

## ANNUAL REPORT OF THE SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS

The Randolph Public Schools had a singular focus for 2013: “A commitment to improvement for all.” In 2013, that “all” included each student and staff member. The vehicle for this improvement process was the district self-developed Accelerated Improvement Plan (AIP).

The Randolph Public Schools has been operating with an Accelerated Improvement Plan since 2011. Having been designated a level four district in 2010, the district embarked on a plan of continuous improvement targeted at addressing areas of weakness as identified in the initial 2010 Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (ESE) District Review. The AIP for 2013 was built upon the success and unaddressed needs of the prior year’s plan. Through the continuous acts of planning, implementing, measuring, and analyzing progress, the district has built a series of strategies and associated activities designed at addressing the needs cited in the initial district review and subsequent quarterly and annual reviews of the plan. The first three objectives of the plan are specifically aimed at actions that occur within the walls of the schools. The fourth objective discussed later on in this document is aimed at increasing activities in the home that can support school-based activities.

Through the objective of “*Ensuring success for all students through high quality teaching and learning,*” the district is addressing the ESE findings of:

- The need to address the literacy skills of students, which are below state average
- The need to have the current curriculum address the development of 21<sup>st</sup> Century skills
- The need to address the significant achievement gaps for sub-groups
- The need to improve teacher effectiveness in providing rigorous and engaging learning for students

Through the objective of “*Ensuring success for all students through high quality professional development,*” the district is addressing the ESE findings of:

- The need to improve the instructional practices of teachers
- The need to improve the evaluation and supervision skills of administrators
- The ability of all staff to understand and address the needs of targeted populations

Through the objective of “*Ensuring success for all students through high quality accountability systems,*” the district is addressing the ESE findings of:

- The need to improve the use of data to guide curriculum and instruction in ELA and Math
- The need to use data to develop teacher and administrator knowledge and skills
- The need to use data to implement systems and practices that ensure the growth of targeted populations.

The district believes that progress has been made in all of these areas, although in some more than others. Most strikingly the AIP process has clearly defined the district’s focus and guided the

development of a new district structure. Specifically, the 2013-14 budget was developed to support the activities of the AIP through structure, professional development, and resource reallocation. In 2013-14, the primary goal of the district is to firmly institutionalize the practices and successes of the prior two years along with continually improving in all three objectives of the plan. The institutionalization of the AIP in 2013-14 began with the collective creation of the 2013-14 AIP. This plan unlike prior plans is the collective work of the district instructional leadership team. The district realizes that the success of our students rests with the district itself, and while support from the DESE has been essential in our work, the futures lies in the ability of the district to collectively create, implement, measure and analyze its own activities as related to the success of its students.

To further strengthen the work of the AIP the district Superintendent and Assistant Superintendent divided the work between them. The Assistant Superintendent was charged with the implementation and management of many of the initiatives while the superintendent managed the change process working closely with teachers and administrators to assure that the initiatives would eventually become institutionalized in the district. This two prong approach of initiative and change management practices has been recognized repeatedly by the MA Department of Elementary and Secondary Education as the most effective implementation of an AIP to date. Should the district continue to implement the AIP with an eye toward institutionalization the district could soon be removed from Level 4 status.

In 2013, the district continued its commitment to a rich educational environment that included a robust music program from grades 4 to 12. With continued expansion of the “Marching Blue Devils” marching band and a rich choral music program, Randolph is gaining a regional reputation as a school of choice for those with a musical inclination.

The district’s athletic programs continue to gain recognition in the area of sportsmanship as well as with improved win-loss records. With the addition of the new athletic facility Randolph hosted its first home track meet in over a decade. Both the music and athletic programs add tremendous value to the student’s education as well as to the community.

Much can be said about the challenges facing the Randolph Public Schools. Much more has been said about what is or is not being done to make the school department once again the pride of the community. The community is clearly losing its patience with the district’s well documented struggles and the expectation of improved results is understood. Yet, that impatience should not lead to a continual change of direction and leadership. The district and its leaders must decide on a course and stay on that course no matter the short-term outcomes. The AIP has proven its worth in focusing the district on a limited number of initiatives, in setting measurable benchmarks, and in developing practices that can be institutionalized. Change is both a force for improvement and a barrier to improvement for the Randolph Public Schools. It is the community’s patience that will determine which force ultimately wins out.

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