

WELLESLEY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Learning • Caring • Innovating



DISTRICT PROGRESS REPORT

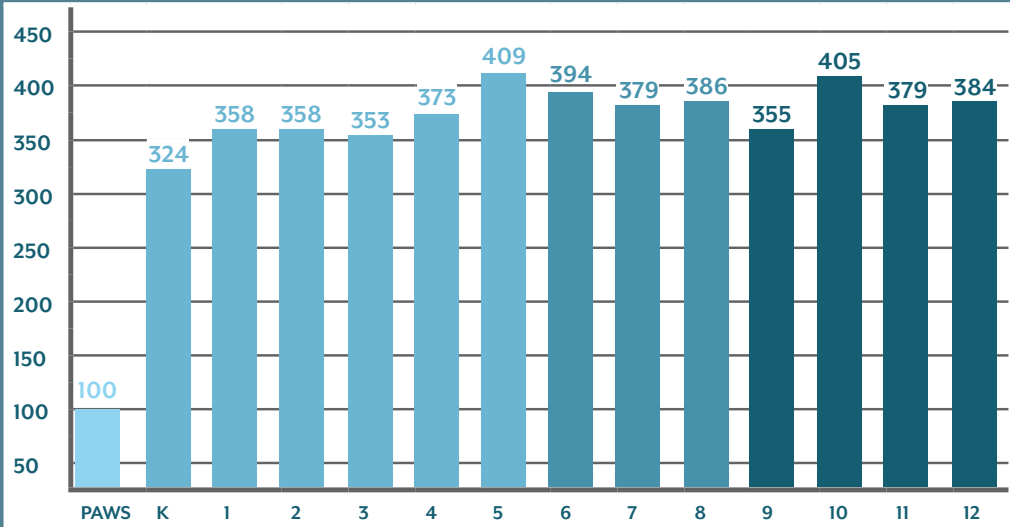


2018-2019
SCHOOL YEAR

2018-2019 School Year - At a Glance

ENROLLMENT

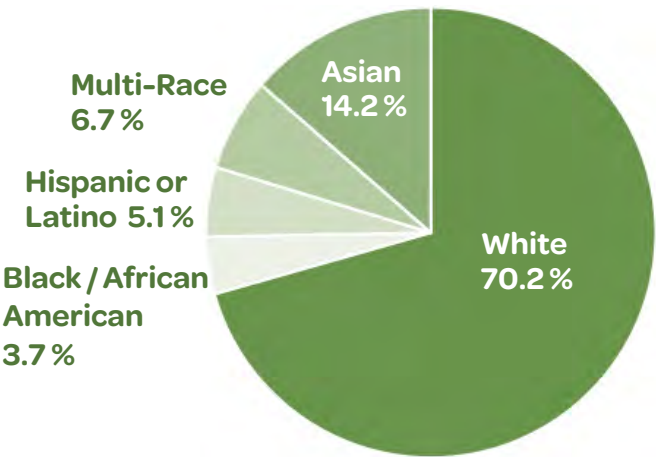
4,963 Total Students



P.A.W.S. (Pre-K)	100
Bates Elementary	357
Fiske Elementary	291
Hardy Elementary	287
Hunnewell Elementary	260
Schofield Elementary	382
Sprague Elementary	366
Upham Elementary	232
Wellesley Middle School	1159
Wellesley High School	1529

OUR STUDENTS

Demographics by Race/Ethnicity

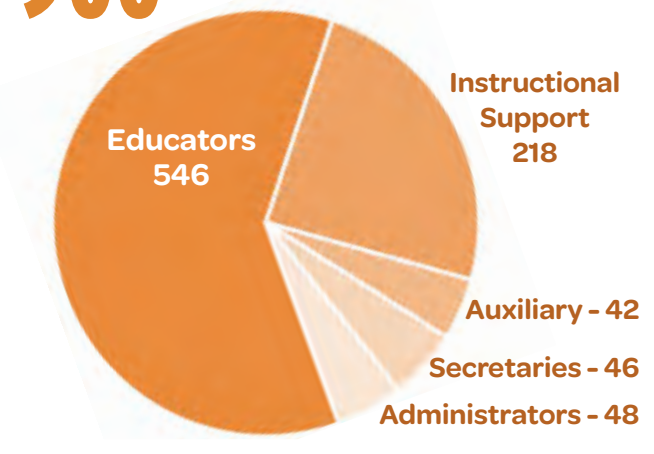


Special Populations

	WELLESLEY	MA
English Learners (EL)	2.3 %	10.5 %
Economically Disadvantaged	5.6 %	31.2 %
Students with Disabilities	16 %	18.1 %

OUR STAFF

900 Total Employees



514 Teaching staff members hold an advanced degree.

DESE District Profile

	WELLESLEY	MA
Teacher Retention Rate	92.6%	86.9%
Experienced Teachers	90.3%	82.6%



WELLESLEY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

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SCHOOL COMMITTEE

Melissa Martin, Chair
Linda Chow, Vice Chair
Matthew Kelley, Secretary
Sharon Gray, Member
Jim Roberti, Member

PRINCIPALS

P.A.W.S. Preschool
Rebecca Zieminski, Director
781-446-6222

Bates Elementary
Toni Jolley
781-446-6260

Fiske Elementary
Rachel McGregor
781-446-6265

Hardy Elementary
Charlene Cook
781-446-6270

Hunnewell Elementary
Ellen Quirk
781-446-6275

Schofield Elementary
Gerardo J. Martinez
781-446-6280

Sprague Elementary
Leigh Petrowsky
781-263-1965

Upham Elementary
Jeffery Dees
781-446-6285

Wellesley Middle School
Mark Ito
781-446-6250

Wellesley High School
Dr. Jamie Chisum
781-446-6290

CENTRAL OFFICE

781-446-6200
Superintendent x5605
Teaching & Learning x5602
Finance & Operations x5611
Student Services x5629

Dear Members of the Wellesley Community:

We are proud to present our annual progress report, reflecting the work of the Wellesley Public Schools (WPS) in 2018-19. This report represents the District's ongoing effort to communicate our progress to the entire community.

Coming to the end of the District's five-year strategic plan, SY 2018-19 was a year in which WPS continued to operationalize programs consistent with that original plan while also looking ahead to the future to shape the next strategic plan.

The successes of WPS over the last five years are considerable and include a number of programmatic highlights such as transitioning to tuition-free, full-day kindergarten, phasing in an Elementary world language program, committing to an ambitious equity agenda, expanding STEAM (science, technology, engineering, arts & math) offerings, and remaining focused on social and emotional learning as evidenced through the Challenge Success Program at WHS and WMS.

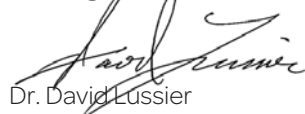
As we look ahead to the next strategic plan, WPS continues to calibrate our work with 21st century expectations for students. A key component of this direction is the District's Profile of a Graduate (POG), a framework approved in 2018-19 after considerable development and vetting. The POG represents the most important competencies we want to develop in all students. Many of these competencies are clearly being deployed in the rapidly expanding project-based learning offerings throughout the District.

At the same time, challenging decisions lie before us. Nowhere is this clearer than in the Hardy/Hunnewell/Upham facilities projects. The planning for these projects has occurred over many years to address fundamental deficiencies in these schools and declining student enrollment, and offers an opportunity to design the schools we want for our children in the future.

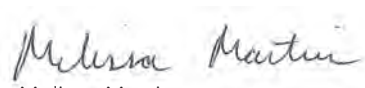
In the report that follows, we highlight the progress we made, as well as the challenges we faced, in the past year. As always, we hope this report clearly reflects our ongoing commitment to the District's core values.

We remain grateful for the strong support of the Wellesley community, a key aspect of our success. We hope this report reinforces confidence in our collective work and engenders excitement in the direction of WPS on behalf of all students.

Best regards,



Dr. David Lussier
Superintendent of Schools

Melissa Martin
Chair, School Committee



OUR DISTRICT'S CORE VALUES

Academic Excellence

Respect for
Human Differences

Commitment to
Community

Cooperative & Caring
Relationships

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PEER DISTRICT COMPARISONS



WPS School Committee

From left: Jim Roberti, Melissa Martin, Sharon Gray, Linda Chow & Matt Kelley

CONTACT THE SCHOOL COMMITTEE

wellesleys.org/schoolcommittee

School_Committee@wellesleys.org

ATTEND A MEETING

School Committee meetings are typically held on Tuesdays at Town Hall.

Stay up-to-date on times and agendas at:
wellesleyma.gov/agendacenter

WATCH A MEETING ONLINE

wellesleymedia.org

COVER PHOTOS: **Top Left** - A member of the 2019 WHS girls' track team competes. (photo by J. Jordahl & M. Henry),
Top Right - Fifth grade Sprague students complete a science investigation. (photo by Nancy Bentley)
Middle - Hunnewell students have a conversation in Spanish with Sra. Álvaro and "Lola". (photo by Bárbara Barnett)
Bottom - WMS students perform *High School Musical JR.* (photo by Sandy Sandwich)

A. KNOWLEDGE AND COMPETENCIES

Wellesley Public Schools (WPS) continues its journey to embed the principles of 21st century learning across the District in order to create a rich learning environment that prepares students for college, career, and life. The **Profile of a Graduate (POG)**, developed in 2017-18, creates a vision for the six core competencies which the District will seek to develop in all of its students over their years in WPS.

Renewing the Strategic Plan

By design, the **POG** launched work to renew the WPS strategic plan. In December 2018, a **Strategic Planning Advisory Committee** was formed, composed of 24 WPS students, parents, staff, School Committee, and community members. Over the course of six months, the group provided input to WPS leadership to inform the next iteration of the plan. Key activities included

- Reviewing the 2013-19 strategic plan and accomplishments
- Conducting an assessment: Where are we now?
- Researching and reviewing peer organizations' strategic plans
- Recommending how to incorporate the **POG** into the strategic plan and providing thoughtful feedback on several of the **POG** competencies that are less developed in the District at this early stage
- Building consensus on the draft strategic priorities for the next strategic plan
- Developing a structure for organizing strategic priorities and initiatives

As the school year ended, the **Strategic Planning Advisory Committee** provided their work to the administrative and academic leadership of the District, for their detailed review, refining, and writing. This work also informed their summer planning. The new plan will be launched in 2020.

Profile of a Graduate



WHS Class of 2019 graduates.
Photo Courtesy of WHS Yearbook 2019

WELLESLEY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

PROFILE OF A GRADUATE

WPS aspires to be a school system that develops the heads, hearts, and hands of its students by inspiring them to:



Think Critically and Solve Problems

Create and Innovate

Communicate and Collaborate

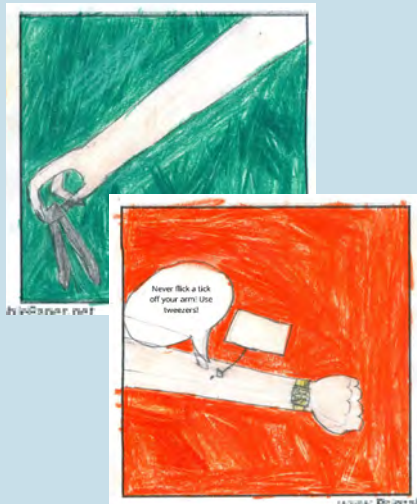
Engage Locally and Globally

Respect Human Differences and Challenge Inequities

Attend to Physical, Social, and Emotional Health

Project Based Learning

Project Based Learning (PBL) engages students in real work for real audiences, enabling them to connect to their communities, practice 21st century skills, and deepen their learning.



Fifth Grade Students at Sprague Elementary School get "Ticked Off"

Ken Craig, special educator **Rachel Silver**, and librarian **Sara Jauniskis**, created a community building project-based learning opportunity for their fifth grade students. Using a tick bite as a jumping off point, they investigated Lyme disease, researched the growing incidences of tick-borne diseases with the help of real-world guests from the community, arrived at possible solutions to the problem, and created final products to convey their messages to different audiences. Projects included a public service announcement that aired on community access TV, a newspaper article for the *Wellesley Townsman*, a presentation to the Board of Selectmen, a website, and a *graphic novel (excerpt pictured left)* designed for fellow students at Sprague. Mr. Craig noticed that his students were emotionally invested in the project, which led to success.

"Parents and kids told me how proud they felt because they succeeded in something, including kids that had not had a lot of previous traditional academic success in the past."
- Ken Craig



Sprague fifth graders create a video PSA.
Images courtesy of Ken Craig

"Hero-crazy" at Wellesley Middle School (WMS)

After studying heroes and their journeys in mythology and more contemporary fiction and nonfiction with their students, sixth grade social studies teachers **Jonathan Rabinowitz** and **Lisa Driver** dressed up as superheroes to hook their classes into thinking about what it means to be a hero. Students worked in groups to identify community heroes, interviewed their heroes, and gave presentations in their homerooms. An event honoring their heroes at the Tolles Parsons Center gave kids an authentic audience, as did the middle school Thanksgiving assembly, where students thanked their heroes. As a result of **PBL**, Ms. Driver observed, "Kids became more independent and self-confident. They felt comfortable



WMS students honor their hero, Sue Webb.
Photo courtesy of Lisa Driver

advocating for themselves in different situations." For both teachers, **PBL** has become a way of doing business in the classroom. For Mr. Rabinowitz, **PBL** "makes teaching more fun" and has empowered him to connect with the greater community to support student learning.

Wellesley High School (WHS) Students Share the Gift of Books

At the high school, English teachers used **PBL** to connect students and the community around books. In **Stephen Bresnahan's** ninth grade Advanced College Preparatory English class, students chose someone they loved and curated a poetry collection for that person. His class partnered with art teacher **Amie Larson** to learn book-making skills and created books as gifts for their subject. Students presented their books at a poetry reading exhibition, to which their loved ones were invited.

English teachers **Christine Kerr** and **Luke Day** brought their ninth and twelfth grade College Preparatory students together in cross-grade literature circles, giving the older and younger students opportunities to learn from one another. After getting to know one another and reading books in common, students created trailer videos for their books, which were linked to QR codes on shelf tags displayed at **Wellesley Books** just in time for the winter holidays.

MCAS RESULTS SPRING 2019



Meets or Exceeds Expectations

ELA	Gr. 3-8	52%	79%
MATH	Gr. 3-8	49%	75%
SCIENCE	Gr. 5 & 8	48%	73%
ELA	Gr. 10	61%	85%
MATH	Gr. 10	59%	89%

Advanced or Proficient

SCIENCE (Grade 10)	74%	96%
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Figure 1 - Source, Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE)

Accountability & Assessment

State Accountability and MCAS

The District values the **Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE)** accountability system as a monitor of success in meeting student needs. The reports provide information to help the District adjust instruction and identify patterns of unmet needs. Indicators include achievement (ELA, Math, and Science MCAS scaled scores), growth across achievement levels (ELA and Math MCAS student growth percentiles), English Learners (EL) language progress (ACCESS scores), high school completion (graduation rate, extended engagement rate, and dropout rate), and additional indicators (advanced coursework rate, chronic absenteeism). **DESE** sets improvement targets for each indicator, individualized for each district. In 2019, the District met or exceeded targets for nearly every indicator.

District leaders use accountability reports for specific groups to analyze patterns of unmet needs. Though the High Needs group (Economically Disadvantaged Students, Students with Disabilities, English Learners, and Former English Learners) is making substantial progress toward meeting targets, and the overall narrative for most students is positive, the data reveal opportunity gaps. Specifically, the District seeks to better address the needs of its African American/Black and Hispanic/Latino students. In 2018, in response to these persistent gaps, the District established a K-8 Math Opportunity & Achievement Gap Task Force, which is engaged in ongoing investigation and action to better meet the needs of all students at the individual, classroom, school, and district levels.

Students with Disabilities

Wellesley High School students with disabilities' average scaled scores were at the 94th (ELA) and 97th (Math) percentiles compared to the average scaled scores of students with disabilities from all public schools across the state.

Data in Context

While standardized achievement tests cannot measure everything the District teaches or values, they provide important data regarding student achievement and growth. They help inform curriculum and instruction, supporting teachers to better meet students' needs. The District uses these data along with information from measures of school climate and student health and behaviors, such as VOCAL and the MetroWest Adolescent Health Survey, and other district measures, such as standards-based report cards and PBL rubrics, to inform the next strategic plan and ensure that the needs of every child are met.

U.S.	MA	W
2019 SAT Average Composite Score		
1059	1120	1253
2019 ACT Average Composite Score		
20.7	25.5	28.4
2018-19 AP Exam % Scored 3 or Higher		
59.1%	68.7%	93.3%

Figure 2 - Source, College Board

Schools of Recognition

Four Wellesley elementary schools — **Hardy, Fiske, Bates, and Sprague** — were among 67 schools in Massachusetts that earned **School of Recognition** designations for high growth and/or high achievement from **DESE**.



FOCUS AREA I: PREPARING OUR STUDENTS

B. SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL LEARNING

Challenge Success is a national, non-profit organization that partners with schools and families to provide kids with the academic, social, and emotional skills needed to succeed now and in the future, encouraging educators to create policies and practices that, according to the **Challenge Success** website, “foster interpersonal and collaborative skills, adaptability and resilience, and the critical thinking and creativity needed to solve complex problems.”

At the start of the 2018-2019 school year, WMS administrators, faculty, and parents formed a committee to work directly with **Challenge Success** in an effort to help their students build resilience, create balance, experience different types of success, and increase independent and critical thought. They join WHS, which has been working with **Challenge Success** since the fall of 2016.

In the fall of 2018, nearly all 1,114 WMS students and 49% of parents provided input by completing the Stanford Survey of Adolescent Experiences. After the survey, a team of parents, staff, and administrators analysed the data and pinpointed three areas of focus: homework, family engagement, and grade transition support. **Principal Mark Ito** and middle school **Challenge Success** team members attended **Challenge Success** conferences and have since worked to revise the middle school’s homework policy.

“WMS is proud to connect **Challenge Success** with our greater commitment to Social and Emotional Learning,” said Ito.

Challenge Success @ WMS

Key Focus Areas

Explore **FAMILY ENGAGEMENT** including the use of technology and how it relates to school/life balance.

Understand **HOMEWORK** better by exploring its philosophy and purpose, use as an assessment, time management, and how it relates to stress.

Understand a student’s **TRANSITION** from grades 6 to 8 to identify ways we can provide more effective support and engagement.

“We all want our kids to do well in school and to master certain skills and concepts, but our largely singular focus on academic achievement has resulted in a lack of attention to other components of a successful life – the ability to be independent, adaptable, ethical, and engaged critical thinkers.”

- ChallengeSuccess.org



Dr. Lisa Damour
Photo courtesy of Dr. Damour

Community Engagement and Parent Education

On March 13, **Dr. Lisa Damour**, psychologist, author, teacher, speaker, and consultant visited the District, speaking with students, meeting with educators, and presenting to parents. With the wisdom she’s built from years of clinical experience and a healthy dose of humor, Damour talked about healthy and unhealthy anxiety and gave students, teachers, and parents strategies for coping, rest, and recovery. Though she is known for her work with girls, Damour’s talk resonated across the gender continuum.

Damour writes the monthly Adolescence column for the New York Times and is a regular contributor at CBS News. She is the author of the New York Times best-selling books **Untangled: Guiding Teenage Girls Through the Seven Stages of Adulthood** and **under pressure: Confronting the Epidemic of Stress and Anxiety in Girls**.

Dr. Damour’s visit was made possible with additional support from the **Central Council of PTOs** and the **Wellesley Hills Junior Women’s Club**.

Extracurricular Activities

VISUAL ARTS

47% of WHS students took an art class during the 2018-2019 school year.

76 Boston Globe Scholastic Awards **1** National Scholastic Art & Writing Award



Photos courtesy of Page Waterman NEXT UP! website

NEXT UP! Page Waterman Art Gallery WHS Award Winners 2019
Left: *Run, Run Little One* by Erin Barry, 2nd Place - 2D Art
Right: *Fxyz Orbital* by Javier Lopez, 3rd Place - 3D Art

ATHLETICS

81% of the class of 2019 played a sport.

4 State Championships in 2018-2019

2019 State Champ 4x800 relay team.
Photo courtesy of Raiders Athletics



PERFORMING ARTS

39% of WHS students participated in performing arts last year.

36 students in All-Eastern District Ensembles **9** students in All-State



The WHS cast of Spamalot! performs.
Photo courtesy of George Luozzi

Building Connections & Exploring Interests

At the high school **The Enrichment Education Program (ERP)** provides clubs and recreational activities for students every day after school, creating space for *playtime, downtime, and family time* (PDF). There is no fee to participate and no long-term commitment required.

The **ERP** program grew out of a desire to find ways for faculty and students to connect outside the classroom around their passions. Originally funded by a gift from a private donor to help the school nurture such connections, funding for the successful program has since been rolled into the operating budget. Initial offerings included clay with kids, knitting, and fly-tying and have grown to include activities such as *Let's Talk About Race*, Friday afternoon movies, Friday Morning Announcements, S.T.E.M Club, American Sign Language, *Friends Forever*, Ping Pong, digital art, and ultimate frisbee. Each fall, students can suggest ideas for clubs and partner with educators to make them happen. The expansion of the program highlights that kids are finding ways to connect with other students and faculty on a personal level, building community at the high school, and helping to ensure that no student slips through the cracks.

The high school is fortunate to have community support for PDF and the **ERP** from the PTSO, Community Investors, and the Wellesley Recreation Department.



WHS students participate in ERP afterschool programs.
Photos courtesy of Amie Larson

86 Clubs met at WHS last year.

225 WHS Students were part of the National Honor Society during the 2018-2019 school year.






C. GLOBAL CITIZENSHIP

WPS Achievement in an International Context

In 2019, 83 15-year old students took the **Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA)**, conducted by the **Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD)**. Wellesley outperformed the United States in reading, math, and science, and performed at the top of selected countries and economies from across the globe. *See Figure 3.*

The **global** score represents the mean of all **PISA** 2015 participants (72 countries) including: Australia, Brazil, Canada, China, Finland, Germany, Hong Kong, Russia, and Singapore. **PISA** is based on a 200-800 score range.

Figure 3 - **OECD / PISA Average Scaled Scores** based on a 200-800 range. Source: OECD / PISA

	 U.S.	
Science		
493	496	559
Mathematics		
490	470	590
Reading		
493	497	564



WHS Art Department Trip to China

For fourteen days last April, 21 students and three chaperones traveled to China as part of the Art department’s spring trip. Led by **K-12 Director of Art Thom Carter**, travelers visited Beijing, Xian, Guilin, Shanghai, Suzhou, and Hong Kong, immersing themselves in the art and culture of a place very different from Wellesley, Massachusetts. Additionally, the trip offered students who take Chinese language classes the opportunity to apply their knowledge and become teacher/translators for students and chaperones who didn’t speak Chinese and those they encountered who didn’t speak English. “The interaction with students their own age or younger (as it was break time for some Chinese schools) was priceless,” said Carter. Those interactions included a pickup game of hacky sack with some senior citizens in Hutong center square.

The Seal of Biliteracy

In March, the School Committee unanimously voted to approve WPS participation in the **Seal of Biliteracy** Program. The Seal is awarded to students who have attained proficiency in English (as measured by the MCAS) and at least one other language by high school graduation, as measured by the **American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages’** performance assessments, available in 12 languages. The Seal recognizes high school graduates who attain high functional and academic levels of proficiency in English and a foreign language, meaning that those students can communicate in those languages in authentic, real-life situations.



The Seal is a key element of the 2017 **Language Opportunities for Our Kids Act (LOOK Act)**. This legislation offers districts more flexibility in their language acquisition programs while still maintaining accountability for timely and effective English language acquisition. Within the **LOOK Act**, the Seal is a distinction that encourages students to pursue biliteracy, honors the skills students attain, and can be evidence of skills attractive to future employers and college admissions officers.

WPS students who meet the requirements for the Seal will receive this designation in the form of an insignia affixed to their transcripts as well as to their diplomas.

YES - Young Ethnic Scholars

"We are Young Ethnic Scholars, students of color and allies alike who partake in our school community. We are walking out in the face of racial injustice in our community. We are walking out to give a voice to the voiceless. We are walking out to show you our pain. We desire our voices to be heard and positive changes to be enacted. Most of all, we desire to stand as equal, integral parts of this community."

These were the words of Manny Bernardo '19 as he gave a brief announcement over the loudspeakers, signaling the beginning of a walkout.

Students of color and minorities, as well as their allies, chose to make their voices of frustration heard that day on April 2 with a sit-in, chants, and speeches.

Led by the new group called Young Ethnic Scholars (YES), students protested the high

school's culture surrounding race by staging a sit-in and then a walk out. Accompanied by allies, faculty, and local press, approximately 300 people participated in the gathering at the football field.

The actions YES asked for were a mandatory school-wide course on race and privilege, the hiring of equity coaches, mandatory teacher training with students of color, and the development of an action plan to hire more minority teachers. They also demanded that students of color be directly involved in the hiring process of the school district's new Director of Diversity.

Mr. Andrew Kelton, one of the high school's assistant principals, emphasized the administration's role in improving current racial relations.

"I hope [the racial climate] doesn't look like the way it does now. If it does ten years from

now, we [as administrators] have failed. If you came to Wellesley High School as a freshman and if you leave as a senior as the same young person, we've failed you," said Kelton.



Excerpted from *The Bradford: Wellesley High School's Student News Publication*

Max Tracey '19 - Executive Editor Emeritus, Ian Lei '21, Felipe Lopez '22 - Co-Features Editor, and Co-News Editor

Preparing for Life After WPS

The WHS Special Education department initiated a partnership with the **Charles River Center** in Needham to facilitate participation in the **Massachusetts Rehabilitation Commission's Pre-Employment Transition Services (Pre-ETS)** program. Through this partnership, several students from the high school's Special Education program accessed local community based support seminars focused on such critical post-secondary transition skills such as: **self advocacy, workplace readiness, work-based learning, and educational and vocational counseling.**

Pre-ETS FIVE CORE SERVICES



Job Exploration Counseling



Workplace Readiness Training



Counseling on Post-secondary Education or Training



Self-advocacy and Peer Mentoring



Work-based Learning Experiences

**Where
in the
World is
Mrs. McGregor?**

Where in the World is Mrs. McGregor?

The Fiske Elementary School community is very proud of the many cultures represented in their school. Each week the school highlights a country with "Where in the World is Mrs. McGregor?" Each day the announcements reveal a student-generated clue about the mystery country. Students spend the week trying to guess the country. Every Monday, students find out the answer and the process begins again.

Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion

During SY18-19, the **Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Leadership Council (Council)** continued its work through action committees focused on curriculum review, professional development, school culture, and family engagement. Recommendations included expanding professional development opportunities to support educators with culturally responsive teaching practices and offering affinity groups for staff.

Additionally, the **Council** membership expanded as Wellesley Public Schools (WPS) educators with deep knowledge and expertise of gender identity and expression (GIE) joined the team and supported work through the GIE lens. The district partnered with the **Department of Education’s (DESE’s) Office of Safe and Supportive Schools** and with the national nonprofit organization, **Welcoming Schools**, to provide “Gender 101” learning sessions in all elementary schools. The goals for these sessions included deepening understanding of GIE and equipping teachers with skills and strategies that promote welcoming and inclusive classrooms.

The Wellesley Middle School (WMS) Special Education department has committed to providing opportunities for their educators to share experiences and challenges related to race, become more comfortable engaging in difficult conversations, reflect on their own practice and implicit bias, and set professional practice goals.

Other highlights included the release of a WPS screening tool for instructional materials entitled, **The Seven Forms of Bias in Instructional Materials** (informed by the work of *The Myra Sadker Foundation*). This checklist (excerpt at right) supports educators as they select and review their materials through the lenses of bias and stereotypes.

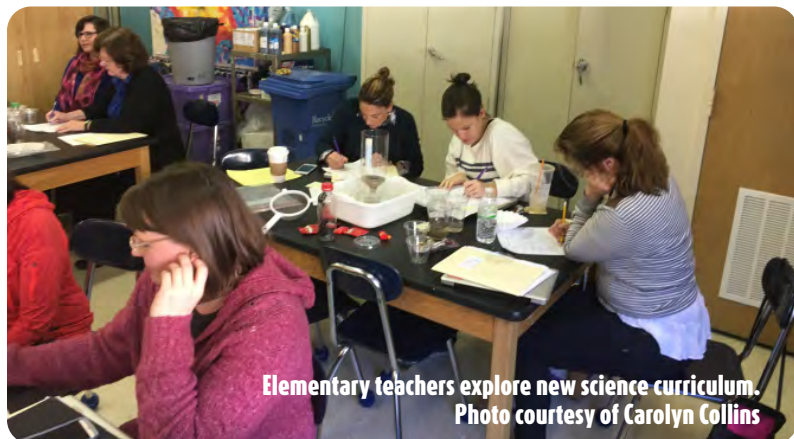
The Seven Forms of Bias in Instructional Materials	
1	INVISIBILITY: What you don't see makes a lasting impression When groups are excluded from instructional materials, students' knowledge is left to general knowledge, chance, and stereotypes.
2	STEREOTYPING: Shortcuts to Bigotry Stereotypes are often negative, and even when they seem positive, they can be problematic and harmful.
3	IMBALANCE & SELECTIVITY: A Tale Half Told Curriculum may perpetuate bias by presenting only one interpretation of an issue, situation, or group of people.
4	UNREALITY: Rose Colored Glasses The tendency of instructional materials to gloss over unpleasant facts and events in our history.
5	FRAGMENTATION & ISOLATION: The Parts Are Less than the Whole Ever notice a “special” chapter or insert appearing in a text? Fragmentation emerges when a group is physically or visually isolated in the text.
6	LINGUISTIC BIAS: Words Count Language can be a powerful conveyor of bias, in both blatant and subtle forms.
7	COSMETIC BIAS: “Shiny” Covers This bias is an “illusion of equity” which suggests that a text is bias free. Beyond the attractive covers, photos, or posters, bias persists.



NEASC Accreditation

Once a decade, a team from the **New England Association of Schools and Colleges (NEASC)** visits Wellesley High School (WHS) to review the school’s accreditation. Preparation starts long before the on-site visit of the **NEASC** team, as high school staff and members of the broader Wellesley community first spend months reflecting and evaluating the school’s performance against the **NEASC** standards. In the spring of 2019, a team of **NEASC** peer reviewers spent time at WHS to observe, engage with staff, and complete their evaluation. WHS’s accreditation was renewed. **NEASC** commended WHS for the strength of community support and funding; the wide variety of course and activity offerings; the depth of supports

for the social and emotional wellness of students; and the higher order thinking and authentic learning opportunities in the classroom. The follow up from the **NEASC** survey is to submit a report in two years to note progress on the survey recommendations. Key areas of focus will include implementing a system for teaching, assessing, and communicating the **Profile of a Graduate**; increasing time for teacher collaboration to ensure consistency across courses and curriculum; and closing the achievement and opportunity gaps between and among groups of students.



Elementary teachers explore new science curriculum.
Photo courtesy of Carolyn Collins

PreK-5 Science Curriculum Review

Over the course of four years, over 50 classroom teachers, special educators, and EL teachers from across the District reviewed state and national standards, evaluated science curricula, piloted instructional materials, adapted units, and led professional development for their colleagues. In addition, teachers wrote seven new science units. With the rollout of the new WPS physical science units last year, the elementary science curriculum is now fully aligned with the Massachusetts frameworks and provides all PreK-5 students with rich experiences in all three strands of science — Earth, Life and Physical — engaging students in the science practices and offering explicit engineering instruction.

Chair Ceremony

In March, **Wellesley Education Foundation (WEF)** held the annual Chair Ceremony to honor WPS faculty and staff members who have contributed over 25 years of devoted service. This tradition brings together the community to reflect on the talent and dedication of the District's educators. Over 120 friends, family, and colleagues attended to celebrate, toast (and roast) the honorees with skits, poems, and personal speeches. In appreciation for their years of service, the ten honorees received a captain's chair embossed with the Town of Wellesley seal.



WPS faculty and staff honored for 25 years of service.
Photo courtesy of Beth Shedd

Honoring our Educators

Rebecca Blouwolff - Middle School - Classical & Modern Languages Teacher

The Northeast Conference on the Teaching of Foreign Languages named Ms. Blouwolff *Teacher of the Year*, as well as *Massachusetts Foreign Language Association's Teacher of the Year*. She was also awarded the *American Association of Teachers of French Dorothy Ludwig Excellence in Teaching Award for Middle School*.



Greg Bodkins - Middle School Industrial Technology & Engineering Teacher

Mr. Bodkins won the *2018 Green Difference Honorable Mention from Project Green Schools* based on his creation of an 8th grade course where students use the greenhouse to design sustainable hydroponic gardening systems.



Kathy Brophy - High School Fitness & Health Teacher

REACH Beyond Domestic Violence awarded *The Ruth and Virginia Bigwood Award* to Ms. Brophy for her work with *Power Up* at WHS.



Dr. Robert Cohen - High School - Math & Computer Science Teacher

The National Center for Women and Information Technology awarded Dr. Cohen the *2019 Massachusetts Educator Award* for encouraging high school women's interest and participation in technology pursuits.



Photos courtesy of awardees

Budget & Expenditures

The Wellesley Public Schools' (WPS) total budget is \$106.4 million from all funding sources (*e.g. local, state and federal* - See Figure 4). Its main source is municipal contributions, with 80.4% of its funding from the Town of Wellesley, and the remaining 19.6% from a variety of community, state, and federal funding sources. Fiske, Schofield and Wellesley High School receive Federal Title I funds. Developing the budget is a dynamic and iterative process that involves District administrators, School Committee, the Town's Advisory Committee, and ultimately Town Meeting.

WPS makes budgetary decisions based on best educational practices, learning needs of students, and the District's strategic priorities. A key principle has been to allocate a majority of resources (63.7%) to items that directly impact the classroom and student learning (*See Figure 5*). WPS continues to work on keeping the increase of administrative costs to 2% or less of the budget and on using incremental increases to support classroom instruction (*See Figure 6*).

In the spring of 2019, the School Committee and Town Meeting approved an FY'20 operational budget of \$76,783,930 without benefits, representing a 3.16% increase over the amended FY'19 budget. The budget was comprised of \$54,758,481 for Instruction, Administration, and Operations, and \$22,025,449 for Special Education. The School Committee and Town Meeting also approved an FY'20 Cash Capital Budget of \$1,101,028.

Figure 4 - Funding Sources

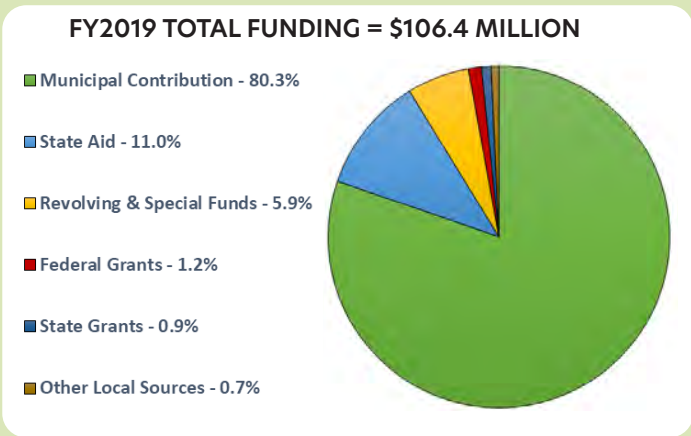


Figure 5 - Expenditures

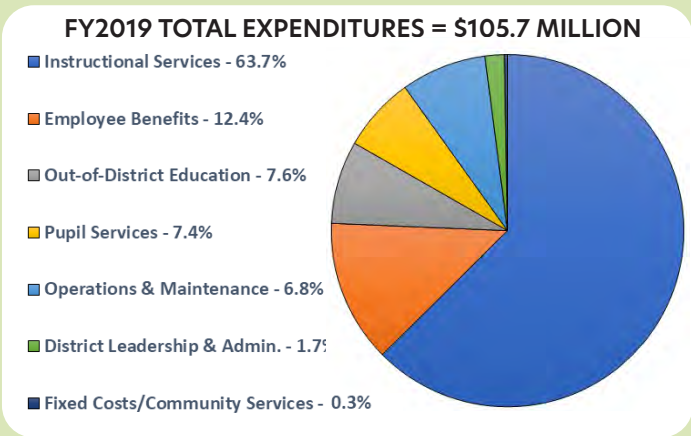


Figure 6 - Expenditures Over Time (FY2015 thru FY2019)



Data from Figures 4, 5 & 6 as well as additional data about the WPS School District can be found on cleargov.com.

Community Partnerships



STEM Expo

Wellesley Education Foundation (WEF) hosted the **4th Wellesley STEM Expo** in April 2019, which drew over 3,750 attendees of all ages from across the Metrowest area. The event brought together 110 high quality exhibits and 26 workshops, including WPS student, staff and club initiatives and WEF-funded STEM grants in action. A new feature for this Expo was an exhibit adapted from the **American Museum of Natural History, New York (AMNH)**, *"Picturing Science: Museum Scientists and Imaging Technologies"*. At the Expo, attendees could view the graphic panel exhibit while learning from an onsite scientist from **AMNH** who explained the technology and its significance to science. The keynote speaker, Boston University's **Dr. Cheryl Knott**, enthralled attendees with her presentation *"Face to Face with Orangutans"* which brought to life her work as a biological anthropologist who studies and works to protect the wild orangutans of Borneo. The STEM Expo was preceded by smaller events and challenges to build student interest and engagement, including workshops in computational thinking and an online challenge, and a Sustainability Challenge in partnership with **Sustainable Wellesley**.



WPS is a Green Ribbon School District

WPS was selected as a **2019 US Department of Education Green Ribbon School District Sustainability Awardee**. This award acknowledges Wellesley's commitment to sustainable practices and its leadership in school facilities, health, and sustainability learning. The award focused on improvements to building energy efficiencies, environmentally friendly cleaning practices, healthier food offerings, expansion of fitness programs and outdoor activities, and work around curricula focused on environmental awareness.

Partnerships with the *Wellesley Facilities Management Department*, *Whitsons School Nutrition*, and representatives of the *Municipal Light Plant* enabled WPS to attain this honor. The District continues to look for ways to expand our sustainability efforts.

PTOs: Enhancing the Student Experience

All of Wellesley's schools benefit from the tremendous support of **Parent Teacher Organizations (PTOs)**. Each year individual PTOs and the **PTO Central Council** support programs and events, and provide funding for resources for teachers and students. Through the generosity of their PTO, Bates Elementary School received new Imagination Playground Blocks during the 2018-2019 school year for use at recess. Students can now partake in STEAM activities during recess each week.



Facilities Master Plan

Elementary School Educational Visioning

The Hunnewell feasibility study last fall presented the District with the unique opportunity of undertaking a comprehensive educational visioning and planning process that brought together elementary school teachers and staff, parents, administration, curriculum specialists, and members of the community, as well as appointed and elected board members who represented numerous constituencies, to develop a shared vision for the new Hunnewell school. Every one of the elementary schools was represented, ensuring that the design of the new schools would reflect the needs of and goals for the District's entire elementary school community. The District developed a comprehensive Hunnewell educational plan (following the **Massachusetts School Building Authority's** format) which serves as an important guidepost for the design team and the community during this early conceptual planning phase. The plan also serves as the critical foundation upon which the educational plan for the second school, to be built at either the Hardy or Upham site, will be developed.

The School Committee approved the educational plan in March of 2019. It provides a comprehensive overview of the schools' and District's needs along with aspirations for a 21st Century facility. The following points in particular strongly informed the conceptual designs and selection of the preferred option:

- **Neighborhood Learning Communities**
- **Appropriate Spaces for Specialized Programs**
- **Indoor – Outdoor Connectivity**
- **Safety and Security**
- **Compact Design with Flexible Spaces**
- **Sustainability**



Renewing WPS Facilities

Wellesley Middle School (WMS) Piping Project:

Funding to repair and replace critical aspects of the steam heating system was approved at the 2019 Annual Town Meeting (ATM). Construction began in June of 2019 and is expected to be completed well ahead of schedule.

WMS Building Systems Design: Design funds were appropriated at the 2019 ATM and the design work began in June of 2019. The goal of this project is to provide a comprehensive update to WMS, specifically to key building areas including the kitchen, exterior façade, art rooms, selected doors and classroom cabinetry, and HVAC systems in the gymnasiums and auditorium. Construction funding is anticipated to be requested at a Special Town Meeting and via a debt exclusion in the fall of 2020, with the work expected to take place in 2021.

Hunnewell and Hardy/Upham Project Update

In October 2018, Town Meeting overwhelmingly approved \$2.5 million in funding for feasibility and schematic design for a new Hardy or Upham school. The Town is partnering with the **Massachusetts School Building Authority (MSBA)** on that project, which is on track to receive state reimbursement for a minimum of 31 percent of eligible costs. The feasibility study on the Hardy and Upham sites is ongoing; the current schedule calls for a recommended plan for building an 18-classroom school at either the Hardy or Upham site to be determined this spring, and submitted to the **MSBA** Board of Directors in June of 2020.

In the spring of 2019, upon the recommendation of the School Building Committee, the School Committee and the Board of Selectmen approved an all-new Hunnewell School that will also allow for three classrooms per grade, meet current state standards, and provide purpose-driven spaces for the Therapeutic Learning Center (TLC) in-district specialized program.

Both the Hunnewell and Hardy/Upham projects are scheduled to seek final project approval from Town Meeting and the voters in the spring of 2021, with Hunnewell scheduled to open in 2023 and either Hardy or Upham to open in 2024.

STAY UP TO DATE ON HHU Visit the website: wellesleyhhu.org Email the School Building Committee: sbc@wellesleyma.gov

Excellence in public schools is not a destination, but an ongoing process grounded in a commitment to continuous improvement. The Wellesley Public Schools (WPS) remains on this journey, balancing a confidence generated by our success with a recognition that we have much work to do to ensure the success of all students. With this in mind, the road ahead for WPS will see the District remaining focused on many of the same areas that have guided our work to date.

In terms of our programming, WPS will continue to calibrate its work with the competencies that comprise our Profile of a Graduate (POG). Increasingly, our aim will be to create opportunities to bundle interdisciplinary content and skills with real-world issues. One of the challenges that we will face in this effort is considering what elements of our prior work may be phased-out to make space for new instructional opportunities. Additionally, providing enough time and staff development for our team will remain essential as we build the District's capacity to engage in this work in a meaningful way.























Another ongoing area of focus for the District will be Social and Emotional Learning (SEL). Not only does SEL represent a set of interpersonal skills we want to develop in all students as well an understanding of emotional and physical self-care, SEL also represents a filter we must have in assessing the culture that exists within school and community for all students. We continue to monitor high stress levels for students, particularly among our adolescent girls, that must inform our efforts. An ongoing challenge for our community is how to balance high expectations for students while simultaneously providing them with a safe space to explore, take risks, and, yes, to fail.

Very much related to SEL is the District's equity agenda. While WPS remains committed to providing a safe, supportive, and inclusive environment where all students can thrive, it's clear that this is not the case today. We will continue to be active in our efforts to diversify our staff, provide training on cultural proficiency, and hold ourselves accountable for disproportionate results for students.

Of course, having the appropriate resources to support the District's goals is essential, and WPS will continue to work with town leaders on a strategy to support school budgets that do more than just maintain the status quo. With significant town capital projects on the horizon, including new schools, balancing long-term debt with annual operating budgets will require a high level of communication, coordination, and transparency.

And finally, the District's Facilities Master Plan and, particularly, the need to build new elementary schools, will remain a signature effort in the near future. While the community faces difficult decisions moving forward, we also have an unprecedented opportunity to design instructional spaces for the future that are aligned with our vision of teaching and learning for all students.

A Look Back At The 2013-19 Strategic Plan

I. Preparing our Students		II. Investing in our Educators		III. Maximizing our Resources	
Close achievement gaps among students		Develop professional learning communities		Develop a facilities master plan	
Expand support for differentiated learning		Enhance recruiting, mentoring, and induction efforts		Establish Innovation Fund at each school	
Develop district-wide assessment strategy		Further develop educator appraisal system		Reduce burden of activity fees on families & reliance on donations	
Implement House model at WHS		Maintain competitive salary levels		 = complete  = in progress  = not yet started	
Strengthen early childhood education: Transition to full-day Kindergarten		Create leadership development program			
Increase support for transition years					
Integrate Common Core, 21st century skills, and interdisciplinary approaches					
Strengthen and expand district STEM offerings					
Implement K-12 World Language program					
Expand opportunities for experiential learning at every grade					
Establish external partnerships for further content enrichment					

This District Progress Report, compiled under the supervision of the Superintendent's Office, reflects a coordinated effort between all District administrators.

District Progress Report Team

Dr. Anne Beauchamp, Coordinator for Curriculum, Assessment & Accountability
Beth Bergeron, WPS Instructional Materials Coordinator
Amanda Brown, WHS English Teacher and Bradford Advisor
Linda Chow, School Committee Vice Chair
Dr. Joan Dabrowski, Assistant Superintendent for Teaching and Learning
Dr. David Lussier, Superintendent
Jennifer Madden, Sponsor Coordinator
Victoria Ostler, WEF Board Member

PEER DISTRICT COMPARISONS

	Spending Per Pupil Expenditure 2017-2018	Average Teacher Compensa- tion 2017-2018	Student to Teacher Ratio 2018-2019	Graduation Rate 2018	Attendance Rate 2018-2019	Composite Average SAT 2018-2019	% Advanced Placement Courses: Score of 3+ 2018-2019
DISTRICT	AMOUNT	AMOUNT	RATIO	RATE	RATE	SCORE	PERCENT
Belmont	\$14,246	\$90,616	16.6 to 1	97.9	97	1236	91
Brookline	\$19,922	\$95,208	12.2 to 1	92.8	96	1265	93
Concord*	\$19,916	\$99,501	12.6 to 1	-	96	-	-
Concord-Carlisle	\$22,472	\$102,630	12.5 to 1	97.6	95	1271	94
Dover-Sherborn	\$20,970	\$94,331	11.2 to 1	98.2	96	1252	96
Lexington	\$18,747	\$84,840	11.8 to 1	95.6	97	1324	94
Lincoln*	\$23,426	\$89,195	10.1 to 1	-	95	-	-
Lincoln-Subury	\$21,778	\$102,175	12.1 to 1	97.4	97	1244	98
Medfield	\$15,890	\$87,170	12.8 to 1	97.4	96	1206	82
Natick	\$16,393	\$77,049	13.3 to 1	97.5	96	1168	85
Needham	\$18,149	\$95,184	14.0 to 1	96.8	96	1226	91
Newton	\$19,349	\$82,045	12.0 to 1	96.2	96	1263	91
Sudbury*	\$16,556	\$89,124	13.2 to 1	-	97	-	-
Wayland	\$18,751	\$97,739	12.5 to 1	97.2	97	1256	91
Wellesley	\$19,381	\$95,371	12.6 to 1	97.1	96	1253	93
Weston	\$25,367	\$101,652	12.0 to 1	98.0	96	1279	85
Winchester	\$14,122	\$79,245	13.1 to 1	93.5	96	1253	92

Source: Department of Education School Profile Reporting 2019

* Concord, Lincoln, and Sudbury are K-8 districts only.
They are regional school districts for Grs. 9-12



Bates students work as a group on math.
Photo by Jen MacPherson



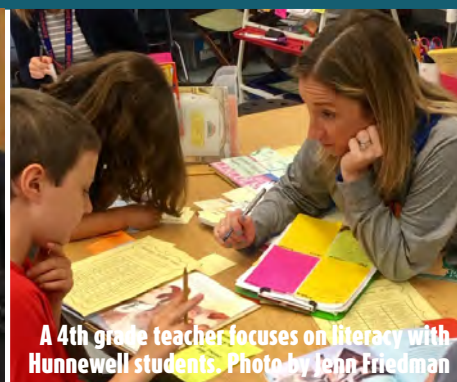
WHS student
throws pottery.
Photo by Amie Larson



WMS students run the 2019 Mini Marathon
Photo by Mark Ito

	Grades 3-8 % Meet or Exceed Expectations MCAS ELA 2019	Grades 3-8 % Meet or Exceed Expectations MCAS Math 2019	Grades 5-8 % Meet or Exceed Expectations MCAS Science 2019	Grade 10 % Meet or Exceed Expectations MCAS ELA 2019	Grade 10 % Meet or Exceed Expectations MCAS Math 2019	% Advanced & Proficient 10th Grade MCAS Science 2019
DISTRICT	PERCENT	PERCENT	PERCENT	PERCENT	PERCENT	PERCENT
Belmont	80	80	84	90	91	97
Brookline	76	73	69	83	83	90
Concord	76	73	71	-	-	-
Concord-Carlisle	-	-	-	86	88	98
Dover-Sherborn	77	77	81	89	91	98
Lexington	79	82	78	90	94	97
Lincoln	61	59	55	-	-	-
Lincoln-Subury	-	-	-	86	86	92
Medfield	75	71	69	79	83	93
Natick	68	66	61	77	79	94
Needham	76	73	70	84	88	90
Newton	73	73	66	78	84	91
Sudbury	76	73	71	-	-	-
Wayland	77	77	74	87	87	98
Wellesley	79	75	73	85	89	96
Weston	83	81	78	88	87	90
Winchester	81	79	78	85	86	93

Source: Commonwealth of Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education website.
 2019 MCAS data for all students, all grades. Test data for Concord is Concord-Carlisle in grades 9-12.
 Test data for Dover & Sherborn is Dover-Sherborn in grades 6-12.



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The 150th Graduation Ceremony of Wellesley High School
Photo Courtesy of 2019 Wellesley High School Yearbook.