



# FOXBOROUGH PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Amy A. Berdos, Ed.D.

Foxborough Public Schools

March 18, 2019

# Superintendent's Entry Plan Report of Findings

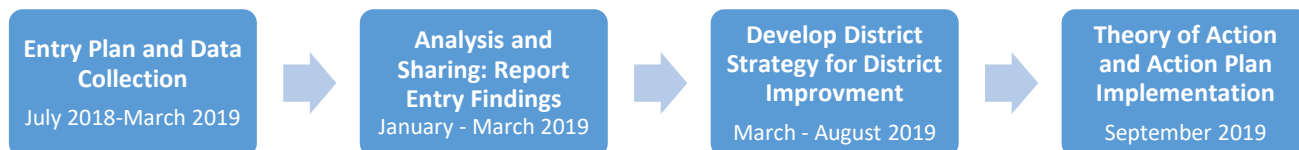
## ***Introduction***

On August 27, 2018, as one component of participating in the Massachusetts Association of School Superintendent's *New Superintendent Induction Program*, I presented a formal and comprehensive Entry Plan. This plan outlined the process I would use to learn more about the Foxborough Public Schools in my new role as Superintendent. My goals in undertaking this process were to learn more about the district and community, to gain a deeper understanding of the current conditions of the system, and to identify areas for further study that will eventually lead to the development of a strategy for growth. As originally hoped, this entry plan process has provided an opportunity to not only learn more about our excellent school system through a new lens, but has also provided an experience that has led to a deeper understanding and appreciation of our wonderful community and the Foxborough Public School System.

Over the past eight months, I have engaged in a process that has included a comprehensive review of the school district, gathering a variety of both quantitative and qualitative data. Specifically, as part of this process, I have collected data that I can see, hear and count. Data that can be seen includes observations within and outside of the schools themselves. This includes a variety of meetings, monthly school visits and numerous observations of classrooms in all five schools, and attending community and school events. Data that can be heard includes formal and informal interviews, focus groups, and again attending community and school events. A thorough review of district documents encompassed data that can be counted. This process produced a significant amount of information. As part analyzing this data, I worked closely with our administrative leadership team to analyze academic achievement data and perception data. Throughout this process, I have had the chance to learn from many perspectives and stakeholders. Uncovering the themes and patterns that emerged has been a rewarding experience.

The goal of this report is to communicate what I learned through the entry process. As stated above, these findings represent a synthesis of what I heard, observed and what I analyzed during the entry activities focused on Foxborough Public Schools' culture and climate, strengths, challenges, and areas for opportunity and improvement. These findings will be organized by the themes and patterns that emerged.

## ***Review of the Process***



## ***Overview and Summary***

Foxborough is a community valued by all constituency groups. It is a community where the Foxborough community and the Foxborough Public Schools community value positive relationships characterized by a level of respect, trust and transparency. Foxborough is an inclusive community where newcomers express that they immediately feel welcome. A positive collaborative working relationship exists between schools, town agencies and organizations. There is strong community support for the schools. Teachers, staff and students report that they feel valued and supported on a personal, school and district level. Parents are actively engaged in the schools and community. A strong sense of pride by all stakeholder groups was expressed for *their* town of Foxborough.

A culture of excellence exists in the Foxborough Public Schools. A solid and consistent curriculum provides students with multiple levels of challenge. “There is range of offerings and programs that advance students to college and career ready.” In addition to a strong core of academic offerings, there is a robust arts curriculum. All stakeholder groups expressed their appreciation for the value and supports placed on the arts. Music and the visual arts programming were noted repeatedly as highly valued, as was the fact that Spanish begins as early as first grade. All constituency groups noted the importance of the arts and languages at all levels, expressing their appreciation that they exist in the Foxborough Public Schools. Administration, faculty and staff are seen as engaged, responsive, and accessible to students and their families providing a positive and safe environment for teaching and learning.

Schools focus on the whole student, not just academics. Parents expressed that they feel fortunate to have their children supported by a strong, well-rounded curriculum where there are diverse offerings. Specifically, they reported that high academic standards exist at all levels and students’ needs are met in a variety of ways. “The school system is very committed to educating the whole child, there are lots of opportunities to try new things, enrichment and opportunities to get involved.” The resources provided by the community and the schools are appreciated at both a macro and a micro level. Students requiring additional supports through special education or other related services are supported by many: teachers, support staff and administration. Parents and teachers report that there is a strong sense of team when it comes to meeting the diverse learning needs of students. “There is a caring staff and teachers where they care about more than teaching, they care about kids.” “Foxborough is very child focused; inclusive minded not just pushing the academics, but also pushing social emotional learning.” Parents expressed their appreciation for the collaborative efforts stating, “Teachers are motivating and care about your student.” Moreover, stakeholder groups noted the importance Foxborough places on the social emotional wellbeing of students - continually keeping students’ best interests in mind.

A mutual feeling exists that Foxborough’s community is supportive of its children and schools. Schools work hard to provide the best services to students and intern students have a myriad of opportunities, activities and diverse offerings from which to choose. The fact that there are no fees for extracurricular activities/sports, transportation, parking, and academic programs such as

full day kindergarten were mentioned frequently with a sense of pride from community members.

Residents value both the tremendous support provided to families in town and the fact that the community and schools are “on the same page.” Simply stated, “There is a commitment to education and children” and “Foxborough is a great place to raise your children.”

The next few sections will highlight the data collected and analyzed and identify the four broad themes that emerged. Corresponding strengths, areas for opportunity and inquiry will be noted for each theme. Lastly, essential questions will provide a springboard for further investigation.



**Entry Plan and Data Collection**  
July 2018-March 2019

### ***Data Collection (Information that I could Count, See and Hear)***

Beginning in July 2018, I conducted individual and small group conversations with School Committee members, building principals, central office administrators, and district personnel. In August at our annual Administrator Retreat, which includes all building administrators, central office administrators, district directors and coordinators, and high school department heads, I continued the conversation regarding entry plan data gathering. Information gathering continued through the fall and into the winter with students, teachers, support staff, union leadership, transportation, parents/guardians, community members, town leaders and public safety. The following list represents many of the groups, but does not fully account for all groups as many included individual and smaller focus group meetings.

#### **Student Groups:**

- Burrell, Igo and Taylor Elementary Grade 4 representatives
- Ahern Student Council
- Foxborough High School Superintendent Student Advisory Council

#### **Teachers and Staff Groups: Multiple meetings with each school**

- Burrell Teachers and Staff
- Igo Teachers and Staff



- Taylor Teachers and Staff
- Ahern Teachers and Staff
- Foxborough High School Teachers and Staff

Parent/Guardian Groups:

- Foxborough High School Parent Group – Monthly coffee with the Principal
- Ahern PAC Meeting
- Burrell PTO
- Igo PTO
- Taylor PTO
- Community Evening Meeting with the Superintendent
- Parent Leaders

Town Group Representatives:

- Advisory Council (ADCOM)
- Board of Selectman
- Clergy Members
- Public Safety
- Senior Center (scheduled for April)

Guiding Questions Used for the Interviews/Meetings:

1. What do you value about the Foxborough Public Schools/Foxborough?
2. What does the Foxborough Public Schools do well?
3. What areas do you think need work in the district? Where can we do better?
4. What do you expect from me? Expect from the Superintendent?
5. Is there anything you think is important for the Superintendent to know?
6. How can we strengthen our partnership? (from outside the system)

***Document Review***

While I was a contributor to a number of the documents reviewed, it was important to review the information through a new lens. The document review process included, but was not limited to the following:

- MCAS data
- AP/SAT/ACT data
- OECD Test for Schools data
- Special Education data
- ACCESS data (State Assessment for English Language Learners)
- Survey data – K12 Culture and Climate Survey (Teachers, Parents, Students)
- Enrollment trends
- Budget reports
- Equity data (Special Education, Ethnicity, English Language Learner, Socio-Economic)

- Civil Rights data
- District Analysis Review Tool (DART) reports – Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE)
- Resource Allocation and District Action Reports (RADAR) reports - (DESE)
- Program Review Recommendations (Social Emotional Learning Program Review, Preventing Bias and Discrimination Program Review)



Analysis and  
Sharing: Report  
Entry Findings  
January - March 2019

## Observations

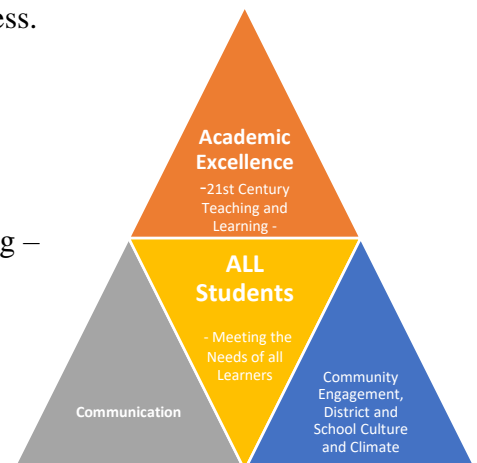
Beginning in September I engaged in countless observations of classrooms in all five schools through monthly school visits. Furthermore, I have participated in classroom observations with principals and department heads through Instructional Rounds. In addition to classroom observations and school visits, I attended town meetings, Open Houses for schools, district professional development activities, school staff meetings and administrator meetings. I also continue to attend many other school and community events outside the school day. Attending and observing school events within and outside the school day provides an opportunity to gather information in a more informal way. It allows me to get a sense of the number of participants that attend such events; the purpose and outcome of the activities; in addition, it affords me an opportunity to interact with our community in a different way.

## Analysis and Sharing – Report Findings

Throughout the data collection process, trends and patterns began to emerge and I was able to draw out themes during this stage of the process. As the data collection came to the final stages, these themes were confirmed or further defined. Again, these findings are representative of group meetings, observations and document reviews. Although a number of the documents reviewed include reports previously presented at School Committee meetings, it was important to include them in the greater context of this report as they are critical quantitative data components. The information shared below is a result of a process intended to extract thoughts and opinions of many stakeholders, as well as account for academic achievement data we are held accountable to as a district. The information is global in nature highlighting a district level focus, but school-based themes also emerged throughout the process.

### Four broad themes emerged:

1. All Students - Meeting the Needs of all Learners
2. Academic Excellence - 21<sup>st</sup> Century Teaching and Learning –
3. Communication
4. Community Engagement,  
District and School Culture and Climate





For each theme, I first outline the major findings that highlight our strengths. These findings are then followed by areas of Opportunity for Growth, Further Inquiry and Essential Questions to guide this inquiry.

As with any qualitative data, ensuring information gathered is shared accurately is not always easy. If you participated in any of the focus groups or interviews and feel that information collected was not captured in this report of findings, I would welcome a further conversation with you. The focus of the report is not on individual thoughts and feelings, but instead on overarching themes that emerged throughout the eight month process.



### ***THEME 1: All Students - Meeting the Needs of All Students***

#### **Strengths:**

- Students are provided with a well-rounded education that focuses on teaching the whole child. Parents, students and teachers report teaching the whole child is valued and supported in Foxborough.
- Parents report that teachers are caring, compassionate, and dedicated to meeting student needs. Strong relationships exist.
- Parents report schools are supportive and responsive when attending to students with special needs. Specifically, it was noted that when students are transitioning back into school, schools, staff and guidance counselors actively work together to ensure a smooth reentry process.
- Students, parents and staff report that schools provide a safe learning environment where student and staff safety is a priority.
- Administrators, teachers and staff are attuned to the students' social emotional needs and again focus on the whole student, not just academics.
- Mental Health supports are in place at all levels. Guidance counselors, social workers and psychologists are available to support the growing needs of students. (See Opportunities for Inquiry/Growth)
- Resources and supports are available for ALL students. The three elementary schools and the middle school are supported by math and reading specialists. English and Math tutors are provided at the high school level.
- Students at all levels report that teachers are willing to provide additional help to support their learning. Particularly at the elementary and middle school level students report that teachers vary their instruction to meet their learning needs.
- Students are supported within the district with new programs in an effort to retain students and have them remain in their school community.
- Students and parents report that students are prepared for the next level and transitions between grades are positive. The transition from the elementary schools to the middle school is particularly smooth. As reported on the *K12 Culture and Climate Survey* the average for



the last five years included 90% of middle school parents strongly agreeing/agreeing their child received useful help for the transition from elementary to middle school. The average for the last five years for middle school to high school transition included 82% of high school parents strongly agreeing/agreeing their child received useful help for the transition from middle to high school.

- Collaboration and strong partnership between town agencies exists to address the emotional and mental health needs of students.
- Students report that coaches are understanding and supportive of academic responsibilities and work with student athletes to meet individual needs.
- Students at all levels are provided numerous extracurricular activities after school to meet their varying interests. It was noted that there are many offerings provided with no fees.



### **Opportunities for Inquiry and Growth**

- Explore how to best prepare, support and professionally develop teachers and staff to learn effective proactive/preventative strategies that best support students who exhibit challenging behavioral or social emotional challenges that affect learning.
- An opportunity exists to better align curriculum to incorporate *Collaborative for Academic, Social and Emotional Learning (CASEL): Self Awareness, Self-Management, Social Awareness, Relationship Skills, and Responsible Decision Making* standards within current curricula.
- The increase in challenging behaviors and mental health needs of students is a growing area of focus. Specifically, how can we best support students and those working with them in ensure a positive and productive learning environment.
- Parents and teachers both spoke to the need to strengthen opportunities for challenging and extending learning for our highest performing students particularly at the elementary and middle levels.
- The Special Education population for the district is growing with Foxborough 18.2% being slightly above the state average of 17.2% (2018 DESE). The process for identifying students with Special Needs and related services is an area to explore as it relates to entrance and exit criteria. Additionally, attention to service delivery models and scheduling for Special Education and related services was identified as need to more effectively meet the needs of students.
- Slight shifts in demographic patterns have created more diversity in our schools. Students are more racially, economically, and culturally diverse. As one example, in 2014 Foxborough had 20 students whose first language was not English as opposed to currently in 2019 there





are 62 students whose first language is not English. We must adequately prepare for these changes in our student population, additionally we need to investigate, and address all equity gaps across the district.

- From an equity standpoint, opportunities exist to identify and address inequitable practices by acknowledging biases (implicit and explicit), employing and ensuring practices that reflect that all students will learn, and safeguard a learning environment of inclusivity.

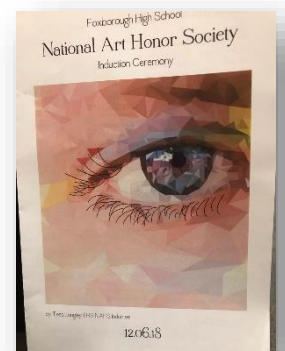
### **Essential Questions to Guide our Work**

- How can Foxborough better leverage scheduling and programming for all students to provide equitable access to high-quality, grade-level academic and behavioral instruction and supports for all students?
- How do we continue to confront our own unconscious biases of race and ethnicity?

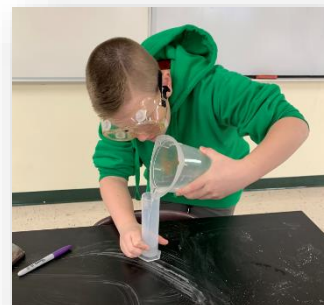
## ***THEME 2: Academic Excellence - 21st Century Teaching and Learning***

### **Strengths:**

- Student needs are met through a well-rounded, consistent and rigorous curriculum. A consistent curriculum exists among the three elementary schools.
- There is a high standard for teacher quality. Teachers are skilled professionals.
- Teachers are dedicated and care for students. Their focus is on academics and teaching the whole child.
- There is a collective belief that students are College and Career ready upon graduation.
- From the class of 2018, 90% of Foxborough High School students pursued continuing education, 2% specialized in programs, 4% enlisted in the military and 4% entered the workforce.
- Parents and teachers report a culture of excellence exists in the schools. A challenging curriculum exists for students with opportunities for advanced learning. Parents report that students are challenged appropriately. (See opportunities for Growth/Inquiry)
- Parents report that there is something for every learner with nontraditional learners having many options.
- Student interests and needs are met through a variety of course offerings at the middle school and high school levels. Elective and enrichment courses are offered at the middle school and a wide range of electives are available at Foxborough High School.



- Students are encouraged and supported to challenge themselves academically by taking Honors and AP courses at Foxborough High School.
- Students are well prepared for college. In 2018, 95% of Grade 10 students scored Advanced/Proficient in English Language Arts on the MCAS; 91% of Grade 10 students scored Advanced/Proficient in Mathematics on the MCAS test; 89% of Grade 10 students scored Advanced/Proficient in Science and Technology on the MCAS test.
- Over the last five years student performance on the Grade 10 MCAS which is required for high school graduation as a competency determination has remained consistent and at high levels. Students scoring at the Advanced/Proficient level for English Language Arts was 96%; 90% for Mathematics and 87% on the Science and Technology. A high level of students score at the Advanced level outpacing the state. (See Baseline and Benchmark Report)
- In 2018, for the second consecutive year, Foxborough High School voluntarily participated in the OECD Test for Schools (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, Paris, FR) an international benchmarking tool allowing schools to compare their performance in science, math and reading to other schools around the nation and the world. Foxborough scores were comparable to the top nations in the world including Singapore, Hong Kong-China, and Japan.
- A diverse offering of courses and electives are available at Foxborough High School. Courses are responsive to student needs and interests. New courses are developed and presented regularly.
- There is a comprehensive offering of Advanced Placements (AP) courses with 19 AP courses at Foxborough High School. Additional AP Courses are available through Virtual High School (VHS).
- The number of AP course offerings and the number of students participating in AP courses at Foxborough High School continues to grow with strong performance displayed by students. In 2018, 80% of students scored 3 or better on a 0-5 point scale. The number of AP tests administered remains at high levels. Over the last three years an average of 439 tests were administered.
- Students, parents and staff report that the education in Foxborough is of high quality with a rigorous curriculum in place. According to the 2018 K12 Culture and Climate Survey 99% of Staff rate education quality in Foxborough as Excellent. Parents rated the quality of education 93% Excellent/Good and Students at 84% Excellent/Good. (Students surveyed were in grades 5-12.) Education quality trends over the last five years on this survey consistently rate



education excellent/good. (Staff 99%; Parents 92%; Students 87% respectively)

- Reading and math specialists are valued by the community and are actively engaged in classrooms supporting students' academic needs.
- The Music and Arts are highly valued in Foxborough. These programs are of high caliber with each respectively receiving high marks at area, state and national competitions.
- The Music program offers leadership opportunities for students, teaching lifelong lessons and nurturing music appreciation.
- A full complement of specialist area courses (wellness, music, art and world language) instruction is supported and valued at the elementary level and all levels.
- Strong world language programs exist with opportunities for advanced learning. Spanish, French and Sign Language provide students with a choice for language learning at the high school with multiple levels available. Spanish beginning in grade 1 is valued by parents.
- Teachers, parents and students are in high agreement that they are provided and supported with instructional materials, resources and technology. (See Opportunities Inquiry/Growth)
- Students graduating from Foxborough High School are accepted at highly selective colleges and universities.
- Over the last five years, an average of 91% of FHS students pursued continuing education.
- Teachers and parents report that class sizes are appropriate. Parents and the community value neighborhood schools at the elementary level.
- Collaboration is valued and provided for among teachers and schools. (See opportunities for Growth/Inquiry)
- Teachers and administration report that there is a high quality of professional development featuring offerings that are timely and effective.
- Many opportunities for professional development exist within the district. Professional development is responsive to current research based practices, timely and of high quality.



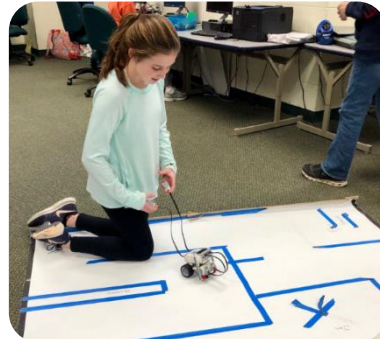
### **Opportunities for Inquiry and Growth**

- Expand opportunities for continued analysis of instructional practices, to ensure high expectations teaching for all students and provide a rigorous and relevant curriculum to better support student learning.
- Investigate Global Citizenship curriculums to supplement/augment current curriculum.
- Strengthen opportunities to challenge and extend the learning of high performing students particularly at the elementary and middle levels was raised by parents and teachers.
- Explore the degree and frequency the flipped classroom model is used as an instructional tool.
- Maximize curriculum opportunities for real world connections and relevance, a need that was identified by students and teachers.

- Identify effective scheduling, planning and consistent use for structured collaboration time. This includes Professional Learning Communities (PLCs), Teacher Assistant Teams (TAT) and Building Based Support Teams (BBST).

### **Essential Questions to Guide our Work**

- How do we ensure students are exposed to rigorous and relevant teaching?
- How can we engage students to generate ideas for real-world problems and provide a structure for the process of creating possible solutions?
- How do we engage students in ways that build their understanding of a global community?
- What safeguards must be in place so students are college and career ready?



### ***THEME 3: Communication***

#### **Strengths:**

- Communications in general are viewed as strong by administration, staff and parents. Specifically, parents noted that administration and teachers are accessible and responsive. Examples given included communication to the School Committee, administrators communicating with staff and with each other, and between teachers and parents. (See Opportunities for Growth and Inquiry)
- School Committee meetings begin with a Teaching and Learning Highlight, which promote and recognize student and staff achievements, accomplishments, academic and extracurricular programs and activities, special events, and innovative practices. Further, these highlights communicate what is valued in Foxborough.
- Strategic planning takes place at the district level where a common vision is promoted and supported. For example, *Objective 1: To develop responsible global citizens by providing dynamic learning experiences within a rigorous curriculum that fosters high levels of achievement for all students* was noted multiple times by constituency groups.
- Communication between schools and home for families participating in the METCO Program is strong and effective.
- Communications between administration/staff and parents is positive with school personnel accessible and approachable. School administration and teachers are readily available and responsive to student and parent needs.
- The student information system, PowerSchool, is a welcome and valued resource by parents and students at the middle and high school level



- Community members report schools are welcoming and accessible. The Community Report is a valued tool for communicating news and information about the school system.
- The sign up process for conferences is effectively communicated and easily accessed.

### **Opportunities for Inquiry and Growth**

- A need exists for more effective communication with internal transition planning and vertical articulation from school to school including procedures, processes, and supports for students.
- Communications and modes of delivery among teachers/grade levels/schools can vary presenting varied experiences from year to year.
- Communication about student progress and class activities can vary at the school/grade/teacher level presenting missed opportunities and misconceptions.
- Expanding the modes of communication to promote student and school activities, happenings and accomplishments is an area to be further explored for increasing public relations.
- The implementation of a new web presence provides a chance to communicate and explore opportunities for expanding social media outreach. Collecting feedback from stakeholders will continue to be an important part of the process and implementation.

### **Essential Question to Guide our Work**

- What communication strategies and activities might we leverage to more effectively and routinely engage with all stakeholder groups?

## ***THEME 4: Community Engagement, District and School Culture and Climate***

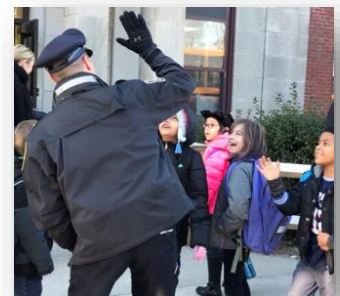
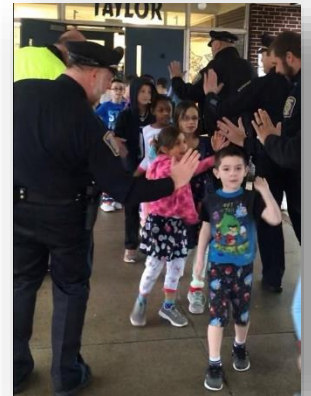
### **Strengths:**

- Foxborough is a community where personal connections, relationships and people are valued.
- A strong sense of community and pride exists. Many staff members reside in Foxborough or have moved to Foxborough in order to have their children attend the Foxborough Public Schools.
- Community members, parents and school personnel report that Foxborough is a community that cares for others within and outside the schools.
- Parents and community members report that there are opportunities to be involved through volunteering, curriculum experiences, career days and special events.





- Parents report that administration and faculty are engaged with each other and interested in achieving the same outcomes.
- Staff and parents report that central office administrators, principals, and assistant principals are actively engaged and work collaboratively as a team to support what is in the best interest of students. Decisions and actions taken maximize the safety of students along with their academic, social and emotional growth.
- Students are involved in the schools and their own learning. This is evidenced by the high level of involvement and participation in student clubs/activities, after-school and extra-curricular activities.
- Strong partnerships with many community organizations, local businesses, service organizations and other organizations exist. Foxborough enjoys strong and vibrant partnerships with several local businesses and community agencies. These include generous parent groups (PTOs/PACs/Athletic and Music Boosters), Meditech, Schneider Electric, the Kraft Organization, the Hockomock Area YMCA, Foxboro Cable Access, and Stop & Shop, along with many others.
- Active PTOs/PACs provide resources and supports for students, staff and schools. A robust PTO organization exists at the elementary level that works collaboratively to support the three schools collectively. The PAC at the middle school level represents a strong support system for middle school students, faculty and staff.
- Administrators, teachers and staff are actively engaged with students and families. Families and students feel welcome in classrooms and schools. Teachers are caring and nurturing to students.
- There is a high level of engagement between staff and parents regarding student academic achievement. According to the K12 Culture and Climate Survey administered annually over the last five years, the average percent of staff strongly agreeing/agreeing that regular communication and engagement exists with parents regarding their child's academic achievement was 92%. Parents strongly agreed/agreed by 93%.
- There is a high level of respect and collaboration among staff and faculty. Over the last five years staff report on average 96% Strongly Agree/Agree that collaboration among teachers and staff is encouraged in school. Over the last five years, on average 94% of teachers Strongly Agree/Agree feel respected and supported by their principal and other administrators and 94% Strongly Agree/Agree they feel the same support and respect by other teachers at their school.
- When concerns arise, administration is accessible and responsive. Staff (97%) and parents (88%) report in 2018 that an administrator was available, listened and responded to concerns in a professional and courteous manner.
- Opportunities, academic and non-academic exist for all students. Students report there is wide range of opportunities to be involved in the school community.



- Administration, teachers and support staff report schools are highly collaborative and decision-making focuses on placing students at the center.
- Students report assemblies and special presentations are engaging. Special speakers and authors supported by PTO/PAC groups are appreciated and of interest to students.
- The district continues to focus on safety measures and planning, actively engaging in preparedness with local public safety officials. A strong partnership exists between the schools, the Foxboro Police Department and the Foxboro Fire Department.
- Teachers and staff are engaged in work outside of the school – coaches, clubs, summer work, etc.
- Schools are actively supported by parents/guardians and the community. As evidenced by the Advisory Committee (ADCOM), Board of Selectman (BOS) and residents at Town Meeting the community continues to support the financial needs of the schools and the school's budget and the Capital Improvement Plan.

### **Opportunities for Inquiry and Growth**

- There is an opportunity to better and more effectively communicate, recognize and celebrate what we do well.
- Identify and work with groups in Foxborough that may not yet be closely connected to the schools.
- Explore ways to communicate in a visible way that Foxborough is a community that embraces and celebrates differences, identities and cultural backgrounds. It will help answer the question, How can we best communicate a consistent message of acceptance?

### **Essential Questions to Guide our Work**

- How do we raise awareness about embracing and celebrating differences, and preventing and minimizing racial, ethnic, cultural, religious, or gender bias and/or discrimination in our students and our schools?
- What are the valued practices that must be nourished and continued in order to sustain a positive climate and culture while taking Foxborough Public Schools to the next level?

### **Next Steps**

Over the spring and summer, the findings from this report will be used to develop a *Strategy for District Improvement*. The *Strategy for District Improvement* consists of three to five strategic objectives that together have the potential to drive significant, systemic improvement in student learning and growth. Simply stated, the strategic objectives will outline the big areas of focus. These objectives will be thoughtfully and thoroughly developed in a collaborative process with our leadership team. The outcome will be the identification of prioritized initiatives that should be taken to achieve the identified long-term strategic objectives.

Although the *Strategy for District Improvement* will be established in concert with the district Strategic Plan, it is different in nature. One difference is that a Strategic Plan identifies initiatives in many areas of district operations and the Strategy for District Improvement focuses on central office and school efforts on improving the quality of teaching and learning. Secondly, a *Strategy* will focus on doing a few things well and integrating a few key initiatives. Lastly, a Strategy for District Improvement is continually reconsidered and adapted while the Strategic Plan is rarely revised based on new information.

A Theory of Action will summarize the above work. A Theory of Action consists of IF/THEN statements that articulate what will happen because of the identified objectives and strategic initiatives. It will represent a detailed account of our best thinking towards improvement as a logical series of steps that will need to be followed in order to achieve the desired success.

It is anticipated that in late fall, a report will be provided to the School Committee to help the Committee understand the *Strategy*.

