Once implemented, we will monitor progress through administrative learning walkthroughs with targeted indicators of implementation.

Select the Focus Area that your district will prioritize over the next three years to address the academic disparities identified in your data analysis.

FOCUS AREA 2.2 Use the MTSS process to implement academic supports and interventions that provide all students, particularly students with disabilities and multilingual learners, equitable access to deeper learning.

Which EBPs will your district implement within this Focus Area?

2.2B High Leverage Practices for Students with Disabilities

Provide a short description of what your district has in place now related to this EBP and what you anticipate will be in place by the conclusion of the plan's implementation (by June 2027).

During the 2023-24 school year, our district began staff training to launch the New IEP process. This effort will be expanded throughout the spring and into next year as staff, administration and our community have the opportunity to engage in learning sessions.

During the spring of 2024, MERSD plans to provide training for administrators to focus on the supervision and evaluation of best teaching practices for all learners. This training will support the ongoing efforts of implementing effective practices through evaluation and feedback cycles at the building level.

During the 2023-2024 school year, we held an introduction to UDL course in partnership with the CAST organization. For some this was a new learning experience, and for other staff a reminder of the importance of meeting the needs of all learners through strong tier 1 instructional practices.

As a district we plan to engage in ongoing professional learning that supports the integration of UDL practices through multiple professional learning opportunities. This work will continue with the external partnership with UDL training through CAST for FY25 and FY26. The goal is to increase expertise within the district in order to build ongoing professional learning embedded in our practices for all staff.

This work aligns with our district strategic plan and district improvement plans. While we have to fund these practices within our operating budget, we will work to continue to support our teachers in growing effective and inclusive instructional practices to meet the needs of all learners.

Which schools will be impacted by these efforts (answer can be district-wide)?

This impact will be district-wide.

What is the anticipated amount of funding that will be allocated to this EBP over the next three years (FY25 + FY26 + FY27), across all funding sources? Total should be cumulative.

Anticipated Funding: \$33,610

Describe the anticipated allocation of funds to this EBP in more detail.

New IEP implementation process: \$13,610

UDL Professional Development: \$20,000

Which budget foundation categories (G.L. c. 70) will be included in this anticipated annual allocation?

Professional Development

What metrics will your district use to monitor progress on this EBP? Please keep in mind that you will be asked to report on progress against these metrics in your annual update to DESE starting next year.

- Decrease in performance gap between Students with Disabilities and All Student populations on Math and Literacy MCAS

Select the Focus Area that your district will prioritize over the next three years to address the academic disparities identified in your data analysis.

FOCUS AREA 1.2 Implement a multi-tiered system of supports (MTSS) that helps all students progress both academically and in their social, emotional, and behavioral development

Which EBPs will your district implement within this Focus Area?

EBP 1.2A Effective Student Support System

Provide a short description of what your district has in place now related to this EBP and what you anticipate will be in place by the conclusion of the plan's implementation (by June 2027).

MERSD is in year 2 of developing MTSS structures in Literacy and Mathematics in grades K-5 in a consistent and coherent way across our elementary schools. This work is ongoing and will continue to be revised and improved using the DESE's MTSS blueprint and technical guidance to strengthen and align our program. The staffing for this program will continue into the FY25 school year and beyond.

Our next step in implementing the MTSS system in MERSD is expanding the academic MTSS program into the middle school (grades 6-8) with coherence and developmentally appropriate supports and data review cycles. This shift requires an investment in staffing to provide targeted intervention support for middle school learners. Our goal is to increase academic intervention staffing at the middle school starting in FY25 while building a coherent system that includes data-driven practices and evidence-based instructional strategies.

Additionally, in order to implement academic supports and interventions that provide all students with effective learning environments, our district plans to hire instructional coaches for K-5 in literacy and mathematics. Pending approval of our district operating budget for FY25, we expect these roles to provide embedded professional learning to support the growth of our teachers in meeting the needs of all learners through tier 1 and tier 2 instruction within their classrooms and content areas.

Which schools will be impacted by these efforts (answer can be district-wide)?

The impacts will be K-8. (Elementary and Middle)

What is the anticipated amount of funding that will be allocated to this EBP over the next three years (FY25 + FY26 + FY27), across all funding sources? Total should be cumulative.

Anticipated Funding: \$1,300,500

Describe the anticipated allocation of funds to this EBP in more detail.

Elementary MTSS Interventionist Team: (4.5 staff members for 3 years): \$1,147,500

Middle School New MTSS Interventionist Teaching Assistant (3 years): \$102,000

K-5 Math & Literacy Instructional Coaches (Partial cost, 3 years): \$51,000

Which budget foundation categories (G.L. c. 70) will be included in this anticipated annual allocation?

Instruction Leadership, Classroom & Specialist Teachers, Other Teaching Services

What metrics will your district use to monitor progress on this EBP? Please keep in mind that you will be asked to report on progress against these metrics in your annual update to DESE starting next year.

- Accelerated growth for students receiving targeted tiered support utilizing iReady diagnostic measures in area of provided support (beyond typical growth expected)
- Decrease in numbers of students significantly below grade level on iReady diagnostic screening assessment