

# End-of-Cycle Summative Evaluation Report: Superintendent



**Superintendent:** Dr. Sheldon Berman  
**Evaluator:** Tracey Spruce *Tracey Spruce* 7/25/2020  
**Name** **Signature** **Date**

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

<b>Professional Practice Goal(s)</b> (FY20 goal 1)	<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
<b>Student Learning Goal(s)</b> (FY20 goal 3 and goal 4)	<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
<b>District Improvement Goal(s)</b> (FY20 goal 2, goal 5, goal 6 and goal 7)	<input type="checkbox"/> Did Not Meet	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Some Progress	<input 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
<b>Standard I: Instructional Leadership</b> (included in FY20 goal 3 and goal 4)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Standard II: Management and Operations</b> (included in FY20 goal 2, goal 6 and goal 7)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Standard III: Family and Community Engagement</b> (included in FY20 goal 4 and goal 5)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Standard IV: Professional Culture</b> (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:** These comments touch upon areas not otherwise addressed in the superintendent's established 2019-20 goals. Progress against those goals is addressed in the appropriate sections below.

To say this evaluation was prepared following the conclusion of an extraordinary school year would be an epic understatement. Given that context, it is important to note the rating of "some progress" on the District Improvement goals listed in Step 1 and as noted below is, in part, due to the interruption of routine district operations because of the COVID-19 pandemic. In that respect, the rating is simply a reflection of the reality that "significant progress" on some of aspects of these goals was rendered impossible by the requirement to immediately pivot to development and implementation of a remote learning program. Under the superintendent's leadership, and with the able assistance and relentless work by his administrative team, faculty, and staff across the district (not to mention families, who bore a great deal of the remote learning weight), the remote learning program in Andover Public Schools was crafted, launched, and continually improved throughout the spring. Every IEP was reviewed and each special education student in the district received an individualized remote learning plan for the closure period as well as for the summer program. Teachers had opportunities for professional development on remote teaching tools and methods. Student assessment rubrics were revamped, striking a balance between incentivizing students to complete their schoolwork and not penalizing students whose personal situations made it difficult for them to do so. Students without devices and/or internet connections received both to enable their continued learning. Meals were made available to families who needed them. While no district, including Andover, was in a position to launch a perfect remote learning program, and we have learned a lot about ways the program should be improved, the superintendent and his team worked tirelessly and accomplished an extraordinary amount in a short period of time. As the district plans for a variety of learning scenarios for the fall, and given the likelihood some version of remote learning will be needed, the superintendent is encouraged to enhance the district's delivery of synchronous learning and other live teacher/student engagement (which promotes the social emotional well-being of our students); emphasize substantive (as opposed to stylistic) consistency in content delivery and time-on-learning across grade levels and academic subjects; and require consistent application of rigorous assessment tools for both students and faculty. As one example of how the district's remote learning program could improve, if remote learning continues at the high school in any fashion this fall, then it must include five days per week of academic instruction and time-on-learning.

Amidst this disruption, the superintendent continued to drive important recruiting initiatives, resulting in key new hires at AHS (principal), South (principal), Bancroft (assistant principal), and the Central Office (COO, Assistant Director of Student Services,

Transportation Coordinator). In addition, the superintendent oversaw and/or participated in ongoing collective bargaining negotiations with the AEA and other unions, resulting in a one-year bridge contract for the custodians' union.

Even without a pandemic, no school year is without its challenges. This year saw a marked increase in the number of grievances, unfair labor practice charges, and lawsuits filed by the district's unions, all of which required significant district resources to address (time spent by the superintendent and other administrators as well as district funds). This increase is largely attributable to a change in union leadership and, consequently, a change in how the AEA chooses to address labor-management concerns. 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 more proactive approach by school administrators. At South School, we learned two distinct sets of staff concerns ([1] staff discontent with the former principal; [2] mistreatment of staff members, parents, and students by other staff members) had been brewing for some time, and both erupted during this school year. Whether earlier intervention would have avoided the eruption of both sets of concerns over the past year is pure speculation; however, the superintendent is encouraged to reflect on the events, identify missed opportunities, and take steps to prevent future school-level conflicts from growing as they did here. With respect to the other set of concerns, the superintendent's response (retaining an outside investigator) was appropriate and consistent with best practices in the face of allegations of a hostile work environment. In addition, the superintendent is to be commended for taking significant time to meet with over 50 South faculty and staff after the investigation concluded, to listen to their concerns and thoughts about next steps. While it is understandable that additional steps have not yet been taken at South to move beyond the year's conflicts (due to the pandemic and the superintendent's desire to include the new principal in those initiatives), the superintendent is encouraged to engage deeply with the South School staff and parent community about what he heard during his meetings and his plans in the coming year to move the community forward.

# 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
<b>1. Sprint Teams</b> (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 checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>2. School Facility Projects</b> (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"/>

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Goals	Focus Indicator(s)	Description	Did Not Meet	Some Progress	Significant Progress	Met	Exceeded
<b>3. Literacy Curriculum</b> (Student Learning Goal)	Standard I: Instructional Leadership	<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"/>
<b>4. Data Analysis</b> (Student Learning Goal)	Standard I: Instructional Leadership;  Standard III: Family and Community Engagement	<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 checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

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
<b>5. Communications</b> (District Improvement Goal)	Standard III: Family and Community Engagement	<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"/>
<b>6. Budgeting</b> (District Improvement Goal)	Standard II: Management and Operations	<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</i></p>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

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
		<i>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>					
<b>7. School Start Times</b> (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 checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

### Standards and Indicators for Effective Administrative Leadership

Superintendents should identify 1-2 focus Indicators per Standard aligned to their goals.

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
<b>OVERALL Rating for Standard I: Instructional Leadership</b> <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*):**

We continue to see good progress in literacy due to significant investments over the past few years. We should remain focused both on what the data shows us about the effectiveness of these investments, and on feedback from teachers and parents, especially those with students on IEPs for language-based learning disabilities. It is a testament to the successes in our district that the state, prominent health care institutions, and other districts look to Andover for tools, guidance, and support. To the extent these initiatives require the time and attention of district personnel, the superintendent should ensure neither he nor other district staff are over-extended and district resources are reserved for endeavors that directly benefit our students.

It is always encouraging to see improvements in MCAS scores, given the importance many parents place on that metric and the ways in which the scores reveal opportunities for instructional improvement. We saw an achievement gap for economically disadvantaged students and Hispanic students, and it is critical the district work to close the gaps in an intentional, thoughtful, and efficient way. Given the financial constraints we faced even before the pandemic, we were unable to add the math coach positions designed in part to address these gaps, and the district now needs to find creative, cost-neutral ways to address them.

Central Office support was helpful this spring, particularly in the area of data analysis when multiple surveys were needed to evaluate remote learning plans. The relative lack of financial analysis from the appropriate Central Office resource to support the committee's bargaining work was disappointing, especially when that function was a major factor in the committee's decision to approve the data analyst role last year. I appreciate receiving some information early in the bargaining process, but expected ongoing, real-time data analyst support throughout, and was disappointed it was not available.



# 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
<b>OVERALL Rating for Standard II: Management &amp; Operations</b> 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:** The superintendent oversaw the successful resubmission of an even stronger AHS Statement of Interest to the MSBA, despite the fact that it was due just weeks after school buildings were closed due to the pandemic. This year also was extremely busy for the West Elementary School Building Committee, and the superintendent's work on the education plan and other key submissions was critical to keeping the project on track. Despite the pandemic and a brief delay to develop a solution to the challenges presented by the MSBA's new mechanical penthouse policy, the project has made significant progress. I also appreciate the superintendent's efforts to respond to feedback from the MSBA, finding ways to reduce the scope and overall (proposed) cost of the project. The superintendent should analyze and provide an update on projected enrollment, as the School Building Committee agreed last year it would do around this point in the process. Given the size and proposed cost, and the other major building projects the community will be asked to fund in the coming years, this examination is necessary to ensure the West El/pre-K facility is built and funded at the right level.

**Budgeting:** Years of hard work by the superintendent and many others paid off when the committee voted to eliminate tuition for full-day kindergarten in FY21. Even after the district was slated to receive a lower amount of c. 70 funds than expected, and in the context of the pandemic, 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. Some of these costs are outside of the district's control, but it is fair to reflect on whether others might have been anticipated with better forecasting, planning, and creative thinking. One silver lining of the pandemic was financial savings which allowed the district to eliminate a large deficit and reallocate budgeted funds to prepare for FY21, which we expect will bring significant new expenses due to the pandemic (e.g., PPE, technology and professional development to support remote learning, frequent and in-depth cleaning, transportation, etc.). I greatly appreciate the superintendent's work with the town manager and the school committee to revamp and reduce the FY21 budget. As that work continues, it will be important to maintain, to the extent feasible within pandemic-related restrictions, the budget to eliminate the B-runs. This has been a school committee priority, and it became clear through the start times discussions it is a community priority as well. The superintendent is encouraged to actively explore creative approaches to this transportation challenge, especially since it may not be realistic to expect increased services from the district's current transportation provider. As we continue to work through pandemic-related budget challenges and make decisions about how to allocate scarce funds, the superintendent is encouraged to consider the long-term impact of any reallocation of previously budgeted funds. It is unrealistic to expect our current challenges to evaporate in FY22; as such, we

must carefully consider the potential ripple effects of shifting funds from one budget item to another (e.g., the long-established textbook refresh cycle). Thoughtful, data-driven decisions are required now, to place the district in a strong position when this financial and world health crisis ends. Finally, Goal 6 included “timely and complete financial analyses and other Central Office expertise necessary to support collective bargaining negotiations; deployment of appropriate Central Office resources...” As noted in other sections of the evaluation, this remains an area of growth. Miscommunications and visible errors in public communications are embarrassing for the district. The superintendent’s commitment to provide the school committee with complete and accurate meeting materials well ahead of our meetings was met inconsistently this year; material continues to be added to the Dropbox until meetings begin, making it difficult to adequately prepare, and some agenda notes have been incomplete or contain improperly worded motions which committee members then must adjust on the fly.

**School Start Times:** Progress continued on the school start times initiative, including the completion of an important transportation study by Edulog and the convening of a parent advisory group. This progress was spearheaded by Assistant Superintendent Sandra Trach, whose work is greatly appreciated. For the second year in a row, I find myself disappointed with the superintendent’s relative lack of engagement and leadership on this school committee priority. Given the uncontroverted medical evidence showing the severe negative impact of early school start times on adolescent mental health, the demonstrated increase in mental health acuity among APS students, Dr. Berman’s passion for social-emotional learning, 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, it is difficult to understand the superintendent’s “hands-off” leadership on this goal. In districts that have made this change successfully, the superintendent has led the way. In Andover, the school committee has been the driving force. With much work remaining on this initiative, I hope to see Dr. Berman take a more active role in supporting a change which will benefit every single student in the district.

# 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
<b>OVERALL Rating for Standard III: Family &amp; Community Engagement</b> 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*):**

This year presented many opportunities to engage with the community, including school start times, closure of school buildings, remote learning, anti-racism. The superintendent’s team launched comprehensive and useful remote learning websites in record time to support students during remote learning. His “listening tour” with every school’s PTO or PAC earlier this year was a good start to deeper engagement with the community. The administration of multiple surveys to solicit feedback from parents, students, and staff about the district’s remote learning program was important, and the results will be critical to informing the district’s plans for the fall. Dr. Berman’s communications to families after school buildings were closed and in response to issues of racial justice were consistent and strong. Going forward, the district must actively engage the community in conversations about anti-racism and to develop, advance, and communicate plans to weave more anti-racism education into APS curriculum, especially at AHS. In addition to continuing the important work of the CCC, the superintendent is encouraged to consider ways for the district to engage with the broader community on this topic, such as a survey of APS families and/or former families about their experiences with racism in APS and hosting a community forum.

There remains room for growth in the area of communications. Last year, the superintendent was asked to cast the communications net wider, including developing a plan to reach residents without students in the public schools and hosting some version of an informal forum or “office hours.” Neither of those things happened. In addition, parents would have benefitted from more frequent communication during the days leading up to the decision to close school buildings; despite repeated requests from the school committee, the superintendent did not do so. The website remains difficult to navigate, and the search function continues to produce outdated or irrelevant results. For example, a search of “AHS Program of Studies” produces a first page with ten results, and the actual Program of Studies for 2020-21 is the tenth result. In addition, greater financial analysis and communications support on the school committee’s bargaining efforts is needed; instead of the superintendent’s office, school committee members have spent a great deal of time this year developing financial analysis and communications relating to bargaining. Competent Central Office resources are available to support this work, which should be prioritized.

# 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
<b>OVERALL Rating for Standard IV: Professional Culture</b> 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*):**

The sprint teams continued to make progress, at least until the closure of school buildings in March. It seems reasonable to expect some action items slated to take place this year will carry over to the 2020-21 school year. With the increased work likely to face administrators, teachers, and staff because of re-opening during a pandemic, the superintendent is encouraged to be especially mindful of striking a balance with sprint team members, 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) in the coming year. It bears repeating that both SEL and mental health are included as discrete sprints, and as such a greater focus on, commitment to, and public advancement of the school start times initiative is appropriate and necessary going forward.

A few specific sprints warrant attention:

**SEL & Equity:** The superintendent is to be commended for overseeing the adoption of an excellent equity policy, as well as his public statements regarding anti-racism. As noted above, it is worth considering whether to do a survey or hold public forums or focus groups to learn more about APS student experiences with racism; the feedback could be used to identify where additional programming or curriculum is necessary to advance anti-racism education. The Instagram account, @BlackAtAndoverHS, tells us we have a great deal of work to do. Our work in this area at the elementary schools is in process with OCON (more on this below) and beginning at the middle schools, but we should explore how to strengthen our anti-racism curriculum at the high school. The efforts made on SEL thus far will be undermined if, with continued remote learning to any degree, teachers are not engaged in a synchronous manner with students. I understand the obstacles this spring were largely due to resistance to synchronous interaction by the AEA leadership; however, the students’ well-being must remain paramount, and parents expect more from their childrens’ teachers. This issue must be resolved if, as expected, remote learning continues in any manner during the coming school year.

OCON continued to be a source of friction this year. While there is no question the underpinnings of the program are critical to promoting anti-racism education, and for that reason I support it wholeheartedly, there seems to be a misalignment between the superintendent and some school committee members (including me) about the approach, including funding mechanisms. In addition, although the district employs a highly capable assistant superintendent for teaching and learning, and therefore development and implementation of OCON falls squarely within her job functions, the superintendent continues to prioritize his own involvement in the process to a degree which not only is disproportionate to any specific superintendent goal or school committee priority, but has been a distraction from other, more pressing priorities. The superintendent is encouraged to fully delegate the remaining work on OCON to his team, allow them to apply their deep expertise on the best ways to continue developing the program, and focus his time and efforts on executive level initiatives.

**Mental Health:** I appreciated the superintendent's effort to maintain inclusion of a new T3 teacher at AHS in the budget, even as it was reduced; this should help the mental health sprint continue its forward movement. The district did incredible work to meet students' mental health needs during the period of school building closure, and these efforts could be better publicized so the community knows how well we are caring for some of our most vulnerable students.