

End-of-Cycle Summative Evaluation Report: Superintendent



Superintendent:	Dr. Sheldon Berman		
Evaluator:	Andover School Committee Composite Evaluation	approved by the School Committee with a 5-0 vote	July 30, 2020
	Name	Signature	Date

Step 1: Assess Progress Toward Goals (*Reference performance goals; check one for each set of goal[s].*)

Professional Practice Goal(s) (FY20 goal 1)	<input type="checkbox"/> Did Not Meet	<input type="checkbox"/> Some Progress	<input type="checkbox"/> Significant Progress	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Met	<input type="checkbox"/> Exceeded
Student Learning Goal(s) (FY20 goal 3 and goal 4)	<input type="checkbox"/> Did Not Meet	<input type="checkbox"/> Some Progress	<input type="checkbox"/> Significant Progress	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Met	<input type="checkbox"/> Exceeded
District Improvement Goal(s) (FY20 goal 2, goal 5, goal 6 and goal 7)	<input type="checkbox"/> Did Not Meet	<input type="checkbox"/> Some Progress	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Significant Progress	<input type="checkbox"/> Met	<input type="checkbox"/> Exceeded

Step 2: Assess Performance on Standards (*Reference Performance Ratings per Standard; check one box for each Standard.*)

Unsatisfactory = Performance on a standard or overall has not significantly improved following a rating of *Needs Improvement*, or performance is consistently below the requirements of a standard or overall and is considered inadequate, or both.

Needs Improvement/Developing = Performance on a standard or overall is below the requirements of a standard or overall but is not considered to be Unsatisfactory at the time. Improvement is necessary and expected.

Proficient = *Proficient practice is understood to be fully satisfactory. This is the rigorous expected level of performance.*

Exemplary = A rating of *Exemplary* indicates that practice significantly exceeds *Proficient* and could serve as a model of practice regionally or statewide.

	Unsatisfactory	Needs Improvement	Proficient	Exemplary
Standard I: Instructional Leadership (included in FY20 goal 3 and goal 4)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Standard II: Management and Operations (included in FY20 goal 2, goal 6 and goal 7)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Standard III: Family and Community Engagement (included in FY20 goal 4 and goal 5)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Standard IV: Professional Culture (included in FY20 goal 1)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

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Step 3: Rate Overall Summative Performance (*Based on Step 1 and Step 2 ratings; check one.*)

Unsatisfactory

Needs Improvement

Proficient

Exemplary

Step 4: Add Evaluator Comments

Comments and analysis are recommended for any rating but are required for an overall summative rating of *Exemplary*, *Needs Improvement* or *Unsatisfactory*.

Comments:

Dr. Berman is a talented educator and strategic leader who considers students first, emphasizes a well-rounded education and is committed to high quality instruction. His understanding of the challenges facing our students, his educational vision, his tireless work, and his strong values all combine to situate our students very well for future success.

The Superintendent and the entire district have a great deal to be proud of in this year's work, with many success stories of students and the adults who support them. Particular note must be given to the tenacity and commitment shown by district educators and leaders during the schoolhouse closure forced by the COVID-19 pandemic. To say this evaluation was prepared following the conclusion of an extraordinary school year would be an epic understatement.

Andover can be a tough community as the standards are always high and because we care deeply about students and their development as learners, creators and human beings. The district and the School Committee expect quite a lot of the Superintendent and he has been patient and resolute in his attacking each day for the benefit of Andover and of its children.

As discussed in comments under the Superintendent Performance Standards, there are areas of concerns and suggestions for improvement as the Superintendent maintains focus on the district's strategic and educational direction. For example, the Superintendent should give consideration to the noted area of operations and management, the increasing number of instances when the Superintendent and School Committee are not on the same page, delegation of day-to-day management to leaders in their areas of responsibility, additional reliance on the experience of the leadership team in implementation matters; focus on enhancing more practical communications to families; and building a district culture that values and manages all staff to a high standard.

Two significant topics addressed in the Superintendent's end-of-year report and not included in the goals set by the School Committee in the fall of 2019 are: Closure/Remote Learning and Personnel. Each is addressed below.

Closure/Remote Learning: The onset of the COVID-19 pandemic and the closure of Andover's physical schools in mid-March, with little advance notice, was a herculean task for the district's educators, administrators, support staff, students and families.

The immediate pivot to develop and implement a remote learning program was enormous, unique and challenging. Under the Superintendent's leadership, our district delivered students with educational experiences beyond DESE's guidance. The logistics, alone, of moving to an all-online learning environment were difficult but met head-on, including plans to provide students without devices and/or internet connections with both in order to enable their continued learning, extension of meals for families who most needed them, and outreach to each student on an IEP to reformulate learning plans.

The relentless work by the Superintendent's administrative team, faculty, and staff across the district (not to mention families, who bore a great deal of the remote learning weight) highlighted the best possible district-wide collaboration and creativity, with commitment to the learning and the emotional and mental wellness of our APS children, families and staff.

The remote learning program was continually improved throughout the spring, and the district has taken further inventory of ways the program should be enriched in preparation for the 2020/21 school year. Some identified areas include ongoing work with leadership of the Andover Education Association (AEA) and some individual teachers to embrace remote learning and all of the available on-line learning tools, and efforts to bring consistency in substantive (as opposed to stylistic) content delivery and time-on-learning across grade levels and academic subjects.

Overall, the Superintendent and his team worked tirelessly and accomplished an extraordinary amount in a short period of time when faced with once-in-a-century challenges.

Personnel: As noted in the Superintendent's end-of-year report, this past year was challenging in the area of personnel, and while personnel actions are not within the purview of the School Committee, the time and district resources that it consumes must be a consideration. The more aggressive and more litigious posture of the new AEA leadership absorbed considerably more time and resources than was the case in previous years. In that respect, use of district resources is a necessity beyond the Superintendent's and the district's control. However, it is fair to ask whether at least one of these conflicts could have been avoided with a stronger approach to performance management, additional follow-through of conflict resolution, a deeper understanding of the extent to which dissatisfaction among colleagues had grown.

To address a hostile work environment complaint at South, the Superintendent's response of retaining an outside investigator was appropriate and consistent with best practices. Every member of the Andover Public Schools deserves to feel safe in their workplace. The district has a responsibility to identify and correct behavior that is against district policy and professional behavior, ensuring professional, respectful, and effective working environments for all within APS. The Superintendent did a laudable job upholding this expectation for our district and community, and addressing issues once they were made abundantly clear.

Additionally, the Superintendent is to be commended for taking significant time to meet with over 50 South faculty and staff after the investigation concluded. Hearing concerns and thoughts about next steps was valuable toward “healing” the community and developing an action plan.

With limited facts available to the School Committee; multiple, disparate characterizations expressed by teachers, staff and parents; and conflation of concerns in media reports, court and DLR filings, it is difficult to gain a clear understanding of where or how problems between staff or cultural issues could have been more successfully addressed before matters hit a boiling point this year. However, the buck stops at the top, and the Superintendent needs to examine what led to a difficult environment for staff, and therefore a difficult environment for the students and community. The Superintendent is encouraged to reflect on the events, identify missed opportunities, consider how situations of discontent can be brought to more productive resolution, and take steps to prevent future school-level conflicts from growing as they did here.

Finally, there is concern that the district-wide performance system is not being applied as designed. The Superintendent should consider whether the district is doing enough in the way of staff performance management and mentorship, and whether known performance problems can be addressed more quickly and more aggressively.

Superintendent's Performance Goals

Superintendents must identify at least one student learning goal, one professional practice goal, and two to four district improvement goals. Goals should be SMART and aligned to at least one focus Indicator from the Standards for Effective Administrative Leadership.

Goals	Focus Indicator(s)	Description	Did Not Meet	Some Progress	Significant Progress	Met	Exceeded
1. Sprint Teams (Professional Practice Goal)	Standard IV: Professional Culture	<p>The superintendent will facilitate progress of the six cross-functional sprint teams and provide regular reports on their progress in order to move forward on the agile strategic plan: Literacy, Transitions, Mental and Behavioral Health, Social-Emotional Learning, Accessibility, and Progress Monitoring.</p> <p><i>Evidence/Product: Each sprint moves forward on action-specific steps identified to achieve its targets. Regular updates of the matrix will be provided to the School Committee in conjunction with verbal updates at regularly scheduled Committee meetings throughout the school year.</i></p>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. School Facility Projects (District Improvement Goal)	Standard II: Management and Operations	<p>The superintendent will work with the assistant superintendent for finance and administration and the director of facilities to make progress on the district's capital plan and large facility projects, with particular attention to supporting the work of the AHS Facility Study Committee and the West Elementary School Building Committee.</p> <p><i>Evidence/Product: Continued progress through the MSBA feasibility phase for the renovation/replacement of West Elementary, a plan for the renovation/addition of Andover High School, a capital plan for Doherty, a strategy for a pre-K facility, and a viable capital improvement plan to address the needs of the other school buildings.</i></p>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

<p>3. Literacy Curriculum (Student Learning Goal)</p>	<p>Standard I: Instructional Leadership</p>	<p>The superintendent will work with the assistant superintendent of student services and the assistant superintendent for teaching and learning to complete the implementation of a strong core literacy curriculum and interventions that address students' reading issues, including issues related to dyslexia, through: a) purchasing the remaining curricular materials and providing professional development for the second year of a three-year phase-in of a new elementary literacy program; b) enhancing the use of such diagnostic tools as DIBELS, MAP, Lexia, the Benchmark Assessment System (BAS), and early screening measures to identify the supports needed for students to be successful as well as areas for program improvement; c) continuing to expand reading interventions and programs at the middle and high school levels; and d) integrating social studies and arts into the elementary literacy program.</p> <p><i>Evidence/Product: Document the use of assessments for early identification, universal screening and progress monitoring, supported by data where appropriate; the professional development offered to both regular education and special education staff; and the program supports implemented at the middle and high school levels, with demonstrated improvement in students' reading performance, particularly for students with language-based reading issues.</i></p>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p>4. Data Analysis (Student Learning Goal)</p>	<p>Standard I: Instructional Leadership; Standard III: Family and Community Engagement</p>	<p>The superintendent will provide detailed and reliable data analyses and reports to help assess curricular strengths and implement changes in areas that require growth related to student academic performance (including with respect to literacy initiatives described in Goal #3), as well as to assess Andover's performance relative to other comparable communities.</p> <p><i>Evidence/Product: Provide analytical data reports on MCAS, MAP and other assessments that track the district's academic trends and our comparative performance among similar communities as well as providing trend data on the district's financial investments in comparison to other similar communities.</i></p>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

<p>5. Communications (District Improvement Goal)</p>	<p>Standard III: Family and Community Engagement</p>	<p>The superintendent will work with the communication director, administrators, faculty, the School Committee, and parents to enhance communication among these district stakeholders and within the community in order to keep the community informed of district initiatives, events, and achievements; enlist feedback on ways to address issues confronting the district, including from School Committee members, administrators and the public; ensure School Committee receives information and data in a timely manner, consistent with applicable School Committee policy, as needed to evaluate decisions; and, strengthen appreciation of the valuable contributions the district is making to students and the community at large.</p> <p><i>Evidence/Product: Creation and implementation of a district communications plan that addresses various stakeholder groups (including those in the community without APS students) and that builds a bridge to the broader Andover community, including a superintendent listening tour; creation and implementation of a plan with identified tasks and target dates for the update of the APS website in order to enhance usability while ensuring universal accessibility; and timely, strong and consistent communications both internally and externally from the superintendent's office.</i></p>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p>6. Budgeting (District Improvement Goal)</p>	<p>Standard II: Management and Operations</p>	<p>The superintendent will work with the assistant superintendent for finance and administration, the Superintendent's Administrative Team, the School Committee, the town manager and relevant town boards to identify budget needs as early as possible, establish priorities, implement financial reporting processes that drive confidence in school department transparency, prepare thorough and timely budget documents, communicate with Town leaders and the public regarding budget needs, examine opportunities for cost savings, and attempt to reach an early and responsible budget agreement with a particular emphasis on eliminating the fee for full-day kindergarten; and will ensure appropriate Central Office resources are deployed timely and effectively to support the superintendent's progress towards these goals.</p> <p><i>Evidence/Product: Thorough, well-documented budget that enables the district to move forward with consideration for capital needs, support for district initiatives, town funding capacity, and the elimination of tuition for full-day kindergarten; timely and complete financial analyses and other Central Office expertise necessary to support collective bargaining negotiations; deployment of appropriate Central Office resources; financial summaries to accompany financials presented at School Committee meetings; and hiring of an individual to replace the assistant superintendent for finance and administration by June 30, 2020.</i></p>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

7. School Start Times (District Improvement Goal)	Standard II: Management and Operations	<p>The superintendent will work with the assistant superintendent for teaching and learning and key stakeholders to refine potential options for later start times for secondary students and provide objective information concerning the benefits and drawbacks of various options to the School Committee to enable it to evaluate the feasibility of and receptivity to the potential options so that the School Committee can make an effective decision.</p> <p><i>Evidence/Product: A report on the feedback and proposed options for changing start times, along with an explanation of the positive and negative implications of each option and an assessment of its feasibility, effectiveness and acceptability.</i></p>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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Standards and Indicators for Effective Administrative Leadership <i>Superintendents should identify 1-2 focus Indicators per Standard aligned to their goals.</i>			
I. Instructional Leadership	II. Management & Operations	III. Family & Community Engagement	IV. Professional Culture
I-A. Curriculum I-B. Instruction I-C. Assessment I-D. Evaluation I-E. Data-Informed Decisionmaking I-F. Student Learning	II-A. Environment II-B. HR Management and Development II-C. Scheduling & Management Information Systems II-D. Law, Ethics and Policies II-E. Fiscal Systems	III-A. Engagement III-B. Sharing Responsibility III-C. Communication III-D. Family Concerns	IV-A. Commitment to High Standards IV-B. Cultural Proficiency IV-C. Communication IV-D. Continuous Learning IV-E. Shared Vision IV-F. Managing Conflict

Superintendent's Performance Rating for Standard I: Instructional Leadership



The Superintendent's FY20 goals toward Standard I: Instructional Leadership were contained in:
 Goal 3, **Literacy Curriculum**; and Goal 4, **Data Analysis**.

	U	NI	P	E
OVERALL Rating for Standard I: Instructional Leadership <input type="checkbox"/> The education leader promotes the learning and growth of all students and the success of all staff by cultivating a shared vision that makes powerful teaching and learning the central focus of schooling.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Comments and analysis (recommended for any overall rating; required for overall rating of Exemplary, Needs Improvement or Unsatisfactory):

Curriculum: Dr. Berman remains dedicated to forward-thinking, high-quality instruction, and efforts to improve district literacy curriculum continue to receive a lot of worthwhile focus, showing a commitment to the academic health of students. The approach to literacy at all grade levels and in both special education and general education has been comprehensive and thoughtful. Investment in curriculum, professional development, teacher leaders, and progress monitoring is evident in improved standardized test scores. While not the only metric by which the district should be measured, these are encouraging given the importance many parents place on them and the way they reveal opportunities for continued instructional improvement to close the achievement gap for traditionally marginalized groups.

Recent anecdotal evidence suggests that we have a great deal of work to do in the area of multicultural awareness and inclusivity. However, these events also gave the district an opportunity to describe the existing work being done to advance equitable and inclusive learning at all levels ([Anti-Racism Activism Within APS](#)) and reiterate commitments by the district to a continuation of this work.

Data Analysis: The newly added data analyst function has dual responsibilities to curriculum and finance/operations departments. Related to curriculum, work appears to be paying dividends in terms of providing meaningful information to support teachers and administrators in better addressing individual student needs. Additionally, the effort to issue and analyze multiple surveys (teachers, students, parents), this spring during school closure was helpful to evaluate remote learning plans and has fed important information to the Return to School Task Force. (Financial analysis aspects are addressed in Standard III.)

Superintendent's Performance Rating for Standard II: Management & Operations



The Superintendent's FY20 goals toward Standard II: Management & Operations were contained in: Goal 2, **School Facility Project**; Goal 6, **Budgeting**; and Goal 7, **School Start Times**.

	U	NI	P	E
OVERALL Rating for Standard II: Management & Operations The education leader promotes the learning and growth of all students and the success of all staff by ensuring a safe, efficient, and effective learning environment, using resources to implement appropriate curriculum, staffing, and scheduling.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Comments and analysis (recommended for any overall rating; required for overall rating of *Exemplary*, *Needs Improvement* or *Unsatisfactory*):

Facilities: Dr. Berman continues his deep involvement in school facility work, including major efforts for West Elementary (including Shawsheen pre-K) and Andover High School. The West Elementary project made significant progress over the past year, and the Superintendent's work was important in keeping milestones on track. The quality of the work has been high, particularly on the development of a comprehensive and robust education plan as a significant portion of the PSR submission to MSBA. Concern has been raised that the planned size for West EI should be revisited – rather than simply being designed based on uneven MSBA enrollment projections – to ensure the West EI/pre-K facility is right-sized and funded at the appropriate level. For Andover High, there was significant work involved in understanding the reasons for rejection of the 2019 Statement of Interest (SOI) to MSBA, and a lot of careful consideration went into the decision to revise and submit a 2020 SOI for Andover High. Finally, a plan for improvements to other district facilities was created, although ultimately required modification due to budgeting changes brought on by the pandemic, and this work has demonstrated a high level of cooperation with the town and facilities department.

Budget: This has been a difficult year in planning the FY21 budget as a result of a number of factors outside the district's control: lower than anticipated Chapter 70 funding despite high expectation from the Student Opportunity Act; the increased costs involved in responding to the pandemic; and the impacts of decreased state and local revenues. The Superintendent and his team have spent countless hours revising the FY21 budget to respond to changes brought on by the sudden economic downturn. Important decisions were made to pay all staff during the shutdown, and to maximize the retention of staff for FY21.

Additionally, years of hard work by the Superintendent and many others paid off when the committee voted to eliminate tuition for full-day kindergarten beginning with the 2020/21 school year, a plan which also won the support of the Select Board, Finance Committee and Town Manager. Even after the financial implications of the pandemic raised alarm, the Superintendent worked with the Committee on a financial plan to maintain this important commitment to the community.

There were many financial challenges this year even before the pandemic, with surprising increases in costs associated with special transportation and out-of-district placements. While there are certainly unforeseen circumstances that arise in complicated and dynamic budgets, it is fair to reflect on what could have been better anticipated or mitigated with healthier forecasting, planning, and

inventive thinking. Student transportation, in particular, is an area in which the Superintendent is encouraged to actively explore creative approaches.

The district was successful in the application for and advocacy of additional, external operating budget funds. This included seeking all available state and federal COVID relief, efforts to lobby the state legislature for full funding of the special education circuit breaker, and securing state special education extraordinary relief to address some unanticipated costs.

Start Times: On the School Start Time initiative, meaningful progress was spearheaded by Assistant Superintendent Trach. Accomplishments included the Edulog transportation report, numerous public meetings, convening a parent advisory group, and the completion of the Assistant Superintendent's comprehensive report providing objective information concerning the benefits and drawbacks of various options released in late June.

The Superintendent's relative lack of engagement and leadership on this school committee priority has been noted. Given the uncontroverted medical evidence showing the severe negative impact of early school start times on adolescents, the demonstrated increase in mental health acuity among Andover students, Dr. Berman's passion for social-emotional learning, the district focus on educating the whole child, the SEL and mental health sprints, and clear feedback from the community that the district should address this issue for our middle school and high school students, the Superintendent's leadership on start times can and should be stronger.

The Superintendent is encouraged to reexamine ways to provide supportive leadership and encourage creative problem solving as we enter the third year of the school start time project. He should not allow the difficulty of a surmountable hurdle nor the perceived politics around it drive what is best for our students educationally, physiologically, and psychologically.

Superintendent's Performance Rating for Standard III: Family and Community Engagement



The Superintendent's FY20 goals toward Standard III: Family and Community were contained in: Goal 4, **Data Analysis**; and Goal 5, **Communications**.

	U	NI	P	E
OVERALL Rating for Standard III: Family & Community Engagement The education leader promotes the learning and growth of all students and the success of all staff through effective partnerships with families, community organizations, and other stakeholders that support the mission of the district and its schools.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Comments and analysis (recommended for any overall rating; required for overall rating of *Exemplary, Needs Improvement or Unsatisfactory*):

Data Analysis: This year's focus on data analysis was in support of student assessment data and community surveys, leaving a relative lack of attention to financial analysis in support the committee's bargaining work. The surveys provide valuable data to shape the policies and direction of the district, but prioritization away from financial analysis, including bargaining and cost proposals, was disappointing since that function was a major factor in the committee's decision to add the data analyst role for FY20.

Communications: There have been many good communications from the Superintendent's office this year, and informative, timely updates were helpful especially during the closure. The Superintendent's team launched comprehensive and useful remote learning websites in record time to support students during remote learning. The Superintendent is encouraged to continue the positive aspects of keeping the communication flowing especially during crisis times, even when it may appear there is not much new to report.

Additionally, the Superintendent should be given credit for the listening tour he conducted to every school's PTO or PAC during the early part of the school year, allowing deeper, direct engagement with the community. He should consider extending this outreach to casual meetings with parents and attempts to reach students.

Communication this year has focused on providing positive press, highlighting our students and staff, and exciting work in the district. There have also been important updates on issues that quickly escalate in concern throughout the community. Added effort should prioritize more basic communication, including the district's responsiveness to parents and families, and additional emphasis should go into proactive communication on areas of potential controversy so that the district is less often on the defensive.

The Superintendent's response and statements around racial justice and against systemic racism were consistent and strong. The explanation of current work underway to weave more anti-racism education into curriculum was important, and communications should be ongoing as this important work continues and expands.

Work has been slow (delayed in part by resource diversion resulting from the pandemic) to update the APS website, including information scrubbing that would provide accurate and current results from a search. This aspect of communication remains a priority for the Committee.

The Superintendent is encouraged to take full advantage of available social media tools and extend communication to mechanism widely used by the broader community. Communication should cast a wider net, including a plan to reach residents without students in the public schools. Finally, communication updates should be short enough for reader absorption. Succinctness in communication and reaching stakeholders where they receive their information is critical for successful communication.

Superintendent's Performance Rating for Standard IV: Professional Culture



The Superintendent's FY20 goals toward Standard IV: Professional Culture were contained in:
 Goal 1, **Sprint Teams**.

	U	NI	P	E
OVERALL Rating for Standard IV: Professional Culture The education leader promotes the learning and growth of all students and the success of all staff by nurturing and sustaining a districtwide culture of reflective practice, high expectations, and continuous learning for staff.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Comments and analysis (recommended for any overall rating; required for overall rating of *Exemplary*, *Needs Improvement* or *Unsatisfactory*):

Sprint Teams: Expectations for student learning have consistently been high during Dr. Berman's tenure, and in this area the Superintendent has led well. This is reflected in the work produced by the sprint teams by establishing and managing the district's educational priorities. Overall, these teams have been a good demonstration leveraging in-house talent, enabling cross-functional collaboration, and expanding competence in important areas, including continued focus on social and emotional learning, cultural competency, and mental and behavioral health.

Balancing the workload of staff and administrators on sprint teams with their "regular" work deserves continued attention. The Superintendent is encouraged to be especially mindful of striking a balance with sprint team members in the coming year – perhaps reconstituting teams more regularly or with focus on more clearly defined short-term objectives – so they are not over-extended and can devote the bulk of their time to meeting the needs of our students in classrooms (physical or remote).