Lessons Learned in High School Turnaround:
One Boston High School's Success Story

ESEA 2019, Kansas City

Erica Champagne, Kendra Winner, Laura Stein, and Cory McCarthy

MASSACHUSETTS DEPARTMENT OF ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION

AIR® AMERICAN INSTITUTES FOR RESEARCH®

BOSTON Public Schools
Focus on Children

CONTENTS

01 Massachusetts Context

Massachusetts Context

- State law supported by School Improvement Grant (SIG)
- State education agency (SEA) turnaround office focused on building district capacity
- Massachusetts SEA's research agenda tied to consistent, long-term progress monitoring of turnaround schools:
  - Are turnaround schools and districts improving student outcomes at a faster rate than other schools or districts?
  - What factors are correlated with successful turnaround?
  - What role does the statewide system of support play in improving outcomes?

SIG in Massachusetts

- Massachusetts School Redesign Grants (aka SIG)
  - Competitive
  - Awarded in three year increments
  - Help schools meet students' needs through funding improvement strategies
  - School interventions need to be aligned with research-based turnaround strategies
- Made a statistically **significant difference in student outcomes** in Massachusetts schools (based on a comparative interrupted time series analysis), but high schools have had less success
- Examination of implementation of SRG provides insight into how turnaround is achieved
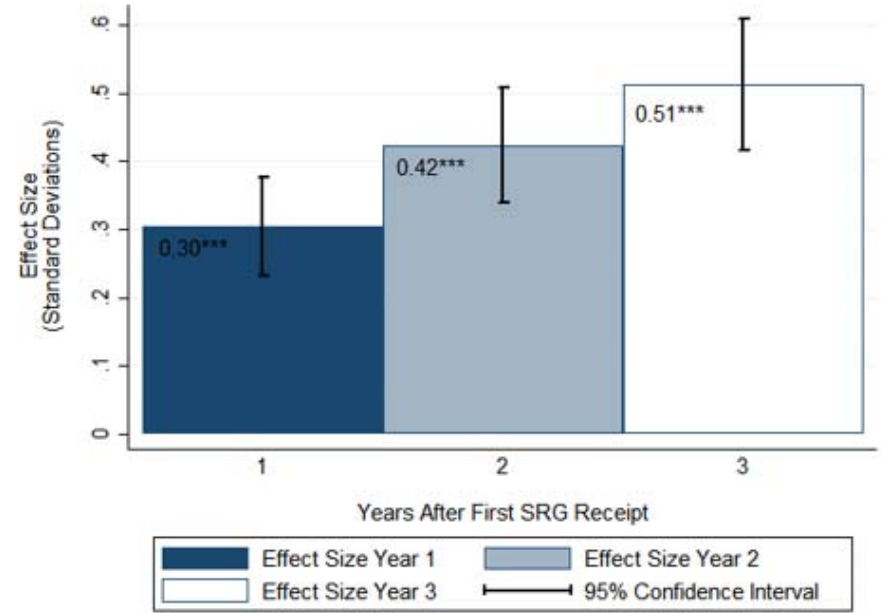
Impact Study Findings (overall)

Equivalent to one additional year of schooling in both ELA and math

ELA
Achievement Score Effect Sizes
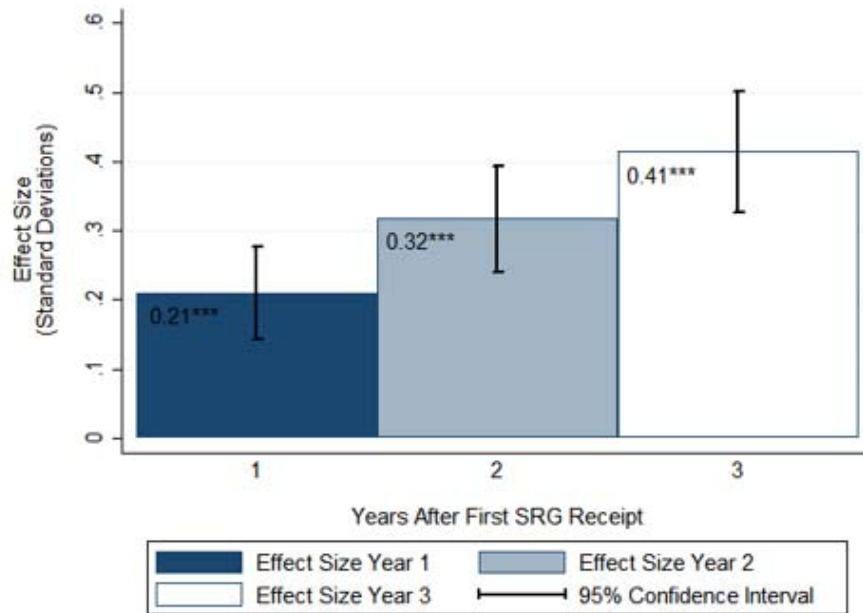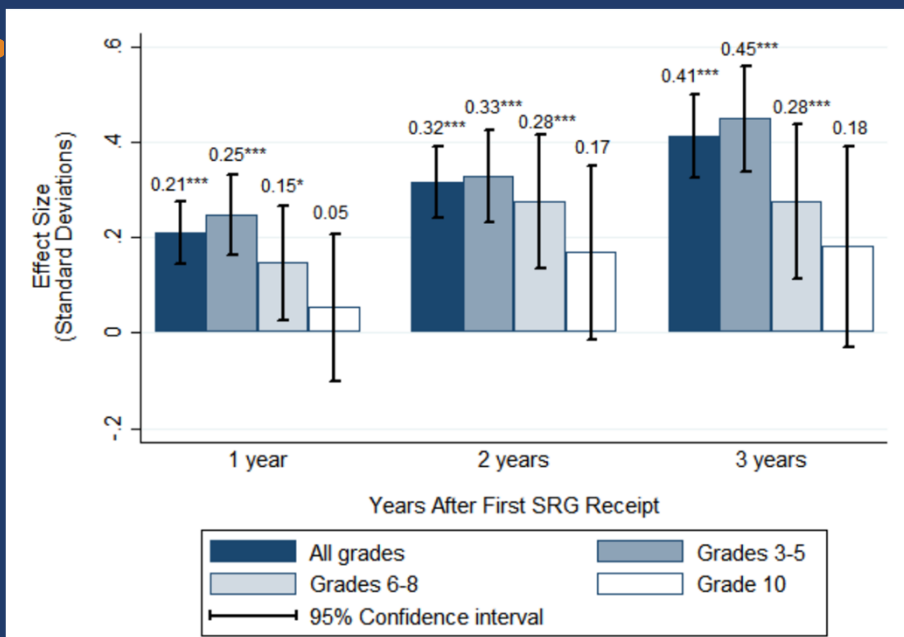
Math
Achievement Score Effect Sizes

Secondary schools falling behind

- Elementary schools in MA are moving out of turnaround, but the majority of middle and high schools are not able to realize the same gains

- As part of a research partnership, we engaged AIR to reach outside of our own turnaround schools to find best practice in higher performing high schools with similar demographics
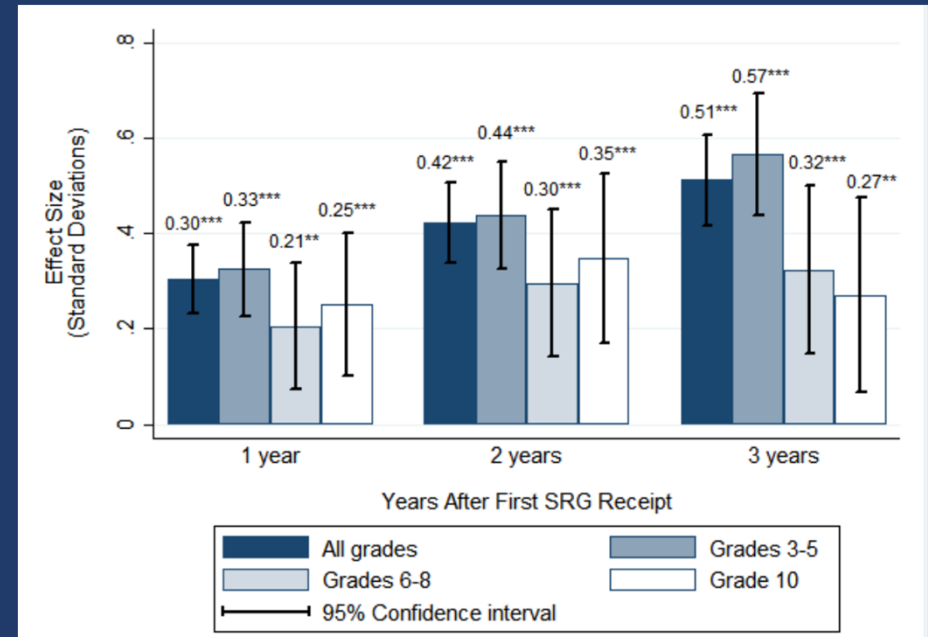
Impact Study Findings (by grade)

ELA Achievement Score Effect Sizes by Grade Range and Years After First SRG Receipt

Mathematics Achievement Score Effect Sizes by Grade Range and Years After First SRG Receipt

Turn-and-Talk

- What are your hypotheses on why secondary schools are lagging behind their elementary counterparts?

02 American Institutes for Research - High School Study

HS Follow-Up Study – Sample and Methods

- Monitoring site visit (MSV) reports for existing and formerly Level 4 high schools

  - 22 reports across three years

    » 13 unique high schools

    » 7 districts

    » 6 SRG cohorts

  - Qualitative and quantitative data

- Original data collected from three higher-performing high schools

- Focused on exploring areas in which low-performing high schools commonly struggled (as evidenced by low MSV implementation scores) and lessons learned from strategies implemented in higher-performing high schools

Relationship to Turnaround Practices and Indicators

1. Leadership, Shared Responsibility, and Professional Collaboration	2. Intentional Practices for Improving Instruction	3. Student-Specific Supports and Instruction to All Students	4. School Climate and Culture
1.1 Use of Autonomy	2.1 Instructional Expectations	3.1 General Academic Interventions and Enrichment	**4.1 Schoolwide Behavior Plan**
1.2 High Expectations and Positive Regard	**2.2 Instructional Schedule**	**3.2 Teacher Training to Identify Student Needs (Academic and Nonacademic)**	4.2 Adult–Student Relationships
1.3 Vision/Theory of Action and Buy-In	**2.3 Identifying and Addressing Student Academic Needs**	3.3 Determining Schoolwide Student Supports (Academic Interventions and Enrichment)	4.3 Expanded Learning
1.4 Monitoring Implementation and School Progress	2.4 Classroom Observation Data Use	**3.4 Multitiered System of Support (Academic and Nonacademic)**	**4.4 Wraparound Services and External Partners**
1.5 Trusting Relationships	2.5 Student Assessment Data Use (for Schoolwide Decision Making)	3.5 Academic Interventions for English Language Learners	4.5 Family and Community Engagement
1.6 Time Use for Professional Development and Collaboration	2.6 Student Assessment Data Use (for Classroom Instruction)	3.6 Academic Interventions for Students With Disabilities	
1.7 Communication With Staff	2.7 Structures for Instructional Improvement		
1.8 Sustainability			

Relationship to Turnaround Practices and Indicators

1. Leadership, Shared Responsibility, and Professional Collaboration	2. Intentional Practices for Improving Instruction	3. Student-Specific Supports and Instruction to All Students	4. School Climate and Culture
			4.1 Schoolwide Behavior Plan
	2.2 Instructional Schedule		
		3.4 Multitiered System of Support (Academic and Nonacademic)	
1.7 Communication With Staff			

Communication

- Staff inclusion in decision making
  - Committees
  - Build buy-in
  - Feedback opportunities

- Multiple forms
  - Avoid e-mail overload
  - E-mail PLUS paper and in-person
  - Weekly bullet point highlights
- Consistency and follow-up
  - Formal feedback gathering system
  - Communicate about feedback follow-up

"A team of teachers [and] administrators; they get together, and they brainstorm and they plan, and through that process, I think it creates a lot more buy-in."

"I don't just send e-mails for things that are really important. I'll hand deliver a paper; I don't put things in people's mailboxes. Or we'll have a meeting with the lead people, and…I tell them, 'You need to meet with folks around this.'"

Instructional Schedule

- Staff inclusion in schedule development
  - o Feedback opportunities
    - ▪ Scheduling committees
    - ▪ Schoolwide surveys
- Time for instruction
  - o 60 minute sweet spot
    - ▪ Time for projects & in-depth analysis
    - ▪ Avoids extended periods of inaction
  - o Adequate intervention and enrichment time
- Collaboration and coordination of staff
  - o Collaborative lesson planning
  - o Include special educators & interventionists
  - o Consider co-teaching models

"Our students fatigue. An hour and a half of work, especially when we're working with dense text and doing text analysis on argument writing, all this kind of work and students have just come from a calculus class."

Multitiered System of Student Support

- Student Support Team (SST) members and communication
  - Instructional staff, guidance, and mental health staff
  - SST members follow up with referring teachers
  - Teacher involvement in discussions about progress
- Differentiation consistency
  - All know and use appropriate differentiation strategies
- Monitoring
  - Formal process for monitoring and follow-up
  - Assign regular follow-up tasks
  - Track actions on a shared spreadsheet

One district is building a historical database of K–8 interventions across the district, ensuring that "[the data are] documented and collected so that whenever there's an issue, we can go directly to that student and see what interventions were in place."

Schools focus on differentiating lessons for students and "meeting kids where they're at." Staff emphasize the use of instructional strategies such as group work, individual activities, and one-on-one teacher support for students.

Schoolwide Student Behavior Plan

- Communicate expectations to students
  - Set aside time at the start of the year & throughout
- Establish a positive schoolwide culture
  - Focus on cultivating positive student characteristics
  - Approach counterproductive behaviors as learning opportunities for students
  - Have conversations with students to get at root causes
- Involve parents
  - Treat parents as an asset
  - Phone calls or in person meetings
- Use discipline data to inform decision-making
  - Identify teachers with strong classroom management skills to serve as exemplars
  - Identify teachers who may be overwhelmed, need additional support

"We don't bombard kids with rules, it's not loose around here, but it's our culture. If you have rules, somebody is telling you what to do. If you have a culture, you know what to do… We use that to really, really get our kids to be successful and our kids have a general understanding and pride in our school."

"This is a teachable moment, and [students] need to learn [from] this mistake. [I'm] not lecturing them. I find it interesting that if you just say to [students], 'Oh, you just hurt my feelings,' if they've been disrespectful and they're like, 'What? I didn't mean to… I didn't mean to hurt your feelings.' They begin to see you as a human being."

Group Discussion

- What could a secondary school leader do with these findings?

- For school leaders in the room – what resonates the most with you?

02 One Boston High School's Success Story: New Mission High School

New Mission High School

A Pilot of the Boston Public Schools

Cory McCarthy – Director of Operations

Brief History

* Founded in 1998

* 1 of 21 pilot schools in the Boston Public School district

* Models of educational innovation and research and development sites

* Autonomy over budget, staffing, governance, curriculum/assessment, and the school calendar to provide increased flexibility

Our Promise

The New Mission community considers ourselves the "exam school without the exam." If you choose New Mission, we promise you will receive a high quality education in a warm and supportive environment. You will graduate from high school and gain admission to college.

Demographics (2017)

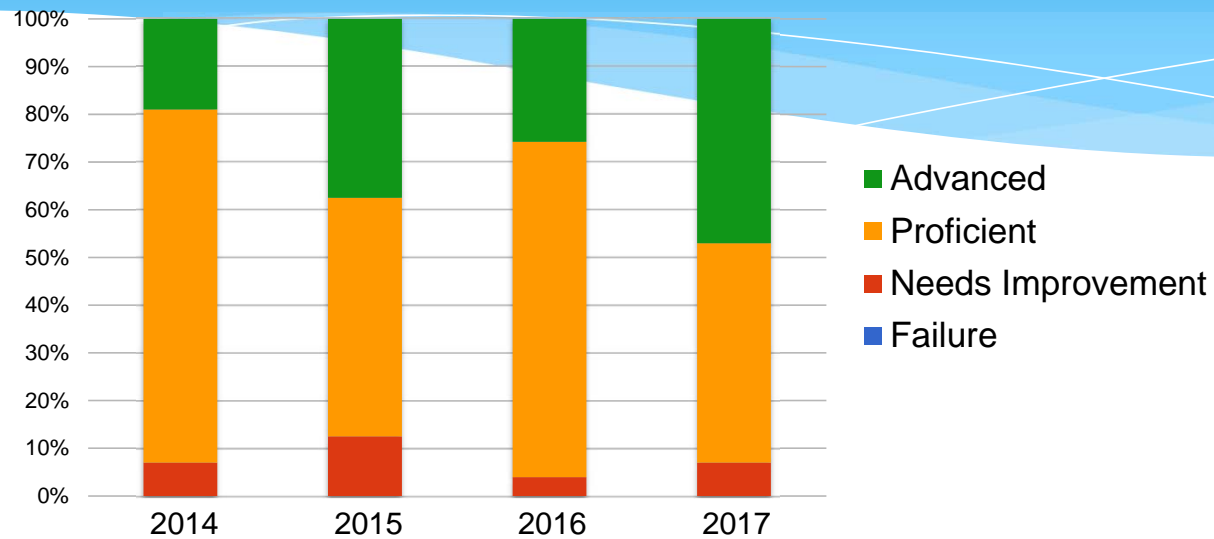| Race/ethnicity	% Of school	Selected Populations	% Of school
African American	65	First language not English	32.5
Asian	.3	English language learner	5.9
Hispanic	31.6	Students with disabilities	16.3
Native American	.6	High needs	60.9
White	1.3	Economically disadvantaged	53.1
Multi race, non hispanic	1.3	Male/female	163/157

At NMHS we're proud of...

* High levels of performance on state accountability system for 6 years
* 2011 Commendation School
* 2012 Winner of the EdVestors $100K School on the Move Award
* 2013 National Blue Ribbon School
* 2017 National Distinguished School Award
* 5 TIME state Basketball champions 2007, 2010, 2011, 2014, 2016
* National Healthy Schools Award - Bronze

ELA MCAS (A/P 93%)

Legend:
- Advanced (green)
- Proficient (orange)
- Needs Improvement (red)
- Failure (blue)

X-axis: 2014, 2015, 2016, 2017
Y-axis: 0% to 100%

Strengths
- All students passing, once again
- Significant gain in Advanced scores:
  (180% gain from 2016)
  (190% gain from 2014)

Notes:
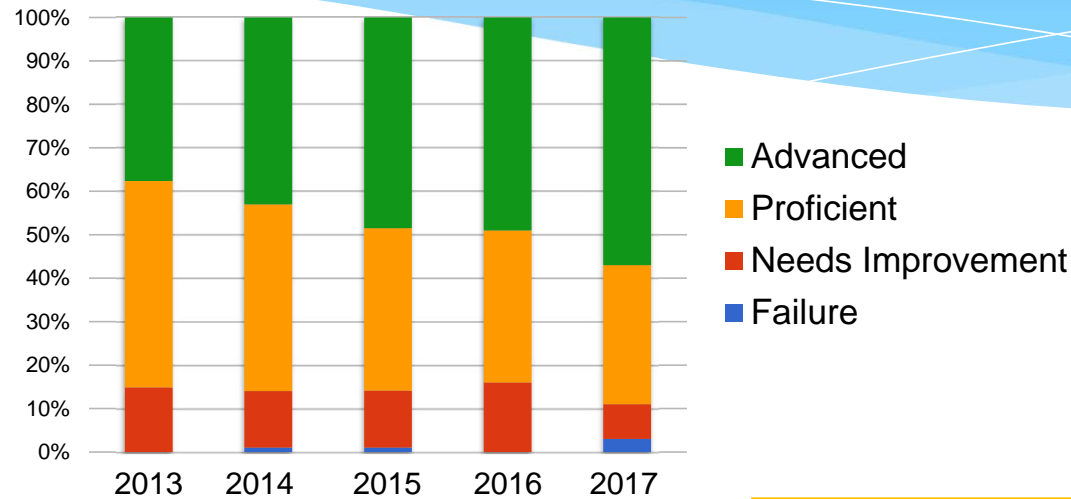- Needs Improvement hovers around 4-8% of total students over 4 years

MATH MCAS
(A/P 90%)

Chart legend:
- ■ Advanced
- ■ Proficient
- ■ Needs Improvement
- ■ Failure

Strengths

- Increased advanced scores
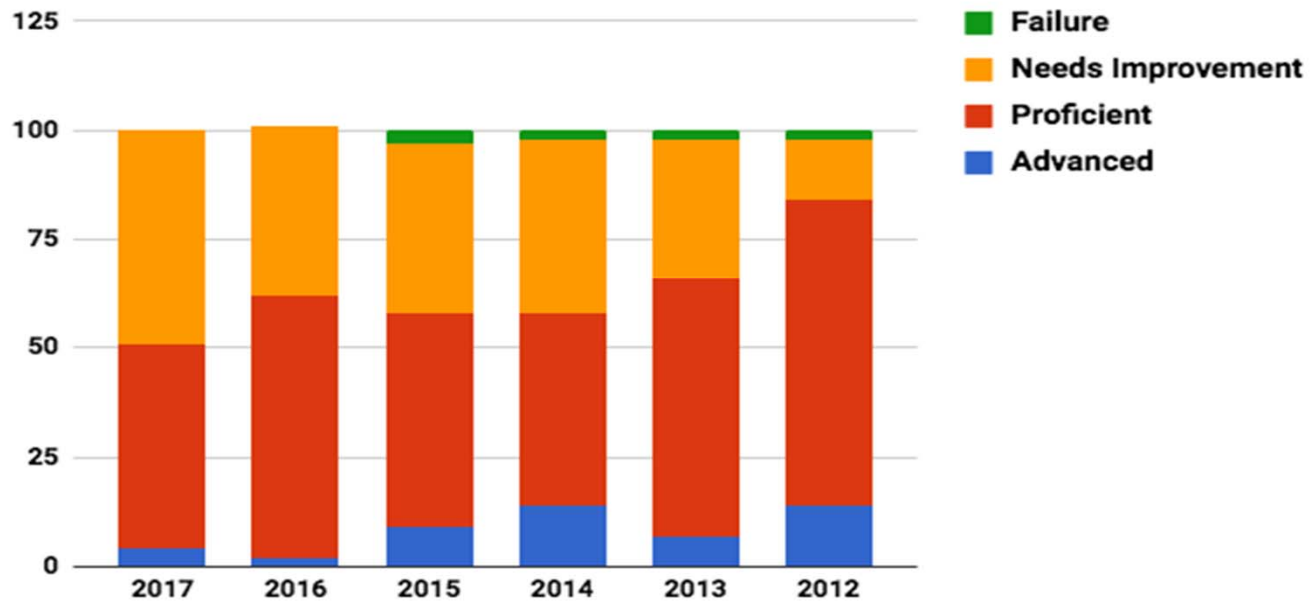- Overall results: Above BPS & at state level % correct

Challenges:

- Moving students out of NI into P
- Do these scores transfer to college readiness?
- Transitioning this success to SAT questions
- Advanced AP cohort vs. Double Path

SCIENCE MCAS

NMCA Science MCAS Score %

Legend:
- **Failure** (green)
- **Needs Improvement** (orange)
- **Proficient** (red)
- **Advanced** (blue)

**Scores do not include 2017 February MCAS scores

Strengths

- 0% failure rate with new planning for MCAS
  - Tiered MCAS support plan is still working

Challenges:

- Low Advanced Percentage
- High Needs Improvement Percentage

New Yearly Progress

	2016 CPI	2016 SGP	2017 Actual CPI	**CPI Change From 201**6	2017 SGP	SGP change from 2015	DESE Rating
ELA	99.3	62	98.3	-1	**53**	-9	Above Target
Math	94.7	59	95.3	+0.6	**73**	+14	On Target
Science	87.1	----	93.6	+6.5	--	--	Above Target

Class of 2017
Graduation Rate: 98.5%

* 59 (75%) students go to 4 year schools
  o 46 attending 4 year state schools
  o 13 attending 4 year private schools
* 14 (18%) students going to 2 year schools
  o 12 attending 2 year state schools
  o 2 attending 2 year private schools (BFIT)
* 4 (5%) students doing alternative programs such as _US Military, Year UP, prep school_
* 2 (2%) students finished summer school in August (will be working)

Pie chart legend:
- 4 year schools — 75%
- 2 year schools — 18%
- Programs — 5%
- Other — 2%
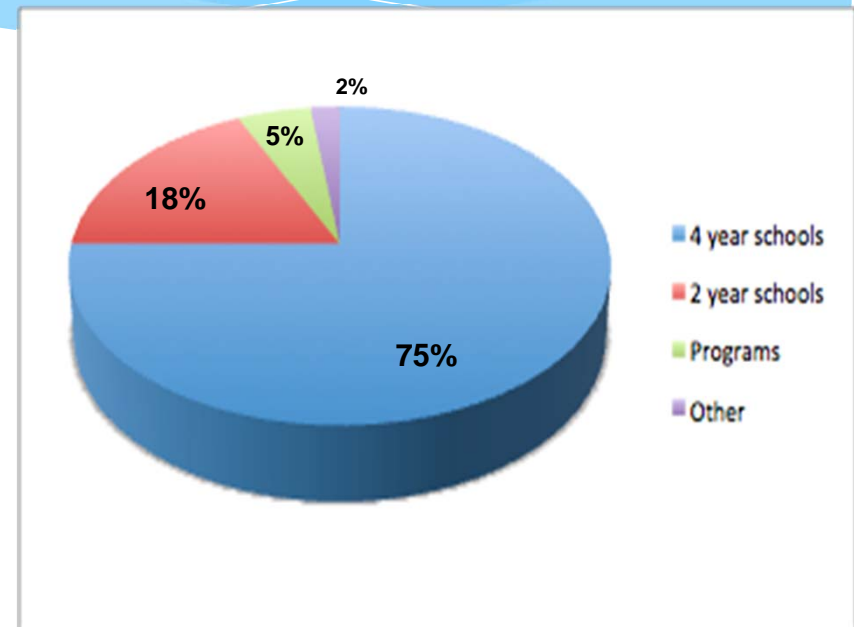
Key Levers
"Changing Life Trajectories"

1. Distributive leadership
   * Shared decision making
   * Collaborative teacher-led teams
   * Autonomy
2. Strategic Instructional Practices
   * AP for All
   * Academic Supports
   * Accelerated Math Pathway for all(end with Calculus +)

Key Levers
"Changing Life Trajectories"

3. Student Support
   * Comprehensive Behavior Health Model (Tiered approach to support BIMAS screening)
   * School Based Health Center (nurse practitioner, mental health provider, sexual health instructor)
   * Mental Health Partnerships (Doc Wayne, Home for Little Wanderers (2 counselors)

4. School Culture and Climate
   * Bi-Yearly Portfolio review
   * Homework Academy
   * Saturday School

Distributive Leadership

Over 80% of our staff are leading teams, supervising staff and/or implementing autonomous initiatives.

Governing Board - Administrator Team

* New Mission Cabinet
* AP Team
* Content Team Leaders
* Special Education Team

Operational Team

Grade Level Team

Student Support Team

Attendance Team

Guidance Team

Common Practices include: embedded school day meeting time, common protocols and agendas,

Teacher Professional Growth

* Financial Support for Professional Licensures
* Schoolwide Training for professional licenses

Accelerated Pathways

FOUNDATIONS GRADE 9	INQUIRY GRADE 10	ETHOS GRADE 11	GRAD GRADE 12
ALGEBRA 1(H or CP) GEOMETRY (H)	GEOMETRY(CP or H) and ADVANCED ALGEBRA(CP or H) ------------------------------- or ADVANCED ALGEBRA(H)	PRE-CALCULUS (H or CP)	AP CALCULUS CALCULUS AP STATISTICS
Biology(CP or H) PHYSICS (H)	Chemistry CHEMISTRY(H) AP Physics	AP PHYSICS AP BIOLOGY PHYSICS	AP Environmental Science
ENGLISH 9(CP or H)	ENGLISH 10(CP or H)	AP LANGUAGE OR ENGLISH 11(CP)	AP LANGUAGE OR AP LITERATURE
WORLD HISTORY(CP or H)	US HISTORY(CP or H)	WORLD HISTORY 2(CP or H) AND AP US HISTORY	SENIOR SEMINAR-SENIOR DEFENSE

Computer Science Pathway *New*
Project Lead The Way

FOUNDATIONS GRADE 9	INQUIRY GRADE 10	ETHOS GRADE 11	GRAD GRADE 12
Essentials of Computer Science	Cyber security	Computer Science Principles	Computer Science Internship

Extended Learning

* Summer programming for grades 7 and 9
* Summer AP boot camps
* Saturday AP seminars - Mass Insight
* Saturday school
* Vacation academies
* Afterschool homework academy

Academic Enhancement through Programs and Community Partnerships

* Breakthrough Boston

* Calculus Project

* Summer Search

* Dual Enrollment at local colleges

* Harvard Crimson Program

* Brigham and Women's Hospital Internship

* Boston Partners in Education

* And many, many more…

Portfolio Presentations

* Each year all students at New Mission demonstrate their learning through a special portfolio presentation to their families and advisors. These are individual presentations that happen two times per year (January and June).

* Students answer the critical essential questions in all four core content classes as well as reflect on their goals for continued success in their classes.

Special Programs

* Project Ochendo for Young Men
* Rites of Passage curriculum
* Mentoring
* Academic Progress Monitoring
* Academic Support
* College visits and speakers
* Summer employment – internships

Clubs and Afterschool Programs

* Basketball
* Football
* Track and Field winter and spring
* Softball
* Baseball
* Cheerleading
* Volleyball
* Soccer
* Homework Academy
* Urban Debate League

Questions?