WARE PUBLIC SCHOOLS

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Dear Ware Learning Community,

We are pleased to share the Ware Public Schools accountability data for the 2022-2023 school year, which was made public today. This memo aims to provide an interpretation of the data, which is also available on our district website with links to the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE).

State Goals and Targets: The state's goals and targets were thoughtfully crafted to aid the recovery of achievement scores to pre-pandemic levels, addressing the learning losses experienced during the pandemic. While we have not yet fully recovered to the scores of the 2019 school year, we've taken significant steps to tackle these challenges. We remain dedicated to surpassing our 2019 academic scores in the upcoming school year and beyond.

Overview of District Progress: Our district has made significant progress towards the targets set by the state, with the majority of our schools either meeting or exceeding the state's recovery targets. While we have not yet fully regained the pre-pandemic achievement scores, we have made steady strides in the right direction.

The targets and goals established by the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) were purposefully designed to address the learning losses observed over the past four years in districts across the commonwealth. These targets and goals will continue to serve as our guiding framework for the next four years as we work diligently to bridge the learning gaps and achieve the desired academic outcomes.

Challenges and Achievements: While we celebrate our progress, we must also recognize areas that require focused attention. These include improving graduation rates, overall improved attendance, raising achievement scores across all grade levels, and increasing access and completion of advanced courses for high school students. These areas are critical to the overall success of our students and our district.

Positive Developments: Nonetheless, we are heartened by substantial improvements in other critical areas, particularly the reduction in absenteeism among grades 3-8 and the growth in academic achievement, notably in high school English Language Arts.

Addressing Gaps: Our district is fully committed to addressing the gaps identified in our data. We have developed comprehensive plans to ensure that we not only meet but also exceed state benchmarks in all aspects of our educational programs. This includes targeted initiatives to boost graduation rates, improve school attendance, and expand opportunities for advanced courses.

Curricular Enhancements: The confidence we have in our teaching and support staff to implement curricular materials to meet the needs of our student population is unwavering. However, based on a deeper analysis of our data, specific gaps in complex and inferential questions have become a central focus for our professional development efforts this year. It is for this reason that we have begun a comprehension training and coaching initiative to support all teachers and school principals as they learn to connect the high-quality resources the district has procured with the specific gaps that students have presented in their ability to perform on state testing metrics. It is through this strategic support initiative that we predict dramatic and immediate shifts in our student's ability to read with comprehension and write academically across all grade levels to meet or exceed the state targets set forth by this data.

Collaboration and Dedication: Our progress is a testament to the dedication and hard work of our students, families, and staff. Together, we have navigated the challenges of the past few years and continue to strive for excellence.

School Determinations: The summary data for the district indicates Moderate Progress Towards Targets, with an annual growth target measured at 48% for the entire district. The individual school assessments are as follows:

- Stanley M. Koziol Elementary School: Meeting or Exceeding State Targets
- Ware Middle School: Making Moderate Progress
- Ware Junior/Senior High School: Achieving Substantial Progress Towards Targets

The following data has been included in the State Accountability measures and reported by the state:

State Accountability Categories

Indicator	Measure
Achievement	- English Language Arts (ELA) Achievement - Mathematics Achievement - Science Achievement
Student Growth	- ELA mean student growth (SGP) - Mathematics mean SGP
High School Completion	- Four-year cohort graduation rate - Extended engagement rate (five-year cohort graduation rate pls the percentage of students from the cohort who are still enrolled) - Annual drop rate
English Language Proficiency	- Progress made by students towards attaining English language proficiency (percentages of students meeting annual targets calculated to attain English proficiency in six years)
Additional Indicator	- Chronic absenteeism (percentage of students missing 20 percent or more of their days in membership) - Percentage of 11th & 12th graders completing advanced coursework (advanced placement, international baccalaureate, Project Lead the Way, Dual Enrollment Courses, Chapter 74 – approved vocational/technical secondary cooperative education programs, and other selected rigorous courses)

Points Allocation and Understanding Progress: Points were assigned to evaluate and score the progress of each district, including Ware Public Schools, on their path to recovering to pre-pandemic levels, considering the statewide decline in scores. It's crucial to understand that achieving four points and surpassing the target does not mean that we have fully returned to pre-pandemic levels of achievement. Rather, it signifies progress and alignment with the DESE benchmarks for recovery.

Point Assignments: Points were allocated according to the following descriptions:

- **Exceeded Target**: 4 points
- **Met Target**: 3 points
- **Improved Below Target**: 2 points
- **No Change**: 1 point
- **Declined**: 0 points

Subcategories and Reporting: Subcategories are established when a minimum of 20 students are available to be reported for accountability. Consequently, while we have students with disabilities and minority subgroups, they are not listed due to the absence of comparison subgroups that met the minimum criteria to create such subgroups.

MCAS English Language Arts Achievement Scores for Students' Grades 3-8 Non-High School

Group	2022	2023	Change	2023 Target	Points	Mean SGP	2019
All Students	487.1	486.1	-1.0	489.9	0	43.9	490.1
Lowest Performing Students	465.5	462.7	-2.9	471.9	0	40.4	N/A
High Needs	483.2	481.9	-1.3	485.1	0	43.2	483.7
Low Income	483.8	482.6	-1.2	486.1	0	43.2	484.3
White	488.3	487.7	-.06	490.8	0	44	491.4

Analyzing the Data: In the domain of English Language Arts, the performance of grades 3-8 did not align with the goals or benchmarks set by the state. This is evident from the absence of points earned and the negative percentage change observed in the specified sub-categories. To attain performance levels that meet or exceed expectations, it is essential for the Student Growth Percentile (SGP) for these grades to reach at least 50, which is considered indicative of typical annual growth.

Despite the challenges we've encountered, it's important to emphasize that the district's recovery to pre-pandemic levels remains an attainable goal. The district has taken proactive steps by implementing interventions to address these deficits and work toward improved outcomes.

MCAS English Language Arts Achievement Scores for High School Students

Group	2022	2023	Change	2023 Target	Points	Mean SGP	2019
All Students	491.0	496.5	5.5	494.8	4	52.2	506.2
Lowest Performing Students	N/A	N/A	-	N/A	-	-	N/A
High Needs	487.2	491.7	4.5	490.6	4	48.2	500.9
Low Income	488.9	492.5	3.6	492.8	3	49.0	504.4
White	492.0	501.0	9.0	495.3	4	55.3	505.1

Analyzing the Data: Upon reviewing the data, it becomes evident that Ware High School has made significant strides towards meeting the set targets, with the exception of the sub-category concerning low-income students, for which we received 3 points. However, it's worth celebrating that in all other areas, we achieved an impressive 4-point rating. What's even more noteworthy is the positive increase recorded across all these categories, demonstrating our progress. In particular, when examining the category of change, we can observe positive increases in each area. These trends signify that Ware High School is on a promising trajectory, well on its way to attaining the baseline performance level of the 2019 school year, as indicated in the table.

Furthermore, it's worth noting that the mean Student Growth Percentile (SGP) has notably increased, reaching 50 in all student categories, including white students. This achievement underscores our commitment to facilitating growth and progress across the board. These encouraging developments affirm our dedication to continuous improvement and the success of Ware High School.

MCAS Math Achievement Scores for Students' Grades 3-8 Non-High School

Group	2022	2023	Change	2023 Target	Points	Mean SGP	2019
All Students	483.8	485.2	1.4	485.8	2	50.9	488.1
Lowest Performing Students	459.8	465.6	5.6	463.1	4	46.5	N/A
High Needs	479.9	480.9	1.0	481.3	3	49.1	483.2
Low Income	480.3	481.3	1.0	482.0	2	49.3	483.7
White	485.1	486.6	1.5	486.9	3	51.1	488.5

Analyzing the Data: We are pleased to report that there has been some improvement in MCAS math scores for grades 3-8. Each of the categories has witnessed slight increases, with the Student Growth Percentile (SGP) in all student categories meeting the expected annual growth rate. While there is more work ahead to fully regain pre-pandemic

levels, it's encouraging to note that the data has begun to follow an upward trend, signaling positive growth in these areas. This progress underscores our commitment to continuous improvement and the positive trajectory we are on in enhancing math education for our students.

Math MCAS Achievement Scores for High School

Group	2022	2023	Change	2023 Target	Points	Mean SGP	2019
All Students	489.9	492.3	2.4	494.1	2	61.4	506.7
Lowest Performing Students	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	-	-	N/A
High Needs	484.0	485.9	1.9	487.3	2	52.2	497.2
Low Income	485.8	485.8	0	489.1	1	49.8	499.0
White	491.8	497.2	5.4	495.5	4	64.5	506.7

Analyzing the Data: We are pleased to report notable improvements in MCAS math achievement scores at the high school level, particularly in specific sub-categories. The mean Student Growth Percentile (SGP) has shown remarkable progress, with scores exceeding 60 in two categories. While it's true that pre-pandemic numbers were significantly higher than our current scores, it's encouraging to see this positive growth trend emerging. These developments indicate that we are moving in the right direction and provide a promising outlook for continued growth in math education at the high school level.

MCAS Science Achievement Scores Non-High School

Group	2022	2023	Change	2023 Target	Points
All Students	488.3	488.1	-.02	490.0	1
Lowest Performing Students	N/A	N/A	-	N/A	-
High Needs	483.1	484.6	1.5	485.1	3
Low Income	482.8	484.8	2.0	485.4	2
White	489.4	491.4	2.0	492	2

Analyzing the Data: The Science MCAS scores presented a mixed picture, with each sub-category showing a slight increase. However, it's important to note that overall, there was a slight decrease in student scores. It's worth mentioning that assessments have undergone changes over the last two years, which is why 2019 data is not included in this analysis. This context helps us understand the variations in the scores and underscores the need for ongoing assessment and improvement efforts in the science education domain.

MCAS Science Achievement Scores High School

Group	2022	2023	Change	2023 Target	Points
All Students	491.3	490.2	-1.1	495.2	0
Lowest Performing Students	N/A	N/A	-	-	N/A
High Needs	486.9	485.1	-1.8	490.3	0
Low Income	489.7	484.5	-5.2	493.3	0
White	491.6	494.6	30	495.2	2

Analyzing the Data: Regrettably, the high school science scores did not align with the state's goals, as each of the indicators exhibited a slight decrease. It's important to note that Student Growth Percentile (SGP) and 2019 data were not provided, as the exam lacks baseline data prior to the 2022 dataset. This absence of historical data further emphasizes the need for ongoing assessment and targeted improvements to address the challenges faced in high school science education.

Graduation Rate

Group	2021	2022	Change	Target	Points
All Students	73.6	77.6	4	75.6	4
Lowest Performing Students	N/A	N/A	-	N/A	-
High Needs	60.9	68.8	7.9	65.2	4
Low Income	60.5	68.9	8.4	65.1	4
White	75.9	79.7	3.8	77.9	4

Analyzing the Data: Our graduation rate continues to hover in the mid-70s, showing an improvement from 73.6% to 77.6%. While this increase is certainly promising, there are persistent concerns regarding sub-categories and subgroups. These areas warrant our continued attention and efforts to ensure that every student has the support and resources needed to achieve academic success.

Drop-out Data

Group	2021	2022	Change	Target	Points
All Students	3.0	6.5	3.5	2.7	0
Lowest Performing Students	N/A	N/A	-	N/A	-
High Needs	4.1	8.8	4.7	3.7	0
Low Income	4.8	7.1	2.3	4.3	0
White	2.7	6.0	3.3	2.4	0

Analyzing the Data: We have observed a concerning increase in drop-out data, rising from 3.0% to 6.5%. This is an issue that demands our immediate attention and action.

To address this, the district is actively reviewing our data tracking system to better measure and provide support for our seniors. Additionally, we are examining our data submission processes to determine if any changes are needed to improve accuracy and effectiveness. Furthermore, we are placing a strong emphasis on enhancing student involvement and connections at the high school level. Ensuring that every student feels connected and engaged in their educational journey is a top priority as we work to mitigate the drop-out rate and support the success of all our students.

Advanced Coursework

Group	2022 (%)	2023 (%)	Change	Target	Points
All Students	53.4	46.3	-7.1	56.8	0
Lowest Performing Students	N/A	N/A	-	N/A	-
High Needs	35.4	26.2	-9.2	41.1	0
Low Income	35.5	28.3	-7.2	41.7	0
White	55.3	49.5	-5.8	58.9	0

Analyzing the Data: The issue of declining completion rates for advanced courses remains a cause for concern. This persistent trend underscores the importance of addressing the matter urgently. These advanced courses represent higher-level and more rigorous academic offerings, and it is vital that we take steps to reverse this trend and ensure that our students have access to and succeed in these valuable educational opportunities.

Chronic Absenteeism – Non-High School

Group	2022 (%)	2023 (%)	Change	Target	Points
All Students	33.5	22.9	-10.6	32.5	4
Lowest Performing Students	41.4	32.6	-8.5	39.3	4
High Needs	40.6	26.6	-14.0	38.8	4
Low Income	41.6	27.2	-14.4	39.2	4
White	32.0	20.5	-11.5	30.8	4

Analyzing the Data: We are pleased to report significant progress in reducing absenteeism for grades 3-8. In each category, we have earned the maximum 4 points, demonstrating remarkable improvement. Most notably, we have seen double-digit improvements in attendance in most areas, with just one exception.

To achieve these positive outcomes, each of our schools has developed tailored, individual plans to specifically address attendance improvement at their respective sites. This concerted effort reflects our commitment to ensuring that our students are present and engaged in their learning experiences.

Chronic Absenteeism – High School

Group	2022 (%)	2023 (%)	Change	Target	Points
All Students	42.4	42.1	-.03	40.8	2
Lowest Performing Students	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
High Needs	53.3	50.5	-2.8	50.4	3
Low Income	55.1	52.2	-2.9	50.6	2
White	39.8	40.1	0.3	38.0	1

Analyzing the Data: While we have observed some improvement in high school attendance, it's essential to acknowledge that significant progress remains necessary in this area. Currently, 42 percent of all students fall into the category of chronically absent, indicating that they have missed at least 20 days in a school year. This is a matter of the utmost importance that demands our immediate and unwavering attention.

Summary: We are fortunate to have some of the best educators and staff dedicated to our students' success. It is imperative that we, as a collective, find innovative and effective ways to enhance student attendance. This endeavor is crucial in addressing the learning gaps experienced by our students and ensuring their overall academic success.

We want to emphasize that while data is a crucial component of our district's progress, it represents just one facet of our journey. It does not encapsulate the entire story of our educational endeavors. However, these indicators are relative, and we recognize their significance in shaping the educational experience for our students. As a district, we are committed to addressing each of these indicators to ensure the best education for our students.

Embracing Growth: Our data shows improvements, underscoring our commitment to the success of our students. It highlights that we are on the right path, but it also reminds us of the importance of ongoing efforts to tackle the challenges we face. We are dedicated to providing the highest quality education and will continue our collaborative efforts to achieve the district's goals.

Instructional Improvement: Though we continue to be confident that the investments we have made in high-quality curricular materials over the past several years meet the overall needs of our diverse student population, we continue to perceive a gap between what our students have learned and the way in which they need to academically express their learning on their state assessments.

It is for this reason that this year we have begun a comprehensive teacher training initiative focused on strategic, linguistically informed questioning progressions that will allow teachers to accelerate student learning and provide students with a specific set of skills they need to be able to perform throughout their school career and beyond.

Despite the conclusions that could be drawn from the areas in which the data illustrates that we have been lacking as a district, today we stand ready and excited to embark on a journey together that we truly believe will yield much greater outcomes for all students in Ware.

For More Information: For a comprehensive view of our district's performance and detailed strategies for improvement, please visit our district website.

Gratitude and Acknowledgment: Once again, we extend our deepest gratitude to all individuals involved, including our hardworking students, supportive families, and dedicated staff members. These improvements are a testament to your unwavering commitment.
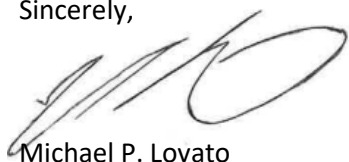
A Collective Commitment: We remain unwavering in our commitment to providing the best education for our students. Your continued support and partnership are invaluable as we work together to realize the goals of Ware Public School.

Links:
District and State Profiles

If you have any questions regarding the data, feel free to contact me.

Sincerely,

Michael P. Lovato
Superintendent