



## Acton-Boxborough Regional School District

15 Charter Road Acton, MA 01720  
978-264-4700  
[www.abschools.org](http://www.abschools.org)

Peter J. Light  
Superintendent of Schools

---

To: Acton-Boxborough Regional School Committee  
From: Peter Light, Superintendent of Schools  
Date: May 12, 2021  
Re: *Superintendent's End of Year Goals Update*

In December of this year, I wrote to you *"It is important to reiterate that this is an extraordinary year for our students, our teachers, our leaders and our district as COVID-19 has impacted every aspect of our operations, teaching, and learning. With this in mind, it was important to me to set realistic and reasonable goals, with the full knowledge that often a leader's goals trickle through the organization. It was important that these goals be meaningful, but simultaneously recognize that 90-95% of our leadership and staff time this year is being spent on responding to issues surrounding the pandemic....I believe that given the circumstances surrounding the pandemic, these goals are ambitious. It is my hope that our work to this end moves our district forward."*

As I look back on these words, I feel as though they were a bit naive in underestimating the volume of disruption and change that occurred between December and May of this year. Ongoing management of COVID-19 cases, evolving safety protocols, changes to DESE requirements around structured learning time, and efforts to bring all of our students back to full in-person learning certainly occupied most if not nearly all of our leadership team's time and energy. It feels premature to "look back" on the 2020-21 school year, but I look back with much gratitude for the commitment of our students, families, educators, staff and leaders for making this a productive year for our students under unprecedented circumstances.

We didn't accomplish all of what we hoped to achieve as outlined in our goals, but we ended the 2020-21 school year with all of our in-person students back to school full time, and having successfully developed a wonderful and engaging remote program that served nearly 1200 students in grades K-12 this year. Our schools remained open for all 170 days, we were able to keep our students learning and attending school, and by most accounts, have had a successful, if imperfect, year.

Attached, you will find the goals, actions and year-end updates for your review and consideration in drafting my final evaluation for the 2020-21 school year.

*To develop engaged, well-balanced learners through collaborative, caring relationships.*



# Superintendent's Goals 2020-21

## Student Learning Goal:

*In order to improve cognitive, behavioral and emotional engagement in learning, and in recognition of the extraordinary circumstances surrounding pandemic schooling, we will:*

- ❑ **(1.5) support educators and families to implement strategies to increase student engagement through effective synchronous and asynchronous instructional practices.**

### Selected Evidence:

- [Summer 2020 Staff PL](#)
- [Modified Educator Evaluation Process](#)
- [Remote Learning Family Guides](#) and [Website](#)
- [Hybrid and Remote Learning Support and Resources for Digital Tools: designed for ABRSD Students and Families](#)

<b>Action Step</b>	<b>Evidence of completion</b>	<b>End of Year Update</b>
<i>Provide professional learning opportunities for educators and leaders specific to teaching and learning in the remote environment</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <i>Educator participation in professional learning opportunities offered throughout the year</i></li> <li>● <i>Evidence of strategies utilized in remote and hybrid classrooms</i></li> <li>● <i>Evidence of digital tools utilized in the district.</i></li> </ul>	<p>This action item was complete to the extent feasible during a pandemic year. The district offered a variety of required and optional professional learning opportunities over the course of the year to support educators in adjusting to the remote and hybrid learning environments. All staff participated in a variety of workshops as we began the school year focused on teaching and learning in the remote environment. Additionally, the district offered optional workshops/professional learning that included:</p>

*To develop engaged, well-balanced learners through collaborative, caring relationships.*

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● August 2020 Summer Tech Camp</li> <li>● Harvard Grad School Course in developing strategies for online teaching and learning</li> </ul> <p>The district also had all leaders participate in professional learning led by Doug Fischer, author of the Distance Learning Playbook specific to teaching and learning in an online setting. Educators were also invited to participate in this offering and a second session was provided based on demand.</p>
<i>Align educator evaluation practices with the priorities of pandemic schooling, including a focus on goal setting and focus indicators of the educator evaluation rubric</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <i>Modifications to the goal setting process</i></li> <li>● <i>Identified focus indicators and provided professional learning for evaluators on specific indicators.</i></li> </ul>	<p>This action item was completed. The district modified the educator evaluation process during the pandemic. Modifications focused on goal setting specific to the nature of schooling this year and narrowing/focus on critical standards and indicators that had particular significance to learning during the pandemic.</p>
<i>Provide a variety of supports for families to learn skills and strategies to support students working in remote and hybrid settings.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <i>Written documents, videos, live webinars and communications with families</i></li> </ul>	<p>This action item was completed to the extent feasible during a pandemic year. District curriculum staff developed resource guides and a website specific to supporting families during hybrid and remote learning that included video tutorials and a variety of resources for families to support their children.</p>
<i>Provide ongoing materials, support, and coaching for educators designed to increase student engagement in remote and hybrid learning environments</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <i>Curriculum documents, unit and lesson plans, and other resources provided to educators</i></li> </ul>	<p>Curriculum coordinators/coaches provided a variety of resources including lesson and unit plans and curriculum maps. Additionally, coaches continued to engage educators in coaching cycles that included modeling, co-teaching and looking at data.</p>
<i>Support Principals in looking at student work educator practice as a way of improving engagement strategies in remote and hybrid learning environments</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <i>Meetings with Principals individuals and in small groups to look at student work and visit classrooms</i></li> </ul>	<p>There was insufficient time to fully implement this action step and we were unable to meet in groups to examine student work and visit classrooms to a sufficient degree. As noted above, the district and school leaders worked to modify educator evaluation practices during the pandemic and participated in professional learning focused on engagement and assessment strategies for remote and hybrid learning.</p>

*To develop engaged, well-balanced learners through collaborative, caring relationships.*

*To develop engaged, well-balanced learners through collaborative, caring relationships.*

WELLNESS • EQUITY • ENGAGEMENT

## Professional Practice Goal:

In order to ensure successful leadership transitions across the district and continue to grow a high-functioning leadership team, we will:

- ❑ **Plan for and support successful leadership transitions across the district including in special education and at the high school.**

### Selected Evidence:

<b>Action Step</b>	<b>Evidence of completion</b>	<b>End of Year Update</b>
<i>Implement recruitment strategies to develop strong candidate pools for vacancies</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <i>Engage NESDEC to assist in advertising and recruiting a candidate pool for leadership positions as appropriate</i></li> <li>● <i>Outreach and publicizing of positions through professional organizations and contacts to further advertise position</i></li> </ul>	This action item was complete and we should continue to expand strategies to recruit a diverse candidate pool. The district engaged NESDEC to advertise and recruit candidates for vacancies for high school principal and special education director. Hiring teams also expanded outreach through a variety of professional organizations, through LinkedIn, and through universities. While we were successful in hiring highly skilled and experienced leaders for our positions, we want to continue to expand strategies to recruit candidates of color for leadership positions within our schools.
<i>Form hiring committees that include broad representation of stakeholders that reflect the diversity of the district</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <i>Evidence of representation on hiring teams for certified educators</i></li> </ul>	This action was completed for all leadership positions and is in progress for teaching positions as hiring is ongoing. Hiring teams for leadership positions included broad stakeholder representation of students, families and educators across the district, including those from historically marginalized groups.
<i>Work with hiring committees to develop candidate profiles that align with the district's mission, vision and values</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <i>Hiring committees will identify key skills and attributes of successful candidates that align with the mission, vision and values of the district</i></li> <li>● <i>Hiring committee members will complete</i></li> </ul>	This action was completed for all leadership positions and is in progress for teaching positions as hiring is ongoing. Hiring teams met for several sessions prior to meeting candidates and completed anti-bias training and discussed profiles for

*To develop engaged, well-balanced learners through collaborative, caring relationships.*

	<i>anti-bias training specific to recruitment and interviewing</i>	successful candidates.
<i>Assist new leaders in developing robust entry plans provide</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <i>Entry plans for each new leader that include specific action the leader will take to learn about the district and our stakeholders and identity opportunities for improvement</i></li> </ul>	There is significant movement within the leadership team for 2021-22, and this action step is in progress. I am currently working with leaders who are new to the district or transitioning into new roles to develop entry and transition plans that allow them to establish relationships with stakeholders and learn about the culture and traditions of our schools during their first 3-6 months in their roles.
<i>Expand administrative retreat time and focus to ensure that the leadership team engages new members, transitions from pandemic schooling, and plans for successful reopening of schools in the fall</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <i>Expanded leadership retreat time.</i></li> <li>● <i>Agenda outlines opportunities for team building, work on development of high functioning teams, reflection and recovery from pandemic schooling and opportunities to focus on districtwide strategic initiatives</i></li> </ul>	This is currently in-progress. There will be five members of the leadership team who are either new to the district or entering new roles within the district. We are currently planning a new administrator orientation for early July. The leadership retreat has been expanded from two to three days in August. We are currently planning agendas for this work and have been working with our current team to identify topics most pertinent to the re-development of this group.

*To develop engaged, well-balanced learners through collaborative, caring relationships.*

## District Goal #1:

In order to improve strategic coherence and accountability for district improvement, we will:

- ❑ **Utilize key learning opportunities from pandemic schooling to work with the leadership team and school committee to revise and adopt the multi-year district strategy and begin to align school improvement plans with district-wide strategic objectives.**

### Selected Evidence:

- [Revised Draft District Strategy](#)
- [School Improvement Plan Template](#)
- [School Improvement Plan Revised Timeline](#)

<b>Action Step</b>	<b>Evidence of completion</b>	<b>End of Year Update</b>
<i>Engage stakeholders to provide feedback about experiences during pandemic schooling</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <i>Survey students, families and educators to solicit feedback</i></li> </ul>	Some progress was made on this action step. The district conducted numerous surveys through the year as conditions during the pandemic evolved. Additionally, we are currently launching a survey jointly created with our DEI Family Advisory group to solicit feedback about our curriculum in general. The high school conducted and implemented a survey to solicit feedback about experiences in schooling this year and made mid-year adjustments to practices, and the junior high school recently completed a student survey to solicit feedback about the impact of various digital tools.
<i>Work with the leadership team and school committee to review stakeholder feedback to identify opportunities for strategic growth and incorporate these into the</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <i>Leadership meeting agendas that outline time to review stakeholder feedback and identify opportunities</i></li> <li>● <i>Leadership team feedback and identified opportunities</i></li> </ul>	This action step is completed. We held a workshop with the school committee on May 6 to solicit additional feedback on the district strategy. This feedback has been incorporated and discussed with the leadership team. The final district strategy is scheduled to be

*To develop engaged, well-balanced learners through collaborative, caring relationships.*

<i>district strategy</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <i>School committee workshop scheduled and held to review feedback and provide input into opportunities for strategic growth</i></li> </ul>	voted by the school committee on May 20, 2021.
<i>Develop action plans for each strategic initiative in the District strategy that articulates actions to be taken, approximate timelines, intended outcomes and measurements of impact.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <i>Development of action plans for strategic initiatives</i></li> <li>● <i>Presentation of action plans to School Committee for adoption</i></li> </ul>	This action step was not started and is deferred until the 2021-22 school year as the overarching district strategy has not yet been adopted.
<i>Work with the school committee to adopt the district strategy</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <i>School Committee presentation</i></li> <li>● <i>School Committee adoption of the district strategy</i></li> </ul>	The final draft of the district strategy is scheduled to be voted by the school committee on May 20, 2021
<i>Work with Principals and district leaders to align annual school and district improvement plans and goals with the strategic objectives and initiatives in the district strategy.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <i>School improvement plans for 2021-22 will incorporate/align with at least two district initiatives in addition to school-wide goals</i></li> </ul>	This action step is substantially completed, but progress will continue into early fall when school improvement plans are finalized. We have developed a template for school improvement plans that will provide consistency across all schools in the district. The template requires schools to have goals that are aligned with the district and allows for goals that are unique to each school community. Additionally, we are amending procedures for submission of school improvement plans this year to allow Principals additional time to work with school councils using the new template and expectations for alignment with district initiatives.

*To develop engaged, well-balanced learners through collaborative, caring relationships.*

## District Goal #2:

In order to ensure that all students, staff, and families feel welcomed, included and see cultural differences as an asset, we will:

- ❑ (2.1) Engage stakeholders to better understand the diverse student and family experiences in our District related to cultural beliefs, race and racism, socioeconomic status, gender and sexual identity, disability, language, and more in order to create more equitable and inclusive schools
- ❑ (2.2) Increase the number of certified staff members in the district who are Black, Latinx, and Asian
- ❑ (2.3) Ensure that all staff engage in ongoing anti-bias and anti-racist professional learning.

### Selected Evidence:

- [Summer 2020 Staff PL](#)
- [Policy GBAA - COMMITMENT TO AN INCLUSIVE AND REPRESENTATIVE EDUCATOR WORKFORCE](#)

<b>Action Step</b>	<b>Evidence of completion</b>	<b>End of Year Update</b>
<p><i>Develop and support the DEI Family Advisory Committee, faculty working groups, and student and educator affinity groups in providing feedback to the district about ways to improve inclusive practices</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <i>Meeting agendas, reports and recommendations from the various groups</i></li> </ul>	<p>This action item is ongoing and in process. The district has supported a variety of groups focused on DEI efforts this year including the DEI family advisory, a high school DEI parent group, ECARES high school educator group, a BIPOC educator affinity group, and several student groups including AB Students for Equity and Justice (ABSEJ) and the ADL A World of Difference Peer Leaders as well as several student unions including a Black student union, Dear Asian Youth and a newly formed AB Jewish student union. Our district and building leaders have continued to work this year to meet with these organizations and use feedback to shape policies and practices. Selected examples of work from these groups include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● DEI Family Advisory is scheduled to present</li> </ul>

*To develop engaged, well-balanced learners through collaborative, caring relationships.*

		<p>conclusions and recommendations from its four working groups to the school committee on June 10.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The BIPOC Affinity group has met with the Superintendent and Deputy Superintendent to discuss developing a district protocol for the recruitment, hiring, induction, mentoring and retention of educators of color.</li> </ul>
<p><i>Develop a DEI leadership team that brings together members of the various groups across the district and schools that can serve to strategically coordinate and focus the work these groups in order to maximize impact</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Membership roster, meeting notes from initial meetings for at least two meetings in Spring 2021</i></li> </ul>	<p>This action item is in process. The Assistant Superintendent for DEI initiated a PK-12 educator advisory team, but due to the pandemic, did not have an opportunity to create a leadership team that brings together members of the various groups to strategically coordinate the focus of our work. The remainder of this action item is deferred until the 2021-22 school year.</p>
<p><i>Ensure representative hiring teams that include people people of diverse backgrounds, experiences and beliefs</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Hiring committee composition from sample committees</i></li> </ul>	<p>We have made substantial progress on this action item. All leadership hiring committees included stakeholders that represented the diversity of our students and community including educators, students and families of color, families of students with disabilities, and members who represented a broad range of experiences within our district.</p>
<p><i>Increase the number of certified staff members in the district who are Black, Latinx, and Asian.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Creation of ABRSC Policy GBAA: Inclusive and Representative Workforce Policy and accompanying procedure</i></li> <li>• <i>Engage the DEI Family Advisory Hiring Practices subcommittee to advise the District in additional recruiting strategies and best practices</i></li> <li>• <i>Outreach to Historically Black Colleges and Universities, and those universities that have diverse education student demographics.</i></li> <li>• <i>Hiring committees will prioritize screening of applicants of color</i></li> </ul>	<p>We have made substantial progress on this action item. The school committee and administration partnered to develop and adopt policy GBAA and the accompanying procedures. Additionally, the district worked with a subcommittee of the DEI family advisory to identify additional opportunities to recruit and hire a more diverse workforce and these recommendations will be presented to the school committee on June 10. The district continues to prioritize screening candidates of color for vacancies. The Assistant Superintendent for DEI and the Deputy Superintendent partnered to utilize a training resource to help hiring teams identify and reduce bias in hiring processes. While hiring for the</p>

*To develop engaged, well-balanced learners through collaborative, caring relationships.*

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <i>Create training resource for hiring teams around anti-bias hiring practices</i></li> <li>● <i>10% of newly hired certified staff will be Black, Latinx or Asian.</i></li> </ul>	2021-22 school year is ongoing, 3 of 6 (50%) positions that have been filled or have pending finalists are candidates of color.
<i>Ensure that all staff engage in ongoing anti-bias and anti-racist professional learning</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <i>District-wide professional learning opportunities for staff</i></li> <li>● <i>Offer two virtual SEED training programs in Spring '21</i></li> <li>● <i>School-based professional learning and discussions</i></li> </ul>	The district required all staff to participate in workshops around anti-bias efforts at the classroom level and to support engaging in brave conversations around race in the classroom. Additionally the district offered two SEED seminars and a professional learning series on understanding how to be a culturally proficient educator.

*To develop engaged, well-balanced learners through collaborative, caring relationships.*

## District Goal #3:

In order to ensure that every student has access to equitable opportunities and outcomes, regardless of gender, socioeconomic status, race, disability, gender identity or other differentiating characteristics, we will:

- ☐ **3.3 Ensure effective evidence-based screening, instruction, and assessment in literacy and mathematics in all general education classrooms PK-12.**

### Selected Evidence

- [iReady 2020-2021 Survey](#)
- [Illustrative Mathematics 2020-2021 Survey](#)
- [K-6 Structured Literacy School Committee Presentation](#)

<b>Action Step</b>	<b>Evidence of completion</b>	<b>End of Year Update</b>
<i>Implement assessment tool twice during the 2020-21 school year</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Results of two student assessment cycles</i></li> <li>• <i>Present overview of assessment tool at school committee meeting</i></li> </ul>	This action step is complete. The district has completed two assessment cycles using the iReady tool in March and May. We shared initial data with the school committee from our fall assessment but did not have an opportunity to provide the committee with a complete overview of the assessment tool.
<i>Provide training and professional learning for leaders and staff around implementation and data analysis</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Training opportunities for staff and leaders</i></li> <li>• <i>Review of assessment results with grade-level teams</i></li> </ul>	This action step was completed, but additional training in the use of the tool will be necessary. Leaders and teachers were trained in the use of the iReady assessment tool early this year prior to the first assessment cycle. As we begin to expand our focus on MTSS next year and beyond, we will need to provide additional training in the use of iReady to maximize its usefulness.

*To develop engaged, well-balanced learners through collaborative, caring relationships.*

<p><i>Solicit feedback from staff and leaders about assessment tool to inform possible adoption of tool</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <i>Survey staff and leaders</i></li> <li>● <i>Possible adoption</i></li> </ul>	<p>This action step is currently in progress. We have just completed the second assessment cycle and have developed a survey that will be sent to teachers and leaders. We intend to use this tool again next year and use the feedback we receive this spring to inform continued implementation.</p>
<p><i>Share consistent expectations and provide professional learning to support universal instructional strategies within K-6 general education ELA and mathematics classrooms</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <i>Guidance and professional learning for educators and leaders in early literacy practices</i></li> <li>● <i>Completion of Illustrative Math pilot, gather feedback from educators, and decide on full implementation for FY22</i></li> </ul>	<p>This action step is completed, and will continue to be in-progress for the next several years.</p>

*To develop engaged, well-balanced learners through collaborative, caring relationships.*

# DRAFT DISTRICT STRATEGY: SEPTEMBER 2020 VERSION

Strategic Objective	Strategic Initiative
<p><b>Engaged Learning</b></p> <p>Improve cognitive, behavioral and emotional engagement in learning by increasing the variety and relevance of learning experiences.</p>	<p>1.1 Involve school and community stakeholders to develop a unified vision of the knowledge, skills, and habits of mind to prepare all students for life after high school.</p> <p>1.2 Align instructional programs, courses, and curricula with the District’s PK-12 unified vision in order to increase and expand the variety and relevance of learning experiences.</p> <p>1.3 Expand learning opportunities for all students in the areas of Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Mathematics (STEAM) particularly for low-income, Latinx and Black and Special Education students as well as English Learners.</p> <p>1.4 Align instructional, assessment, grading, and course leveling practices with the District’s unified vision in order to promote increased cognitive, behavioral, and emotional engagement for students.</p> <p><b>1.5 Support educators in implementing strategies to increase student engagement through effective synchronous and asynchronous instructional practices.</b></p>
<p><b>Inclusive Practices</b></p> <p>Ensure that all students, staff, and families feel welcomed, included and see cultural differences as an asset by strengthening school culture and climate and intentionally implementing anti-bias and anti-racist instructional practices and materials.</p>	<p><b>2.1 Engage stakeholders to better understand the diverse student and family experiences in our District related to cultural beliefs, race and racism, socioeconomic status, gender and sexual identity, disability, language, and more in order to create more equitable and inclusive schools</b></p> <p><b>2.2 Increase the number of certified staff members in the district who are Black, Latinx, and Asian.</b></p> <p><b>2.3 Ensure that all staff engage in ongoing anti-bias and anti-racist professional learning.</b></p> <p>2.4 Strengthen school culture and climate by strengthening relationships between students and adults within the schools, with an emphasis on low-income, Latinx, Black, and Special Education students as well as English Learners.</p> <p>2.5 Ensure that all schools and classrooms use instructional practices and materials that reflect and are responsive to the diversity of our students and families</p> <p>2.6 Strengthen restorative justice practices and ensure all students, particularly students who are Latinx, Black, with low socioeconomic status, students with IEPs, and multilingual learners are treated fairly and equitably.</p>
<p><b>Equitable Opportunities and Outcomes</b></p> <p>Ensure that every student has access to equitable opportunities and outcomes, regardless of gender, socioeconomic status, race, disability, gender identity or other differentiating characteristics.</p>	<p>3.1 Establish an environment that challenges all students to achieve at high levels and be engaged in their learning by increasing access and opportunities for low-income, Latinx, Black, and Special Education students as well as English Learners.</p> <p>3.2 Identify and implement practices that promote more equitable representation of students in advanced coursework including low-income, Latinx, Black, and Special Education students as well as English Learners.</p> <p><b>3.3 Ensure effective evidence-based screening, instruction, and assessment in literacy and mathematics in all general education classrooms PK-12.</b></p> <p>3.4 Ensure that school schedules provide students opportunities to access core instruction and supplemental support in the general education setting.</p> <p><b>3.5 Implement the Child Study and Student Support Process consistently across settings to eliminate variation in practices, data usage, and roles and responsibilities of staffing supporting students academic, social, emotional and behavioral needs.</b></p> <p>3.6 Develop a districtwide PK-12 continuum of support for students in literacy and mathematics that aligns the roles and responsibilities of all educators in providing services for students.</p>
<p><b>Social-emotional Learning (SEL)</b></p>	<p>4.1 Identify core social-emotional competencies that students will develop.</p> <p>4.2 Embed and integrate social-emotional instruction in all education settings.</p>

*To develop engaged, well-balanced learners through collaborative, caring relationships.*

<p>Improve social-emotional development through an aligned continuum of skills, instruction, and support for students PK-12.</p>	<p>4.3 Align and implement a PK-12 continuum of social-emotional and behavioral support for all students particularly for students facing adversity, trauma and/or special education needs.</p>
	<p>4.4 Use Child Study and Student Support Team Process to support consistent social, emotional and behavioral intervention practices, data usage, and roles and responsibilities of staff</p>

*To develop engaged, well-balanced learners through collaborative, caring relationships.*