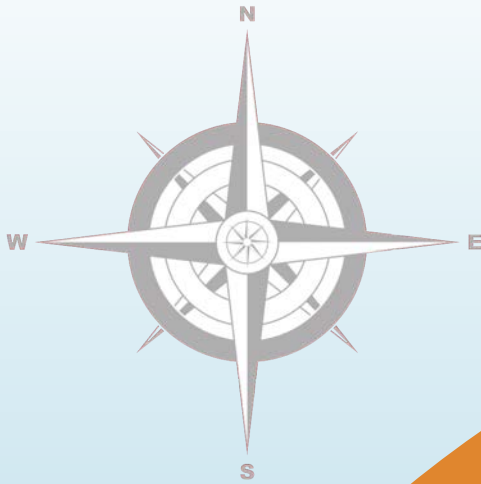


# WELLESLEY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

*Learning • Caring • Innovating*



## DISTRICT PROGRESS REPORT

2017 - 2018 SCHOOL YEAR

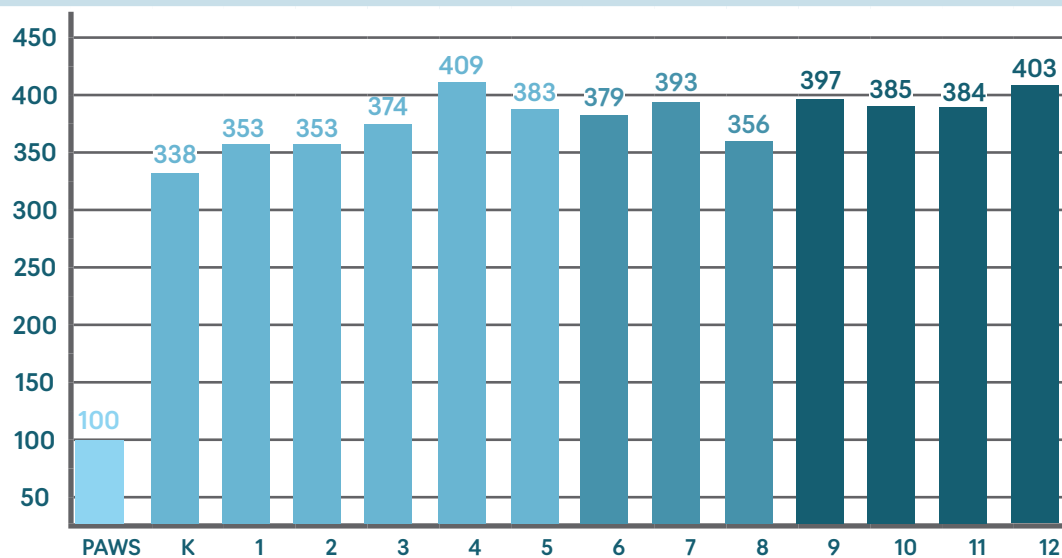


# 2017-2018 School Year - At a Glance

## Student Enrollment

5006 Total Students

### By Grade

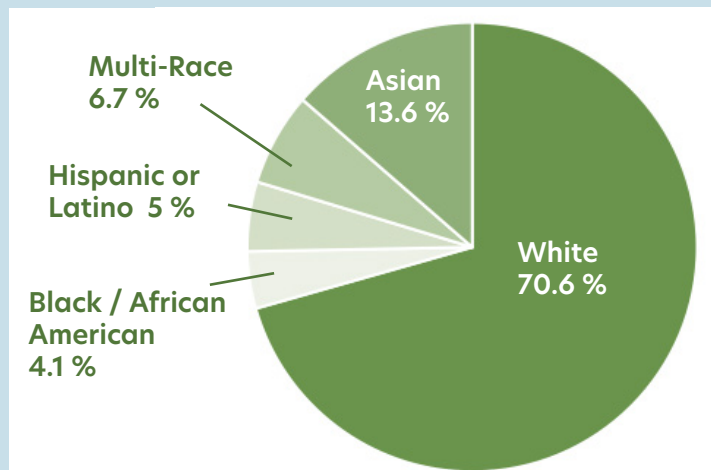


### By School

P.A.W.S. (Pre-K)	100
Bates Elementary	372
Fiske Elementary	298
Hardy Elementary	295
Hunnewell Elementary	248
Schofield Elementary	377
Sprague Elementary	383
Upham Elementary	236
Wellesley Middle School	1128
Wellesley High School	1569

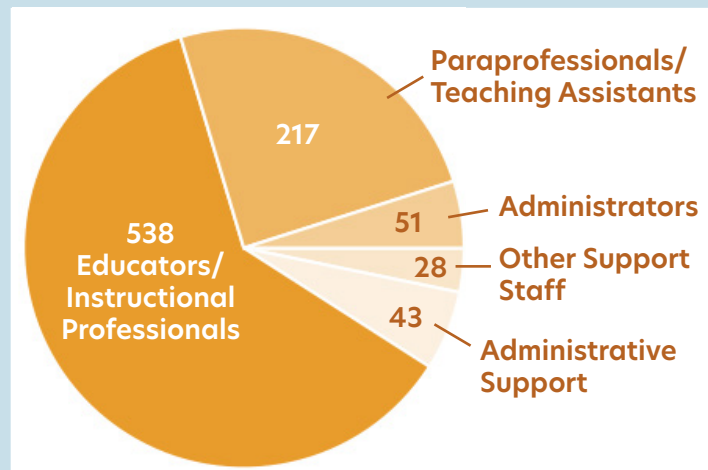
## Student Demographics

### Percentage by Race/Ethnicity



## Employee Statistics

### 877 Total Employees



## Special Populations

	WELLESLEY	STATE
English Learner (EL)	2.3 %	10.2 %
Economically Disadvantaged	5.8 %	32 %
Students with Disabilities	16 %	17.7 %

## In-District Specialized Programs

Integrated Preschool	P.A.W.S.
Therapeutic Learning (TLC)	Hunnewell, WMS
Language Based	Schofield, WMS, WHS
Integrated Specialized (ISS)	Sprague, WMS
Skills	Upham, WMS, WHS
Cornerstone, Gateways & Launch	WHS



# WELLESLEY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

*Learning • Caring • Innovating*

## SCHOOL COMMITTEE

**Matthew Kelley, Chair**  
**Melissa Martin, Vice Chair**  
**Linda Chow, Secretary**  
**Sharon Gray**  
**Michael D'Ortenzio Jr.**

## 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**  
**Susan Snyder**  
**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  
**Business & Finance** 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 2017-2018. This report represents the District's ongoing effort to communicate our progress to the entire Wellesley community.

Wellesley remains a district on the move with innovative work occurring on many fronts. In particular, we are proud of the efforts to calibrate our programming around 21st century skills through examples such as project-based learning. At the same time, we remain committed to supporting our students' social and emotional growth and addressing challenges such as high stress levels among our teens. We believe we can support an environment of high standards that does not place undue pressure on our students.

This report is aligned to the District's 2013-2019 Strategic Plan and organized around three guiding questions:

1. How well are we preparing our students to become global citizens who are ready for college, career, and life?
2. Are we attracting, retaining, and developing the high-quality educators we need in the District?
3. How are we maximizing our resources to achieve long-term success?

In the pages that follow, we show the progress, as well as the challenges, of the District in the past year. Most importantly, we hope this report clearly reflects our ongoing commitment to WPS' core values as well as our strong belief that our success cannot be measured by any single test score or arbitrary ranking system.

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

Best regards,

Dr. David Lussier  
 Superintendent of Schools



Matthew Kelley  
 Chair, School Committee



## OUR DISTRICT'S CORE VALUES

**Academic Excellence**

**Respect for  
 Human Differences**

**Commitment to  
 Community**

**Cooperative & Caring  
 Relationships**

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WPS School Committee

TOP: Linda Chow, Matthew Kelley, & Sharon Gray,  
BOTTOM: Michael Dortenzio Jr. & Melissa Martin

### CONTACT THE SCHOOL COMMITTEE

[wellesleys.org/schoolcommittee](http://wellesleys.org/schoolcommittee)

[School\\_Committee@wellesleys.org](mailto: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](http://wellesleyma.gov/agendacenter)

### WATCH A MEETING ONLINE

[wellesleymedia.org](http://wellesleymedia.org)

# FOCUS AREA I: PREPARING OUR STUDENTS

How well are we preparing our students to become global citizens who are ready for college, career, and life?

## A. KNOWLEDGE AND COMPETENCIES

Wellesley Public Schools (WPS) has been actively working on incorporating key components of 21st century learning for several years. The “4Cs” — critical thinking, creativity, collaboration and communication — are central to creating learning experiences which prepare students for college, career, and life.

In 2017-18, WPS was ready to deepen its understanding of the principles of 21st century learning and to begin developing a plan for further integrating them into the student experience. The Wellesley Education Foundation (WEF) played a pivotal role in advancing the District’s journey by providing the funding to support professional education, promote parent education, and plan related activities throughout the year.

21st  
Century  
Learning &  
Profile of a  
Graduate

### 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 & Solve Problems**

**Create & Innovate**

**Communicate & Collaborate**

**Engage Locally & Globally**

**Respect Human Differences & Challenge Inequities**

**Attend to their Physical, Social & Emotional Health**

#### Collaborating with Staff

At the November Professional Day, PreK-12 staff from across the District came together to welcome Ken Kay from EdLeader21, a national organization focused on transforming educational opportunities for students through its focus on developing 21st century skills. Kay challenged educators to consider how education needs to shift in order to keep pace with a global world awash in data and information and respond to the rapidly changing needs of employers. He introduced WPS staff to the concept of a Profile of a Graduate (POG) which describes the essential knowledge, skills, literacies, and mindsets students need to become lifelong learners and contributing members of society.

#### Engaging with Community

Dialogue and partnership with parents formed the next important step in this journey. In January 2018, WEF hosted “An Evening with Ken Kay - Preparing Students for their 21st Century Lives”. Over 250 parents attended to inform their thinking about how education is changing, learn about the practices of other districts, and provide input about what skills and attributes they think graduates of WPS need to succeed in their future endeavours.



**Ken Kay, CEO  
EdLeader21**

*A professional learning community for education leaders committed to 21st century education.*

#### Creating Our Profile

Following Ken Kay’s presentations, the District formed its POG Task Force. This group of 50, representing students, parents, educators, local employers and higher education professionals, came together during the spring. Thanks to funding from every PTO, the PTSO, and WEF, Kay led each session and helped guide the POG task force as it determined what key competencies students should demonstrate upon graduation from WPS. Their thoughtful consideration, along with community input from a survey with 891 respondents, informed the creation of Wellesley’s own POG, which will serve as the foundation for the creation of the new WPS Strategic Plan in 2018-2019.

# FOCUS AREA I: PREPARING OUR STUDENTS

## Project Based Learning

WPS partnered with *The Buck Institute for Education (BIE)* — now known as *PBLWorks* — to implement project based learning (PBL) in our classrooms. According to *PBLWorks*, PBL is an instructional approach in which students gain knowledge and skills

by working for an extended period of time to investigate and respond to an authentic, engaging, and complex question, problem, or challenge. As a result, students develop deep content knowledge aligned to standards, as well as critical thinking, creativity, and communication skills, in the context of an authentic, meaningful project.

In PBL, students have choice and voice in managing projects. They must collaborate as a team, as well as communicate with businesses or members of the community, learning to apply the skills they are exploring in the classroom to the world beyond its walls.

During the 2017-2018 school year, **fourth grade students** participated in multiple PBL projects.

*Hardy* - In “*R.I.S.E. Up and Make History at Hardy*”, Hardy students explored the history of the Civil Rights Movement and used that knowledge, combined with data collection, to determine how they could create positive social change, specifically by increasing inclusion in the Hardy community.

*Sprague* - “*Relief Architecture*” focused on how to provide immediate temporary housing after a hurricane, tackling science and engineering standards while learning about prototyping and revisioning processes. Students interviewed survivors of Hurricane Harvey, and TedTalk engineers, and had MEMA and other guest experts review their design efforts. Finally, students printed their final prototypes using a 3D printer.

In “*Community Center Conundrum-C3*”, students considered what’s involved in creating one recreation center that meets the needs of all its community members. Students followed the development of the Rt. 9 Rec Center, interviewed stakeholders including the Wellesley recreation director, collected and analyzed data from peers, and presented suggestions to the developer. Students researched similar community centers, evaluated architectural plans, and invited experts to discuss geological core sampling and traffic patterns. Ultimately, students created logos and names for the site.

## AWARD WINNING PROJECT AT MORSES POND



Bates students gather data on erosion at Morses Pond.

At a State House ceremony in May, Energy and Environmental Affairs (EEA) Secretary Matthew Beaton presented fourth grade teachers Irene Gruenfeld from Bates and Annie Gayner from Fiske and their students with the Secretary’s Award for Excellence in Energy and Environmental Education, honoring them for their project based learning study of erosion at Morses Pond.

“Environmental and energy education programs teach our children important scientific and critical-thinking skills, as well as show them how they can make a difference in their communities and schools,” said Lieutenant Governor Karyn Polito, capturing the essence of the power of PBL.

As part of their project, fourth graders did field work at the pond, designed scale models to illustrate solutions to erosion, and presented their results to town officials.

Gruenfeld and Gayner’s classrooms were among 32 energy and environmental education programs at Massachusetts schools and nonprofits celebrated as part of the 24th Annual Secretary’s Awards for Excellence in Energy and Environmental Education. The group also received a \$200 environmental grant and a citation from Representative Alice Peisch.

## Accountability and Standardized Testing

The Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) rolled out a new accountability system this year, redesigning the indicators by which schools are measured. These include student achievement, growth, progress towards English proficiency, chronic absenteeism, high school completion, and advanced coursework completion. In addition to the new indicators, DESE also determined how each indicator is weighed within the overall results, setting targets for improvement with the MCAS assessments and showing how each school is doing in comparison to schools across the state. The goal of the new system is to provide clear information to schools and communities so they can better allocate resources to improve the performance of all students. Wellesley's 2018 overall accountability rating classifies the District as "meeting targets", thus not requiring state assistance or intervention. While 87% of all students in grades 3-12 are making progress toward meeting targets in all subjects, the new accountability system highlights a need for further analysis and targeted assistance for Economically Disadvantaged students in grade 3-10 and for High Needs, Economically Disadvantaged, and Students with Disabilities in grades 9-12.

**MCAS** - The District's spring 2018 MCAS results reflect its commitment to excellence. Wellesley's overall achievement (as measured by Advanced and Proficient) in Grade 10 is 98% in ELA, 96% in Math, and 94% in Science. Student achievement results are strong in ELA and Math in grades 3-10 and continue to be solid in comparison to like districts. In addition, these results reflect WPS' efforts to narrow the achievement gap over time, as students move through grades 3-10. The District's High Needs cohort (Students with Disabilities, English Language Learners and Former English Language learners and Economically Disadvantaged Students) met targets, while Economically Disadvantaged Students with Disabilities partially met targets. African American students in WPS continue to lag behind their peers in both achievement and growth across all subjects and levels. In an effort to focus on every child in every classroom every day, educators will use these results to refine and strengthen instruction and support for all students (See Figure 1).

**SAT and ACT** - 256 members of the Class of 2018 took the SAT, achieving an average score of 1272. This average places Wellesley students ahead of their peers in Massachusetts and nationally. Gaps remain between the scores of Black/African American and Economically Disadvantaged students, compared to those of White, Asian and Hispanic students. 186 students took the ACT, earning an average composite score of 27.7, again placing them ahead of students across Massachusetts and the nation. WPS continues to look at ways to better support all learners through cultural proficiency training, METCO SAT prep, and the Academic Resource Center (See Figure 2).

**Advanced Placement (AP)** - 91.8% of Wellesley students taking AP exams scored a 3 or higher, continuing to outperform students both within Massachusetts and nationally.

Figure 1

Spring 2018 MCAS Results		
"Meets or Exceeds Expectations"		
ELA	Wellesley	State
Grade 5	81%	54%
Grade 8	78%	51%
MATH	Wellesley	State
Grade 5	72%	46%
Grade 8	76%	49%
"Advanced or Proficient"		
SCIENCE	Wellesley	State
Grade 5	64%	48%
Grade 8	63%	35%
Grade 10	94%	75%
ELA	Wellesley	State
Grade 10	98%	91%
MATH	Wellesley	State
Grade 10	96%	78%

Figure 2

2018 SAT Average Composite Scores		
Wellesley	State	National
1272	1102	1068
2018 ACT Average Composite Scores		
Wellesley	State	National
27.7	25.5	20.8
2018 AP Exam % Scored 3 or higher		
Wellesley	State	National
91.8%	65.9%	59%

Sources: MA DESE and College Board

**Beyond Standardized Testing** -While traditional measures of academic success are important, the District acknowledges they narrow views of student performance. WPS is committed to finding additional ways for students to show what they know and understand and to measuring these experiences. To that end, WPS seeks to widen its assessment lens by integrating 21st century assessments that push for critical thinking, collaboration, creativity, communication, and social/emotional wellness.

# FOCUS AREA I: PREPARING OUR STUDENTS

## B. SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL LEARNING

### Superintendent's Advisory Committee on Social and Emotional Learning

The Superintendent's Advisory Committee (SAC) on social and emotional learning (SEL) concluded its work in May 2018. The SAC, with community co-chairs Annie Hall and Carol Morrow from the Wellesley Education Foundation, was charged with surveying WPS' SEL programming across all grade levels. The SAC's mission was to determine whether the District's programs align with accepted SEL industry standards. As a point of reference, the SAC opted to follow guidelines published by the Collaborative for Academic Social and Emotional Learning (CASEL). The SAC was also asked to consider various assessments in place to determine whether the District's approach to SEL produces positive outcomes with respect to social behavior, fewer conduct problems, less emotional distress, and academic success.

The SAC used a two-step process in its deliberations. Committee members first outlined and discussed SEL programming at each grade level. Using the CASEL rubric as a touchstone, the Committee aligned elements of WPS programming with CASEL's core competencies. The Committee also made note of areas that presented opportunities for improvement. The second step of the SAC's process was to identify assessment tools currently implemented by WPS to determine whether the District has mechanisms in place to monitor SEL progress.

This process provided the District an excellent opportunity to engage with experts from Newton-Wellesley Hospital, Open Circle, and Human Relations Services. The information gathered by the SAC will inform WPS administrators as they start work on drafting the new strategic plan.

During the school year 2017-2018 the Fiske staff looked for new ways to implement social and emotional learning throughout the school day. From this work, the Fisketastic Fifth Grade Falcons participated in the first Fiske Fifth Grade Jobs Program.

At the beginning of the school year Fiske staff submitted jobs they would like help with during the week such as helping with recycling, reading with younger students, or assisting in the office. Fifth grade students then applied for their top three jobs, providing references from Fiske staff members. Once "hired" for their jobs, students began helping Fiske shine.

It was inspiring to see fifth graders take on their responsibilities and embrace the importance of showing up each week to their jobs. Students who participated reflected that they enjoyed working with their previous teachers, meeting younger students, and seeing younger siblings.

### Nursing and SEL

Social and emotional health is as critical to academic success as physical well-being. As members of interdisciplinary teams in every school, WPS nurses collaborate with students, families, school staff, and community resources in order to assess, identify, provide intervention, refer, and follow up with students in need of social and emotional support. School nurses are able to recognize warning signs such as changes in school performance, attendance issues, behavior changes, and complaints of illness. Often students will visit the nurse's office with a somatic complaint, and after a comprehensive assessment, therapeutic listening, and a compassionate approach, the school nurse is able to determine that the student is experiencing a social or emotional issue being manifested by a physical complaint.

Thus, school nurses bring a holistic perspective to addressing students' social and emotional issues. Their support of social and emotional development begins with the District's youngest learners and continues throughout their academic experience. The nurse's office is a safe and confidential place for students to go. School nurses offer deep breathing and relaxation exercises, soft background music, and a variety of sensory items in order to calm and comfort students in need of some time away from the classroom. In every encounter with students, nurses teach self management strategies and healthy living strategies. Their goal? To help keep students in an optimal state of health, ready to learn and succeed.

### Spotlight on Nursing

### SEL IN ACTION: FIFTH GRADE JOBS PROGRAM AT FISKE



"We got to help the Fiske staff to show our gratitude and that we were thankful for what Fiske has given us."

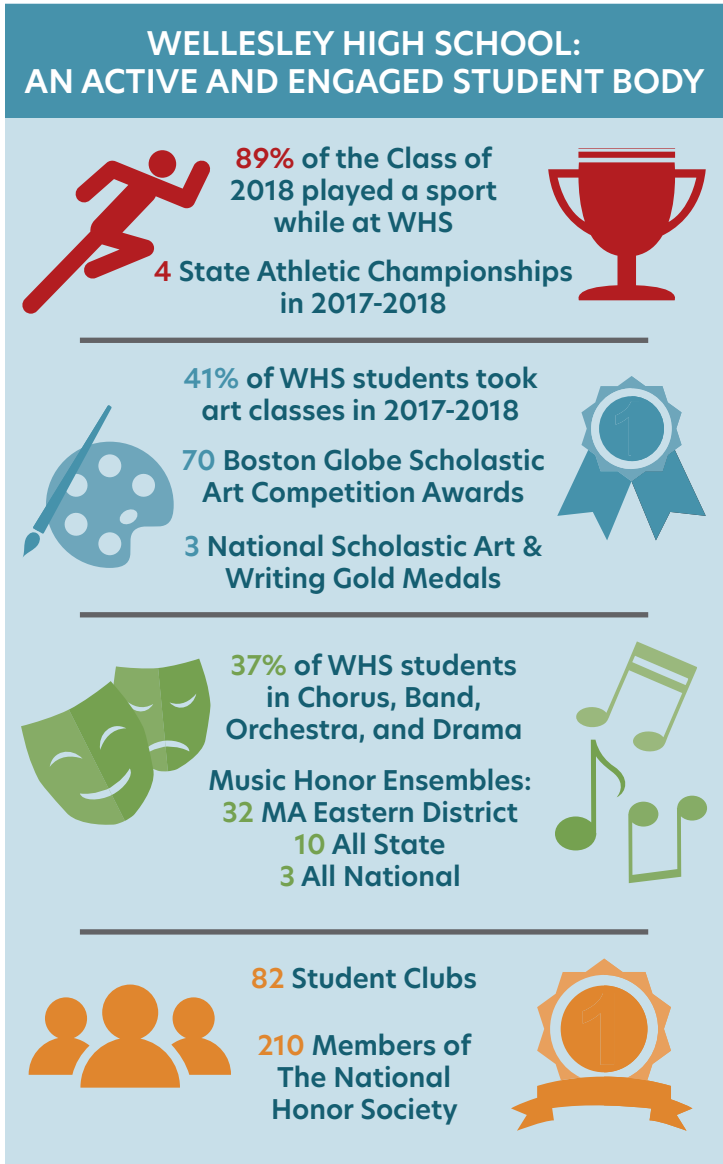
## Metrowest Adolescent Health Survey

In 2006, the MetroWest Community Health Care Foundation embarked on a ten-year initiative to provide communities with timely, local data on the health and risk behaviors of the youth in their communities. To this end, middle and high school students in 26 Metrowest communities take the MetroWest Adolescent Health Survey (MWAHS) every other year. The survey covers important topics including substance abuse, violence and bullying, unintentional injury, mental health, physical activity, nutrition and weight, school attachment, and adult support and risk behaviors on school property.

Wellesley's latest results offer an overall positive narrative for its adolescent students and highlight areas of concern for further study. At the high school level, students report continued strong attachments to adults in the building and connections within the school community. Results show improvement in

physical fighting, school bullying, and substance use — specifically cigarette use. Alcohol use, however, remains an area of concern. At the middle school level, students also report strong connections to adults at school and within the school community, and results there show improvement in cigarette smoking, alcohol use, and school bullying. At both the high school and middle school level, despite a decrease in school bullying, cyberbullying remains an area of concern.

Stress, both school-related and social, and mental health, particularly for girls, are issues that require additional analysis and attention. According to the survey, stress appears to increase over the middle school grades and throughout students' high school experiences and is more pronounced in girls at every level. The District looks forward to focusing on these areas to ensure that all students are supported in their health and wellness.



## CHALLENGE SUCCESS

Wellesley High School continues to work with **Challenge Success (CS)**, a national, non-profit organization affiliated with the *Stanford University Graduate School of Education*. Our energized and growing community of participants includes students, teachers, and parents who have pursued the CS mission to support WHS and its community by promoting a broader definition of success, reducing unhealthy pressures and demands, and helping students build resilience and achieve balance.

In the past year, CS leaders attended the CS spring East Coast conference and worked to educate the community about its team's efforts by hosting speaker Jon Kleiman, the School Program Director for the Northeast Region. Guided by the CS mission and driven by the findings of the Stanford Survey of Adolescent School Experiences administered at WHS in January 2017, the High School's CS team developed a theme for the 2018-2019 school year: ***Achieving Balance***.

Throughout the year, students endeavored to help their peers find joy in the everyday, surprising them with Hershey's kisses on Valentine's Day and Smarties for MCAS, as well as organizing seasonal events including hot chocolate by the digital fire, bubble soccer, and Barn Babies. Community organizations like the Wellesley Youth Council, Recreation Department, and Community Investors have jumped in enthusiastically to support student efforts. WEF and the Wellesley High School PTSO remain important partners in this work.

# FOCUS AREA I: PREPARING OUR STUDENTS

## C. GLOBAL CITIZENSHIP

### Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

In the Fall of 2017, through a generous Wellesley Education Foundation grant, the District partnered with the Kingston Bay Group (KBG) to launch a comprehensive assessment of climate and race in the WPS to help further guide the District's priority of fostering an inclusive school environment. KBG gathered input on race, diversity, and inclusiveness through focus groups consisting of students, employees and parents, individual interviews, and a survey of the entire WPS community. The Racial/Diversity Climate Survey was completed by 2,172 students, 535 WPS employees and 898 families. In addition, KBG analyzed a broad range of WPS documents, including WPS hiring practices and curriculum units, and conducted an athletics review.

During the spring of 2018, KBG presented its WPS Racial Climate Final Report to the Academic Council and to the Diversity & Equity Leadership Council (DELC), a committee established in the fall to consider issues specifically around race, diversity, and inclusiveness. KBG's recommendations included the following:

#### *Professional Development:*

- Continue Diversity, Equity & Inclusion (DE&I) work
- Make diversity training mandatory for all new hires
- Provide ongoing cultural proficiency workshops for all staff
- Address Athletic department concerns and issues
- Design a clear, concise vision for ongoing teacher in-service that addresses curriculum and pedagogical practices

#### *Hiring Procedures, Practices & Policies:*

- Increase diversity representation and participation at all levels
- Include cultural proficiency metrics in staff evaluation
- Create a position of *Assistant Superintendent of Diversity* and hire equity coaches to oversee the District DE&I efforts

#### *Programs & Resources:*

- Perform a review of resources and access for all students
- Create programs in elementary schools which increase equity and diversity
- Develop and fund a DE&I strategic plan with a timeline
- Engage parents across racial groups in dialogue and relationship experiences

KBG's findings and recommendations helped inform the DELC's multi-year action plan for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion. The DELC also used the final report to identify a set of high-priority recommendations for improvement and form five action committees to focus on implementation in professional development, hiring and retention, curriculum, parent/guardian engagement, and school culture.

## WPS STUDENTS AND STAFF



***PAWS staff prepare and deliver meals for "Community Cooks" program*** - For the second year in a row, PAWS faculty and staff have provided food for 25 people each month, delivering the meals to the *Right Turn* organization in Watertown.



***Sprague Disaster Relief Dance raises money for hurricane victims*** - Students dance to music of the Caribbean, Mexico, and southern US states while raising over \$5700 for hurricane relief in the Caribbean and earthquake relief in Mexico.



***WMS Best Buddies tops the Turkey Trot*** - The Best Buddies group took home the trophy for top fundraising chapter at the 2017 WMS Thanksgiving Turkey Trot.

## WORKING TOWARDS CHANGE



**WHS Ceramics students conquer hunger with art** - WHS' 14 Ceramics Intensive students threw over 100 bowls for their 2nd annual Empty Bowls event. Empty Bowls is an international grassroots movement to end hunger founded in 1990. With the \$2344 raised this year, students supported both Rosie's Place and disaster relief in Puerto Rico.



**Students walk out to support legislation to address gun violence** - In the wake of the February 14 Parkland school shooting, students at both WMS and WHS led walkouts of their peers to demonstrate their concerns about gun violence today and their support for legislation to increase safety.

## WMS Best Buddies

The very active WMS chapter of **Best Buddies**, led by middle school educators Liz Egan and Karen Venditto, just celebrated five years and is the largest in Massachusetts, with about 60 students participating each year. Students in specialized programs meet together with their typical peers after school and participate in a variety of activities, building relationships that carry on throughout high school. For the past four years, the WMS chapter has been the top fundraiser in the state for the Best Buddies Friendship Walk.

## STARS at WMS

Now, more than ever, students need opportunities to safely express themselves about local and global issues of race, tolerance, and cultural diversity. The goal of **Students Talking About Race Skillfully (STARS)** is to engage and educate students on race through culturally responsive discussions and activities. STARS aims to create an atmosphere of trust in order to promote meaningful student engagement and open communication about difficult topics. It also celebrates diversity, positivity, and personal growth. Open to all 6th, 7th and 8th graders, STARS meets once a week after school. In addition to after school meetings, STARS also organizes a school-wide conference on race, Stereotypes and Race Discussion Lunches, an annual film festival, and ongoing projects addressing microaggressions.

## WHS Translation Club

In January of 2018, the District began a Translation Club, creating an opportunity for students and parents to serve their community by translating WPS documents. Currently, 18 active members — students and parents learning English as well as native English speakers fluent in other languages — work in three of the many different languages spoken in the school community: Korean, Spanish, and Chinese. For students, the club offers a valuable real-world opportunity to learn to collaborate across cultures and generations and use what they are learning in school to help the larger community. In the spirit of One Wellesley, the club began by translating all of the common signage designed to welcome, inform, and assist parents in our schools. This work led to supporting the Tolles Parson Senior Center in its outreach efforts. The club reviews requests to translate flyers, invitations and notes home from both WPS schools and the larger community, strengthening relationships between families and schools and breathing life into the District's commitment to diversity.

# FOCUS AREA II: INVESTING IN OUR EDUCATORS

Are we attracting, developing, and retaining high quality educators in our District?

## Buck Institute of Education PBLWorks

During the 2017-2018 school year, Wellesley Public Schools (WPS) partnered with the **Buck Institute for Education (now PBLWorks)** — a national leader in the field of project based learning (PBL) — to build the capacity of teachers and leaders to implement PBL in elementary classrooms. A grant from the Wellesley Education Foundation (WEF) enabled 25 teachers and leaders to engage in PBLWorks introductory workshop, PBL 101, during three days in the summer. Through this professional learning experience, participants gained the knowledge and skills necessary to design, assess, and manage a rigorous standards-based project. They received additional support throughout the school year as they implemented two PBL projects in their classrooms.

Next year, the District partnership with PBLWorks will continue, bringing gold standard PBL to the secondary level, as well as increasing the number of trained elementary teachers.

## 2017-2018 WellesleyPD Course Highlights

When it comes to professional development for technology, one size doesn't fit all. A newly designed professional development opportunity during the 2017-2018 school year allowed educators to choose from a "menu" of 3-hour technology workshops to create a customized professional learning experience. The workshops — offered after school and on weekends by the district's instructional technology specialists — focused on topics ranging from Google Sites and accessibility to building a Canvas site for students to delving into the SMART Notebook software associated with classroom SMART Boards. The overwhelmingly positive response to this professional development format will lead to expanded workshop offerings next year.

## Sheltered English Immersion / Retell Certification

English Learners (ELs) are an important focus of the Massachusetts Board of Elementary and Secondary Education's Proficiency Gap Task Force. Closing the proficiency gap depends on teachers having the skills and knowledge necessary to instruct ELs. To that end, all core academic teachers are required to obtain a Sheltered English Immersion (SEI) teacher endorsement. WPS offered two SEI endorsement courses at no cost to educators in 2017-2018. Forty-six educators participated, bringing the total number of endorsed educators to 327.

WPS  
proudly  
partners  
with

BUCK INSTITUTE FOR EDUCATION

PBLworks

## Wellesley Teacher Mentor Program

The Wellesley Teacher Mentor Program is designed to encourage experienced, professional status teachers to share their knowledge, talents, and skills with teachers new to the District. The program has many goals: to improve student learning and achievement through building understanding

of District programs and curriculum; to initiate teachers new to Wellesley into the culture of its schools by offering a keen understanding of WPS' core values, beliefs, and expectations; to increase each teacher's personal professional development; to recognize outstanding, experienced, highly qualified teachers and provide an opportunity for them to reflect upon and share their knowledge and expertise; and to help retain teachers by creating an atmosphere of collegiality and openness that heightens morale and reduces isolation.

During the 2017-2018 school year, 26 educators served as mentors to 27 new PreK-12 professional staff members. New educators indicated that work with their mentors helped them positively influence their students' learning and be more effective teachers. The positive benefits of the Welles-



ley Teacher Mentor Program extend to educators serving as mentors. Taking on mentoring provides mentors with frequent opportunities to reflect on their practice and enhance their professional knowledge and skills.

**"I absolutely loved my mentor and meeting with her every week was something to look forward to. She clued me in on so many different things that I wouldn't have known or been successful in without her."**

## Commitment to Cultural Proficiency

WPS is committed to continuing its focus on cultural proficiency. Across the District, educators had many opportunities to build their knowledge in this area.

**PAWS** began laying a foundation for WPS students by working with families to share cultural traditions.

The **Sprague** faculty devoted time to cultural competency discussions during monthly faculty meetings.

**Hardy** teachers participated in the EDCO Collaborative's Initiatives for Developing Equity and Achievement for Students (IDEAS) course.

At **Schofield**, teachers created a Professional Learning Community (PLC) around cultural proficiency. Parents there also worked with a social worker to create the Schofield Cares committee.

The Diversity committee at **Fiske** implemented "Where in the World is Mrs. McGregor", helping students teach their peers about their countries of origin.

The **Bates** School Council identified implications for expanding the faculty's cultural proficiency work to its parent community.

At **Hunnewell**, teachers reviewed cultural proficiency, implicit bias, and hidden rules with Kalise Wornum.

The **Upham** faculty incorporated GLSEN's Ready, Set, Respect curriculum as part of their ongoing efforts to make every student, in every classroom, feel valued and treated with respect, regardless of their sexual orientation, gender identity or gender expression.

At **WMS**, faculty created and shared a film "Everyone Belongs at WMS" in every homeroom.

Finally, at **WHS**, One Wellesley work continued, including the launch of a successful peer to peer workshop to support teachers as they work through "difficult conversations" focused on diversity, inclusion, and equity.



*WHS Seniors showcase diversity in their senior project photo collage for One Wellesley.*

## CELEBRATING 25 YEARS IN EDUCATION



Experienced educators who grow as teachers and contribute to the District throughout their careers are central to the success of WPS. Each spring, WEF and the Wellesley School Committee come together to host a **Chair Ceremony** to honor staff members who have contributed 25 years of their professional career to WPS. In appreciation for their years of service, the honorees receive a captain's chair embossed with the Town of Wellesley seal. In April 2018, six educators were toasted by their colleagues for their service and leadership in the District.



## WEF-Funded Professional Development Grants

WEF continues to be a key partner in funding professional development, providing grants of over \$71,000 in the 2017/18 year to support learning. This funding benefited every educator in the District on the November Professional Day when they came together for a dynamic discussion about 21st century learning with guest speaker Ken Kay. WEF supported key district strategies such as project-based learning through grants to send educators to the Buck Institute and then spread their knowledge and implement PBL in their schools. Individual educators were able to pursue their own educational goals with funding to attend conferences and institutes. A K-12 team from the Modern Languages department studied together over the summer to learn new ways of engaging students with foreign languages using an approach where students speak, listen, read and write in real world situations.

# FOCUS AREA III: MAXIMIZING OUR RESOURCES

## How are we maximizing our resources to achieve long-term success?

### Budget and Operational Performance - Fiscal Year 2018 (FY2018)

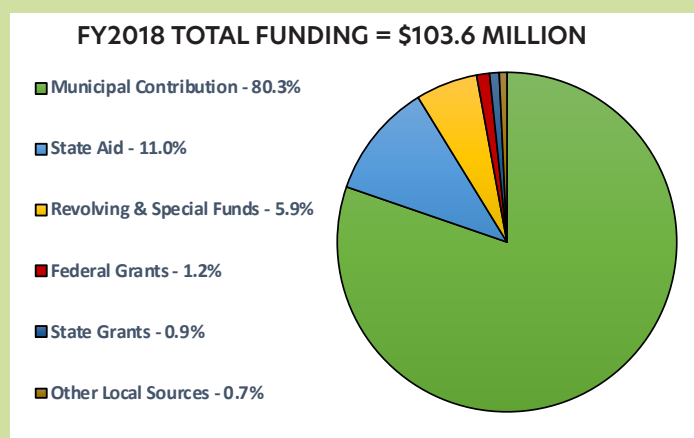
The Wellesley Public Schools' (WPS) total budget is \$103.6 million from all funding sources (e.g., local, state and federal - *See Figure 3*). Its main source is municipal contributions, with 80.3% of its funding from the Town of Wellesley, and the remaining 19.7% from a variety of community, state, 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 resources (62.6%) that directly impact the classroom and student learning (*See Figure 4*). As a result, WPS has worked to keep the increase of administrative costs to 3% or less of the budget and to use incremental increases to support classroom instruction (*See Figure 5*).

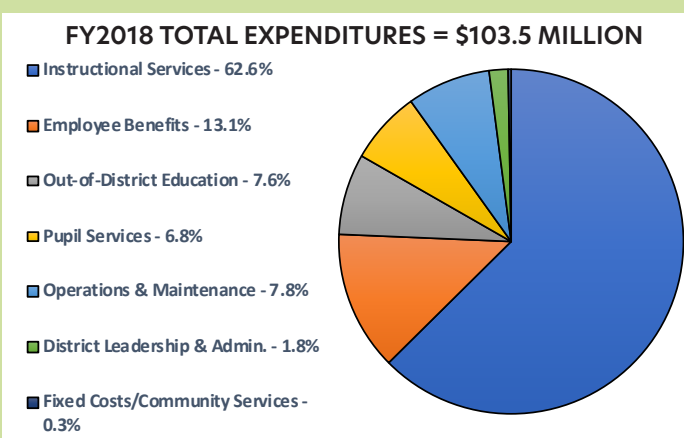
In the spring of 2018, the School Committee and Town Meeting approved an FY'19 operational budget of \$74,428,917 without benefits, representing a 3.44% increase over the amended FY'18 budget. The budget was comprised of \$52,229,051 for Instruction, Administration, and Operations, and \$22,199,866 for Special Education. The School Committee and Town Meeting also approved an FY'19 Cash Capital Budget of \$947,629.

### WELLESLEY PUBLIC SCHOOLS BUDGET AND EXPENDITURES

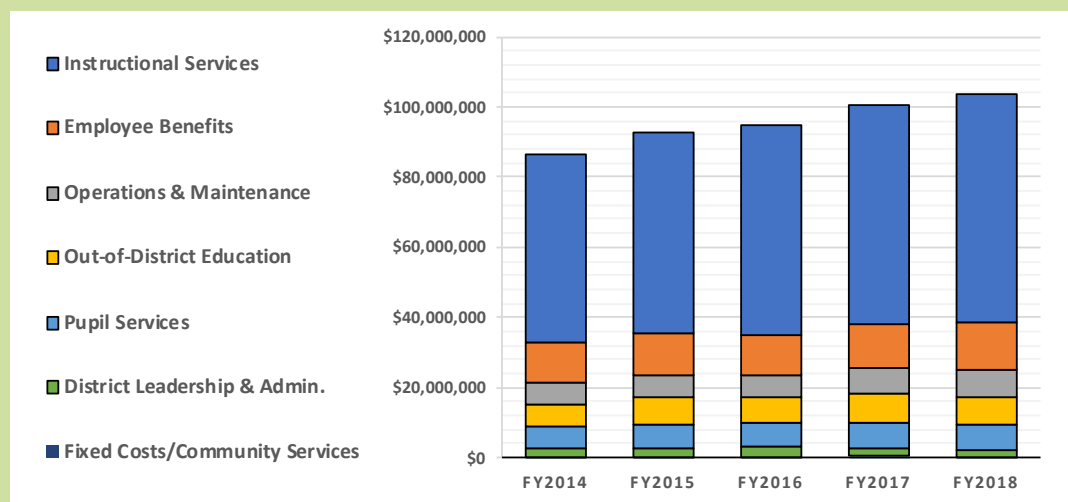
*Figure 3 - Funding Sources*



*Figure 4 - Expenditures*



*Figure 5 - Expenditures Over Time (FY2014 thru FY2018)*



Data from Figures 3, 4 & 5 as well as additional data about the WPS School District can be found on [cleargov.com](http://cleargov.com).

## Building Safety and Security

The past year saw the completion of vital infrastructure improvements to school security systems throughout the District, which greatly increased student and staff safety in all schools. These enhancements allow for improved access control with the addition of new phone technology, prox card readers, and upgraded door hardware. The construction was completed ahead of schedule and within budget over the summer and ‘second shift’ to minimize impacts to the learning environment. In addition, the investment in two-way radios facilitates direct communication with the Wellesley Police Department in case of emergencies, and strategically-placed video cameras allow for greater visibility to key areas throughout the buildings. WPS paired these infrastructure improvements with enhanced evacuation training with staff and students at all schools in partnership with the Wellesley Police. In 2018, Annual Town Meeting voted for an additional School Resource Officer (SRO) to support the single SRO working with the schools.

## Renewing WPS Facilities

The Facilities Master Plan continues to provide WPS with the guidance to plan and implement multi-year projects to ensure educators and students have facilities that effectively support teaching and learning.

**PAWS Feasibility Study:** A feasibility study to assess potential addition or new construction options for the Preschool to address enrollment issues began in February 2018. The results of the study, including recommendations for both an addition and a new building, were presented to School Committee in June 2018.

**MS Piping Project:** WPS hired an engineering consultant in July 2017 to prepare a feasibility study to repair and replace critical aspects of the Middle School’s steam heating system. The results of the study were presented to various committees in the fall and design funds were approved at the 2018 ATM to allow for an expedited construction schedule. Construction is expected to begin in June 2019 and be completed in November 2020.

**MS Building Systems Study:** Funding for this study was approved at the 2018 ATM and the study was scheduled to begin in July 2018. The goal of this project is to provide a comprehensive update to the Middle School, similar to the recent Schofield & Fiske Renovation Projects. Key building systems to be assessed include the kitchen, exterior façade, selected doors and classroom cabinetry, and HVAC systems in the gymnasiums and auditorium.



School Resource Officer Evan Rosenberg visits children at the WHS Child Lab.

## Partnerships with Our Community

Strong partnerships with the community enrich WPS. The Town of Wellesley itself is more than just the WPS’ primary funder — it is a key partner in planning for the future and advancing the schools. Throughout the year, key Town departments such as the Wellesley Police Department, Wellesley Fire & Rescue, the Health Department, and various other Town offices are present both in the classroom supplementing the curriculum, and behind the scenes with administrators.

At each school, families are active partners. Through schools’ individual Parent Teacher Organizations (PTOs), families contributed over \$191,378 to support creative arts and sciences in the classroom, equipment, and professional development opportunities for educators.

The Wellesley Education Foundation (WEF) provided over \$259,294 in funding to WPS in 2017-18. Through the educator grant award program, WEF funded innovation, equipment, and professional development opportunities across all schools PreK-12. WEF also awarded District-wide grants to support key strategic priorities such as project based learning; 21st century learning, through the District’s work with Ken Kay to guide the development of Wellesley’s Profile of a Graduate; and ongoing work in social and emotional learning. Moreover, WEF brings the community together for dialogue and parent education on key topics. This year, WEF continued to ignite student enthusiasm for STEM through the second annual Wellesley CreateAthon, in which over 70 middle and high-school aged students came together to build an app to address a real-world problem which could be addressed with a tech solution.

# FOCUS AREA III: MAXIMIZING OUR RESOURCES

## HHU - Hardy, Hunnewell and Upham Facilities Projects

Once again, the process of addressing the critical facilities needs at the Hardy, Hunnewell, and Upham elementary schools was a priority. During the 2017-18 school year, the work began for the School Building Committee (SBC), a collaborative effort that includes school and Town staff, board members, and members of the community.

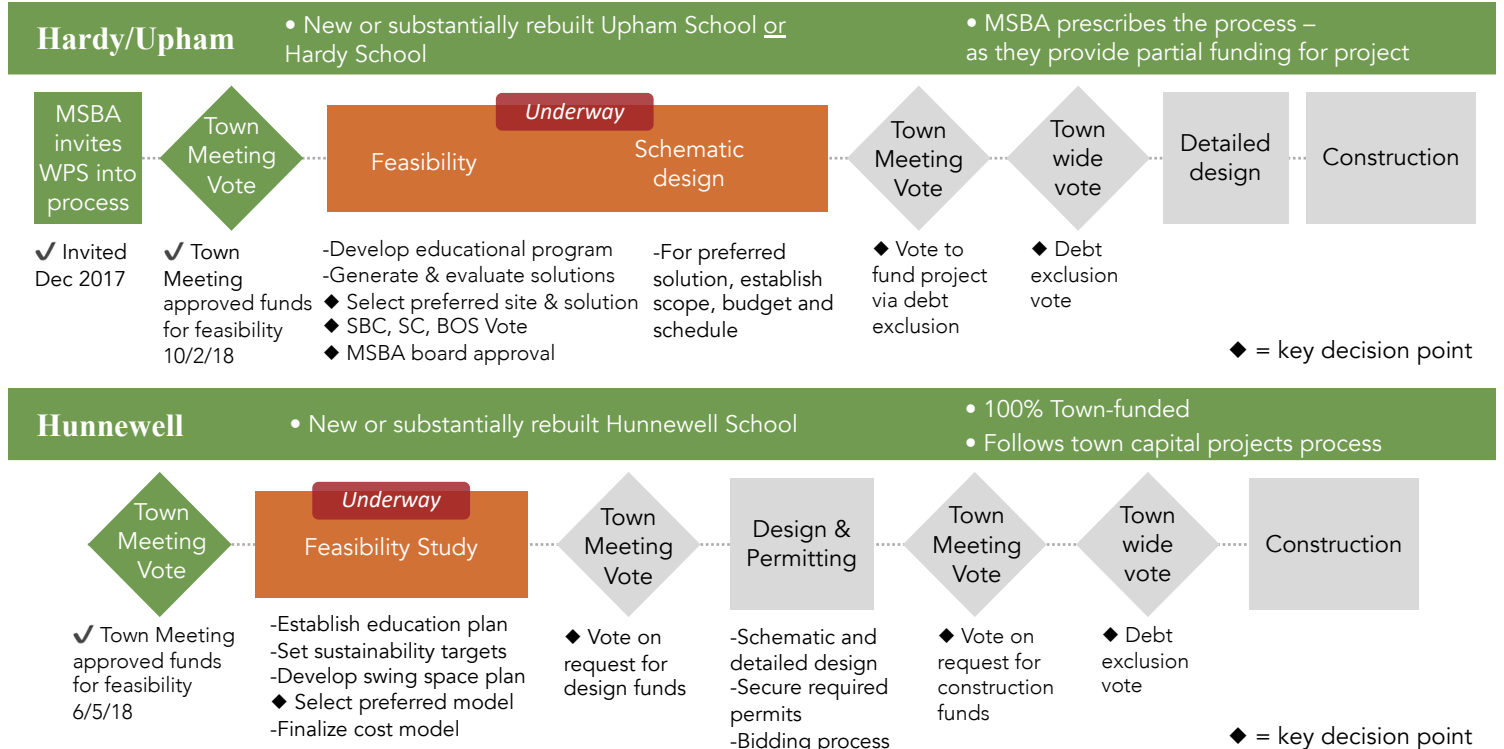
After the Town was invited into a potential partnership with the Massachusetts School Building Authority (MSBA) in December 2017, the work on the three schools was split into two separate projects: the Hardy/Upham project, which will be developed with the MSBA, and the Hunnewell project, which will be funded entirely by the Town.

Given current elementary enrollment needs, the intent of the Town is to construct two new or substantially rebuilt K-5 schools — one on the Hunnewell site and one on either the Hardy or Upham sites — to serve between 350 and 400 students in three classrooms per grade.

The Town entered the 270-day Eligibility Period with the MSBA in April of 2018 for the Hardy/Upham project. In June of 2018, Town Meeting approved \$1 million in funding for a feasibility study for the Hunnewell School. Shortly thereafter, the SBC began a qualifications-based selection process to engage both an architect and Owner's Project Manager (OPM) for the Hunnewell project.



### MILESTONES FOR THE HHU PROJECTS



### STAY UP TO DATE ON HHU

Visit the website: [wellesleyma.gov/774/School-Building-Committee---HHU](http://wellesleyma.gov/774/School-Building-Committee---HHU)

Contact the School Building Committee: [sbc@wellesleyma.gov](mailto:sbc@wellesleyma.gov)

# CHALLENGES AND THE ROAD AHEAD

Despite the many areas of success for Wellesley Public Schools (WPS) during the 2017-2018 school year, the District also faced a number of challenges. For example, the allocation of resources to the school department will continue to be a challenge for the foreseeable future. With significant facilities requests on the horizon for the HHU projects and the Middle School, the Town will have to strike a difficult balance between maintaining annual investments in the District's operating budgets while seeking Town Meeting support for facilities projects.

Similarly, the District remains challenged in the best budget pathway to account for high variability in special education funding and expenses. The District remains proud of its commitment to excellence for all students and will remain engaged with Town leaders on strategies to help ensure that general education and special education receive appropriate funding.

With continued declining enrollment across elementary schools, the District has consolidated a number of classrooms during the past eight to nine years. The challenge now facing WPS is the prospect of some schools becoming too small, with only a single classroom at a grade level. While that level of efficiency may be celebrated from a budget perspective, the District has to assess the tradeoffs of this reality from an educational perspective. While completion of the HHU projects will provide relief to this situation in the long term, this remains a short term challenge.

During the 2017-2018 school year, the District received the results of a commissioned assessment of the climate of race and diversity within WPS. Moving forward, the District must now take these recommendations and translate them into a multi-year action plan. The Diversity and Equity Leadership Council (DELC) was formed to lead this work and has identified action steps in the areas of school culture, parent en-

gagement, recruitment/hiring, curriculum, and professional development as the specific areas in which the District will focus its efforts.

Within the District's equity agenda, a continued area of challenge remains sustaining progress on closing achievement gaps among specific student populations. There are no easy or quick solutions in this work, but the District will continue to examine and invest in ways to provide stronger in-school interventions and progress monitoring to help ensure the success of all students.

Additionally, the District will continue its efforts to prioritize time and resources for PreK-12 Science teaching and learning as the curriculum becomes fully aligned with the DESE standards. These efforts will include new materials and training for elementary teachers during 2018-2019.

On the social and emotional learning front, the District continues to be concerned about stress levels among adolescents. Participating in Challenge Success, the High School has done thoughtful work in better understanding the key drivers of stress among students and is actively working to address them through thoughtful programming. The Middle School will join this effort in 2018-2019. Connecting efforts across WMS and WHS will help ensure a sustained secondary focus on student health and well-being.

A key academic outcome from SY 2017-2018 was the District's collaboration with Edleader21 that resulted in the creation of a draft Profile of a Graduate (POG). Moving into SY 2018-2019, the District will build a new strategic plan around the competencies of this POG. Equally important will be staff and community openness to changes to WPS programming that are better aligned with POG competencies. Time, resources, and professional development will be essential to this effort.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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*

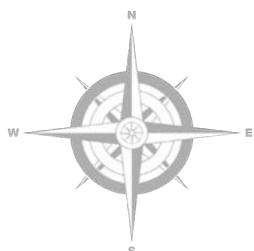
Beth Bergeron, WPS Instructional Materials Coordinator  
Amanda Brown, WHS English Teacher and Bradford Advisor

Linda Chow, School Committee Secretary

Dr. Joan Dabrowski, Assistant Superintendent - Teaching and Learning

Dr. David Lussier, Superintendent

Victoria Ostler, WEF Co-President



# SIMILAR LOCAL DISTRICT COMPARISONS

	Spending Per Pupil Expenditure 2016-2017	Average Teacher Compensa- tion 2016-2017	Student to Teacher Ratio 2017-2018	Graduation Rate 2017	Attendance Rate 2017-2018	Composite Average SAT 2017-2018	% Advanced Placement Courses: Score of 3+ 2017-2018
DISTRICT	AMOUNT	AMOUNT	RATIO	RATE	RATE	SCORE	PERCENT
Belmont	\$13,582	\$85,906	16.8:1	96.6	96.8	1256	92.2
Brookline	\$19,528	\$101,413	12.5:1	93.5	95.7	1259	93.3
Concord*	\$19,173	\$98,295	12.5:1	-	96.4	-	-
Concord-Carlisle	\$22,149	\$100,222	12.4:1	96.6	95.4	1275	92.9
Dover-Sherborn	\$20,253	\$92,626	11.2:1	98.8	96.3	1275	92.8
Lexington	\$18,289	\$82,322	12.3:1	98.5	96.9	1319	93.9
Lincoln*	\$22,743	\$93,039	10.1:1	-	95.1	-	-
Lincoln-Subury	\$20,428	\$95,518	12.0:1	98.5	96.8	1319	93.9
Medfield	\$15,205	\$85,130	13.0:1	97.8	96.6	1202	76.5
Natick	\$15,469	\$73,189	13.6:1	95.5	96.2	1174	79.0
Needham	\$17,307	\$91,350	13.9:1	97.6	96.1	1242	92
Newton	\$18,899	\$81,180	11.9:1	96.0	95.6	1258	92.7
Sudbury*	\$15,606	\$80,592	13.0:1	-	96.4	-	-
Wayland	\$18,470	\$96,103	12.4:1	97.5	96.7	1274	89.5
<b>Wellesley</b>	<b>\$19,823</b>	<b>\$91,478</b>	<b>12.8:1</b>	<b>96.4</b>	<b>95.3</b>	<b>1272</b>	<b>91.8</b>
Weston	\$24,226	\$99,887	12.6:1	98.9	95.8	1262	83.9
Winchester	\$13,547	\$75,752	12.9:1	98.5	95.9	1254	90.5

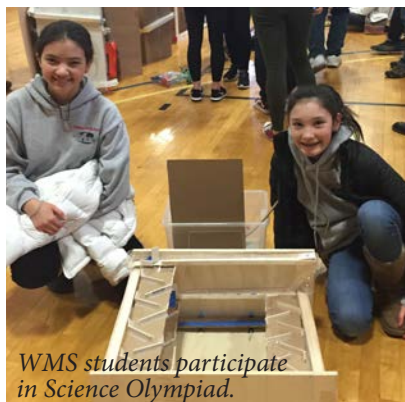
Source: Department of Education School Profile Reporting 2018

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



	Grades 3-8 % Meet or Exceed Expectations MCAS ELA 2018	Grades 3-8 % Meet or Exceed Expectations MCAS Math 2018	% Advanced & Proficient Grades 5-8 MCAS Science 2018	% Advanced & Proficient 10th Grade MCAS ELA 2018	% Advanced & Proficient 10th Grade MCAS Math 2018	% Advanced & Proficient 10th Grade MCAS Science 2018
DISTRICT	PERCENT	PERCENT	PERCENT	PERCENT	PERCENT	PERCENT
Belmont	78	78	76	98	93	94
Brookline	75	73	63	98	93	88
Concord	77	75	65	-	-	-
Concord-Carlisle	-	-	-	99	92	95
Dover-Sherborn	82	75	79	100	99	96
Lexington	80	81	73	98	97	95
Lincoln	57	59	45	-	-	-
Lincoln-Subury	-	-	-	98	94	91
Medfield	69	72	50	97	96	94
Natick	64	64	62	97	91	92
Needham	76	72	66	98	93	92
Newton	70	71	60	97	93	90
Sudbury	74	73	68	-	-	-
Wayland	78	76	69	98	92	96
<b>Wellesley</b>	<b>79</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>64</b>	<b>98</b>	<b>96</b>	<b>93</b>
Weston	81	77	76	99	96	91
Winchester	79	80	76	99	96	95

**Source:** Commonwealth of Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education website.  
2018 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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Class of 2018 Graduation Photo by Sharon Gray