



NEW BEDFORD PUBLIC SCHOOLS

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District Announces Accountability Results and Plans for Recovery

Tackling learning loss & achievement gaps are the focus of district plans

The Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) released the 2022–2023 statewide accountability results that include achievement and growth scores from both ACCESS and MCAS testing. The accountability results also measure progress in the areas of attendance, graduation and dropout rates, and advanced coursework.

For New Bedford Public Schools, accountability measures set a new baseline compared to 2019, the last time a full accountability report was issued. District results summarize scores seen across New Bedford schools with some schools landing above the state average and some below.

Interim Superintendent Andrew O'Leary noted, "MCAS offers a consistent measure of student achievement and compared to 2019 most of our schools have either maintained or seen a decreased number of students meeting or exceeding expectations. This very clearly demands a focused plan for recovery. We've got work to do."

When compared to the pre-pandemic rate of English Language Arts (ELA) achievement for students in Grades 3-8, the percentage of students meeting or exceeding grade-level expectations has dropped from 34 to 24 percent.

Mathematics achievement has experienced a similar 10 percent drop, from 32 to 22 percent, for students taking the MCAS in Grades 3-8.

However, 10th Grade ELA performance has improved slightly during that same period, from 24 to 25 percent of students meeting or exceeding grade-level expectations. High school mathematics is down from 20 to 16 percent.

NBPS is building goals and targets starting from these accountability results, recognizing that learning loss and achievement gaps must be overcome. Specific district actions underway this year include:

- A dedicated Academic Achievement Subcommittee to monitor academic progress
- Strategic professional development for all staff in culturally and linguistically sustaining teaching practices
- Prioritization of specific student groups who may need more support to meet and exceed grade-level standards
- Internal accountability systems overseen by a District Instructional Leadership Team
- Progress monitoring in partnership with MADESE's Office of the Statewide System of Support
- Strategic support and monitoring of individual School Improvement Plans.

Although New Bedford Public Schools exceeded DESE's targets set for improvement of chronic absenteeism, the DESE targets still represent a rate of chronic absenteeism that will make recovery from learning loss difficult to improve. "We need students in school every day for the 180 days of the school year. Even when a child has perfect attendance, they are in school less days than they are out of school during the 365 days of the year," urges Interim Deputy Superintendent, Darcie Aungst. "Attendance matters." "Our students are amazing and they can achieve at grade-level and beyond and good attendance is the first step in doing so."

Families will be receiving their child's individual state report cards in October and the Interim Deputy Superintendent, Darcie Aungst encourages families to partner with their child's teacher and schools to ensure that all New Bedford students achieve at grade-level and beyond.

MCAS, as well as all other accountability measures for NBPS and for all of Massachusetts school districts, are published on the [DESE website](#).

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