

Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education
Stoughton Public Schools District Review Recommendations:
(May 2013)

1. The district should continue its efforts to use a third party to help the school committee and the central office administration work together with the Stoughton Teachers' Association to develop effective lines of communication and resolve issues that hinder the district from moving forward.
2. The district should strengthen its improvement planning process by completing and aligning the goals in its system of plans and including a mechanism to ensure accountability for the follow-through on the plans.
3. To ensure that high-quality instructional practices are fully implemented at all levels, the review team recommends the development of a common understanding of effective instructional practices, the strengthening of instructional leadership at all levels, increased high-quality supervision and feedback at all levels, more structured opportunities for teachers to plan, share, and reflect on instructional practices, and more professional development opportunities targeted at improving instructional practices districtwide.
4. The district should address factors that are limiting teachers' ability and opportunities to make effective instructional use of data.
5. District and high school administrators should ensure that high school teachers have sufficient, timely access to data about their students and take the steps necessary to ensure that teachers have regular opportunities to discuss it.
6. To attract new staff members from diverse backgrounds the school committee should consider enacting and monitoring a recruitment policy that results in a pool of candidates that reflect the student body.
7. So that high-needs students and other students have the opportunity to achieve at high levels, the review team recommends that the district consider making changes in staffing and that it provide more training and supervision for staff to increase teachers' repertoire of instructional strategies.
8. The district should identify programs, procedures, and practices that need evaluation; it should make sure that evaluations include analysis of data and that the decisions it makes based on the evaluations are data driven.
9. The district should ensure that all students are enrolled in courses that prepare them well for college and career readiness. To that end, the district should eliminate Pathways courses at the high school, or at least make sure that they are used effectively only as supplemental courses that help students succeed in their required college preparatory classes.
10. Aligned to the strengthened strategic planning process recommended under Leadership and Governance above, budget development should include a hard look at whether current resource allocation directly supports strategic improvement, and what reallocations may be needed to fully implement the strategic plan and supporting plans.