

**Annual Evaluation of the Superintendent
By the Lexington School Committee**

For the period from September 2013 to June 2014

Superintendent: Dr. Paul Ash

School Committee Members	Signature
Margaret Coppe, Chair	_____
Alessandro Alessandrini	_____
Judith Crocker	_____
Jessie Steigerwald	_____

Approved by the School Committee

February 10, 2015

Evaluation of the Superintendent

Covering the period 2013—2014

Summative Evaluation Report

The Lexington School Committee’s professional evaluation of Dr. Paul Ash for 2013-2014 is following a new process put in place this year by the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education. Working together, the Committee and Dr. Ash agreed to his goals and the specific indicators under each standard that were used in this evaluation. The decision was made to use nine of the indicators in this evaluation. In addition, there was a mid-year check-in in January 2014 and a self-evaluation from Dr. Ash on July 10, 2014. Three Committee members submitted individual evaluations in October 2014 and one in December 2014. There was more turnover on the Committee than usual this year due to the election of a new member in March and the resignation of a member in August 2014. The composite evaluation consists of averages of the individual committee members.

The Committee rated Dr. Ash’s overall summative performance as Proficient. Please note that the Lexington Education Association and School Committee agreed that the “exemplary” category would not be used for any employee during the 2013-2014 school year, and we decided to follow this example. The highest ranking available for each category is proficient, which is defined as “fully satisfactory.” This was based on assessing progress toward his goals and his performance on standards. The impact on student learning earned a high rating. Dr. Ash is a highly knowledgeable and thorough superintendent who has an excellent grasp of budget finance, labor relations, and government mandates and is a strong advocate for professional learning.

The Committee received information throughout the year that included both measurable and anecdotal evidence from Dr. Ash, as well as first-hand observations of his performance through multiple meetings, analysis of district assessment data, reports, and district and school improvement plans. Suggestions for next year include analysis of staff evaluation data and feedback as well as protocols for school visits and sample follow-up reports.

Dr. Ash self-reported that he did not meet his Professional Practice goal of advancing student learning in collaboration with principals and other administrators and making substantial progress in establishing a common understanding of what effective classroom instruction entails in order to provide quality educator feedback under the new educator evaluation system. In the future it would be helpful to have more information on measurable steps that were taken to establish a common understanding. How much time was dedicated? Was it treated as a priority at administrative council meetings?

The Superintendent tied his Student Learning goal of collaborating with other school and district leaders to work with principals to help them meet their school learning goals. He met this goal. All nine principals established SMART student learning goals and made substantial progress toward their goals. He met regularly with the principals to discuss their strategies for achieving

their goals and how he could support them. In order to expand the district's future capacity to build a K-12 comprehensive Response to Intervention system, he recommended expanding the Coordinator of Professional Learning to full-time and hiring a Director of Planning and Assessment.

Recommendations include adding each principal's goals, along with the steps that Dr. Ash took to support that principal, the progress made, and ways to improve.

Standard I: Instructional Leadership

The overall rating is **Proficient**.

Supporting administrator teams to use a variety of formal and informal methods of assessments, including common interim assessments that are aligned across grade levels and subject areas earns Dr. Ash a rating of proficient. Numerous initiatives, including professional development courses on standards, Response to Intervention, using data, Writers Workshop, the Massachusetts Kindergarten Entry Assessment, and District Determined Measures have been held throughout the system over the year.

Dr. Ash informs the Committee on an annual basis on the achievement of all Lexington students on MCAS tests and SAT tests. The achievement gap has been closed at the tenth-grade level for Special Education and Metco students who received the highest scores among the school systems we compare ourselves with. He acknowledges that there is more work to be done with specific sub-groups of students and has consistently provided the needed resources. Staff has Professional Learning opportunities for continual learning and improvement in delivering instruction. Recommendations include providing measureable data in the area of student achievement at levels in addition to grade 10, the kinds and numbers of assessments used across the district, the number of staff taking and subsequently implementing Professional Learning courses, and school visits.

Standard II: Management and Operations

The overall rating is **Proficient**.

Supporting administrator teams in developing systems and procedures for positive student behavior, modeling high expectations for the student behavior and providing appropriate training for administrators to uphold these expectations, establishing district-wide routines and consequences, including policies and systems to prevent and address bullying and other behaviors that threaten students' social and emotional well-being earns Dr. Ash a rating of proficient.

Dr. Ash continues to support a variety of programs, both new and on-going, that address safety, health, emotional, and social needs. These include ALICE, health offerings, and the Ad Hoc Committee on Youth Stress. Professional Development in first aid, CPR and AED, numerous trainings for student health concerns and pro-social skills. The anti-bullying policy developed

with the help of staff was approved by the School Committee in February, 2014. Again, more data on rates of participation by staff and numbers of students served would be welcomed.

Recommendations include continued improvement to traffic management around the ten buildings in the district. Funding for traffic design plans for Clarke Middle School and Bridge Elementary School will be requested at the 2015 Annual Town Meeting.

Standard III: Family and Community Engagement

The overall rating is **Needs Improvement**.

This is one area that Dr Ash needs to focus his attention on. He needs to put more of a priority on increasing cultural awareness in an increasingly diverse student population. He is commended for continuing work on closing the achievement gap for Metco students.

In his self-evaluation, he indicated that he attended school events at eight of the nine schools. He also attended meetings with the Special Education Parent Advisory Committee, the PTA/PTO Presidents Council, and the Chinese American Association of Lexington (CAAL).

Recommendations include working with representatives of the Chinese, Indian, and Korean communities to examine multi-cultural education and programs in the schools. While he has been present in the schools, it would have helped to reassure the community to be on site when there has been a safety issue like the one at Lexington High School in the spring.

Standard IV: Professional Culture

The overall rating is **Needs Improvement—Proficient**

This is an area that elicited different responses depending on the interpretation of the indicator of Managing Conflict. Committee members who focused on resolving conflict and building consensus throughout the district were positive about Dr. Ash's performance. Evidence cited were successful union negotiations on the new teacher supervision and evaluation, the reduction of disputes in the Special Education department, the positive results of the morale study conducted with the Lexington Education Association, and the establishment of the Enrollment Working Group to produce better enrollment projections.

Committee members who focused on a different aspect of conflict resolution cited individual instances of unresolved conflict between either themselves and others or the superintendent and indicated that this was an area that needs improvement.

In future evaluations there needs to be more clarity about the scope of this indicator.

Approved by the School Committee 2/10/2015