2014 – 2016

School Improvement Plan

Rindge Avenue Upper School

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Cambridge, MA 02140

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CPS
Cambridge Public Schools

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Page Number

Vision …… 1

Theory of Action …… 1

Summary of Strategic Objectives and Initiatives…….... 1

Data Analysis

Trend Data/ Areas of Strength …….... 2-5

Trend Data/ Areas for Improvement …….. 6-10

Action Plan #1

Increase cohesion between General Educators …….. 11-12
and Special Educators to increase student
achievement for students with disabilities.

Action Plan #2

Increase cohesion between General Educators…….. 13-14
and Special Educators to increase student
achievement for students with disabilities.

Action Plan #3

1) Strengthen school community and relationships..... 15
between staff and students. Initiative:
2) Whole school is working towards adopting
and implementing common core values
3) Grade Level Advisory Calendars
4) Grade Level Social Contracts

Additional Considerations …… 16-17

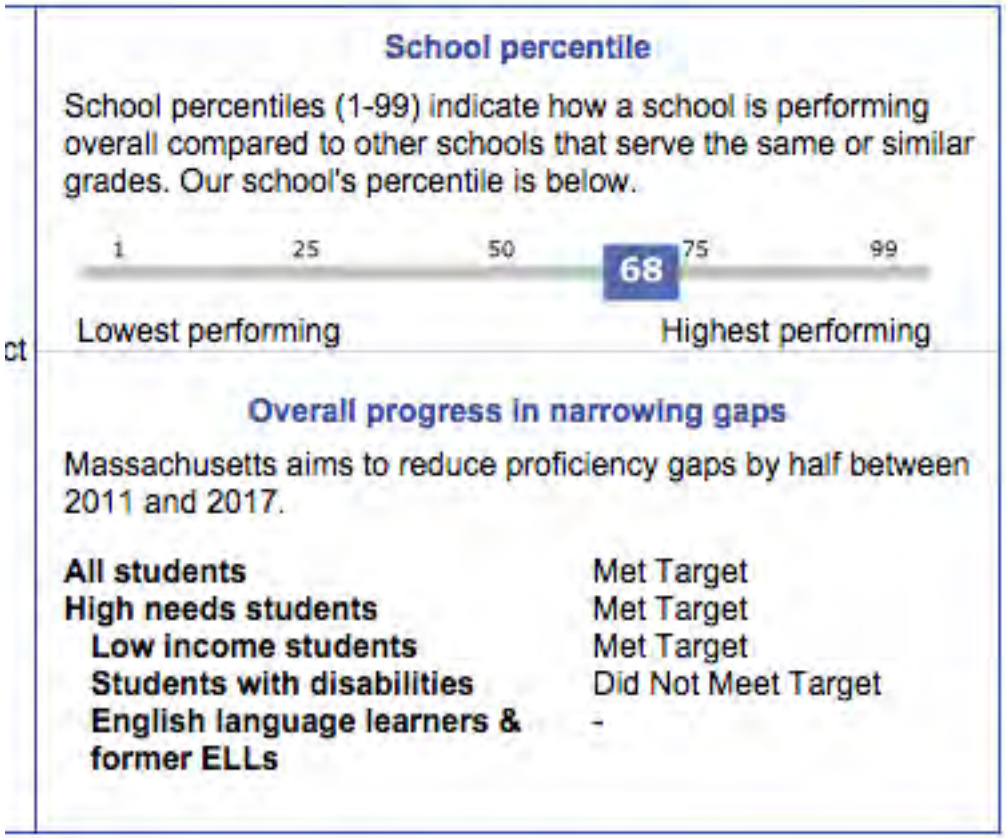
Cambridge Public Schools

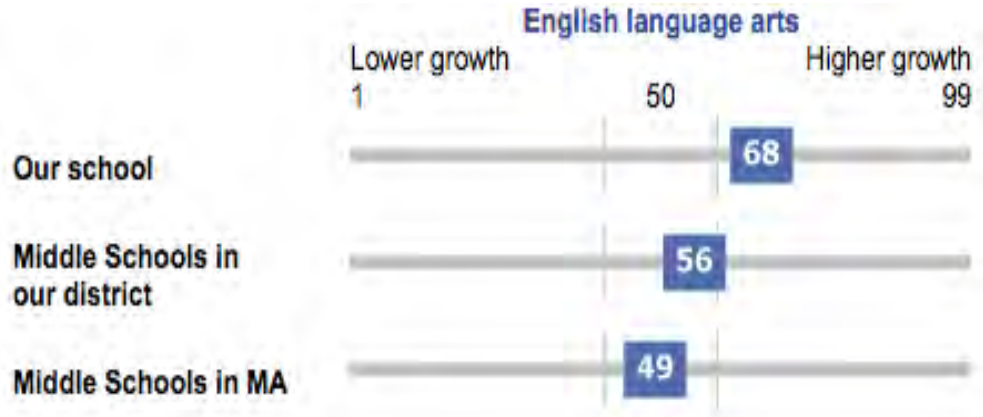
Rindge Avenue Upper School Improvement Plan 2014-16

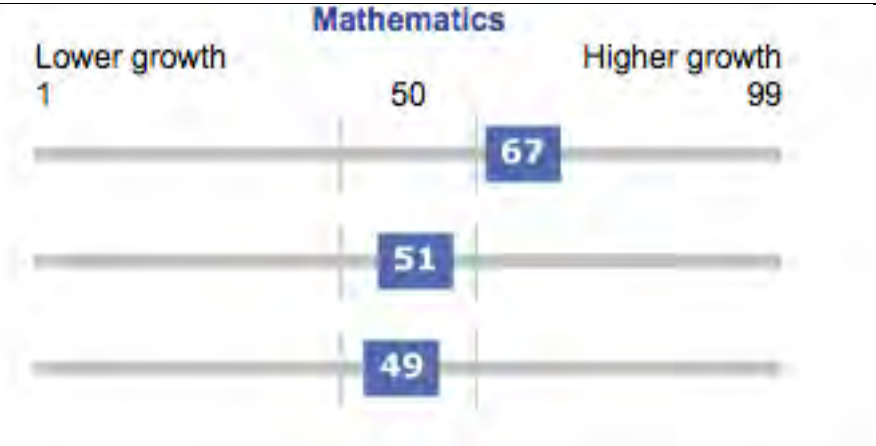
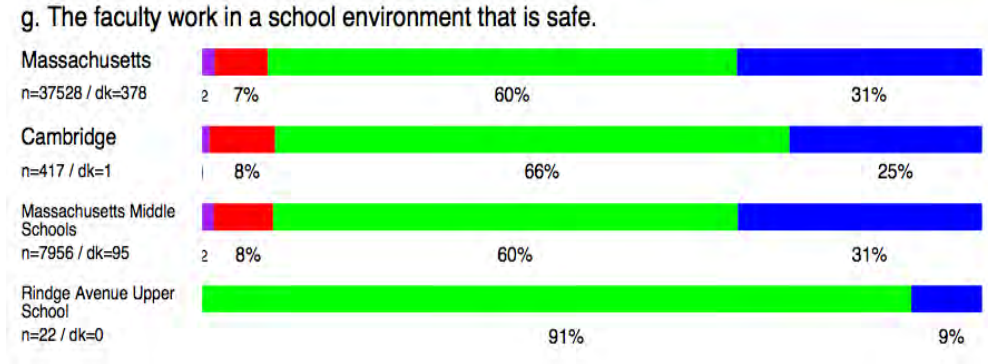
Vision
The vision of the Rindge Avenue Upper Campus community is to provide a student-centered environment that fosters confidence and leadership through building social, emotional, and academic skills necessary for students to reach their full potential.
Theory of Action
If we, as a learning community, believe that all teachers and students can create a safe, supportive and nurturing environment where everyone can learn and every student knows that we care about their social, emotional, and academic well being. Then every RAUC student will be well prepared to move onto CRLS and beyond.

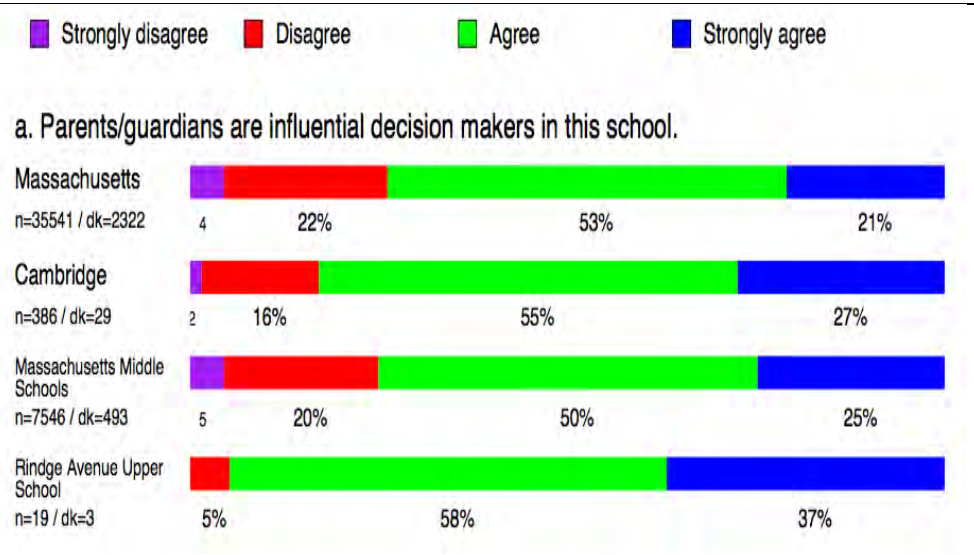
Strategic Objectives		
Increase cohesion between General Educators and Special Educators to increase student achievement in Math for students with disabilities.	Strengthen school community and relationships between staff and students. Initiative	Increase cohesion between General Educators and Special Educators to increase student achievement in ELA for students with disabilities.
Strategic Initiatives		
Math teachers and math coach will focus on targeted group of students to build basic skills. This work will occur as support in the general math class by math coach on a weekly basis.	Whole school is working towards adopting and implementing common core values. Public displays created by students, based on core values. School-wide recognition of students who exemplify the core values	Teachers will implement Tier 2 reading instruction.
Use computational fluency diagnostic to analyze targeted students' gaps.	Grade Level Social Contracts where there will be formal revisiting/check-in around social contracts.	General Educators and Special Educators will engage in weekly PD to focus on specific individual strategies for targeted students and to increase in Tier 2, small group instruction in Gen Ed classrooms
The math coach will be facilitating weekly PD with the general education and OSS teachers. This work will include looking at student work and identifying strategies to support students with disabilities	Grade Level Advisory Calendars School-wide implementation of advisory	Ensure implementation of individual targeted instruction to students with disabilities within GenEd classroom. Ensure implementation and execution of Tier 2 reading instruction.
Targeted students will receive intervention instruction once per week		Teachers have consistently implemented supports and strategies for targeted students as discussed in weekly PD (ie: checklists, GOs, benchmarked goals)
Analyze district assessment of open response data to monitor progress.		Analyze district open response data to monitor progress.
		Analyze SRI results in January

Data Analysis: Strengths

	Trend data that demonstrates an area of **strength**	What are your **observations** and your **hypothesis of the cause** of this area of strength?	What **strategic objectives or initiatives** could have led to this area of strength? How?
#1		**Observation:** Level 1 School – 68th percentile in the state. **Hypothesis:** Efforts made during the first year of the school • effective intervention program, • opportunities for grade level and content teams to collaborate, • full-time coaching in the building • effective use of early release time	• This was the first year where we had a full intervention program. High needs students met with either the Literacy or Math coach 3 times in a 6-day cycle. Coaches also targeted students within the Gen Ed classrooms for additional support. • Grade Level teams met daily to collaborate around students, curriculum, skills and strategies. • Content area teams met with Literacy or Math Coach for professional development that focused on vertical alignment. • Full-time coaches in building to help facilitate PD and to meet weekly with core teachers. • Teachers collaboratively engaged in professional development during

			early release days around Rigor and increasing rigor in our classrooms.
#2		**Observation:** Median SGP for ELA is 68.5. **Hypothesis:** 6,7,8 grade teachers effectively implemented District Curriculum. Each teacher worked closely with Literacy Coach, and team had weekly meetings for majority of school year. During PLC meeting time, teachers and LC worked to ensure vertical alignment and increasing levels of rigor. Intervention programs both in and out of class.	• Effective implementation of district curriculum. • Intervention Program – targeted support for high needs students. Worked with Literacy Coach/Interventionist 3 times in a 6-day cycle. LC also targeted high needs students during independent practice in Gen Ed classroom. • ELA teams met with Literacy Coach for professional development that focused on vertical alignment. • Weekly (at least) meetings with Literacy Coach to strengthen teacher practice and increase • student achievement.

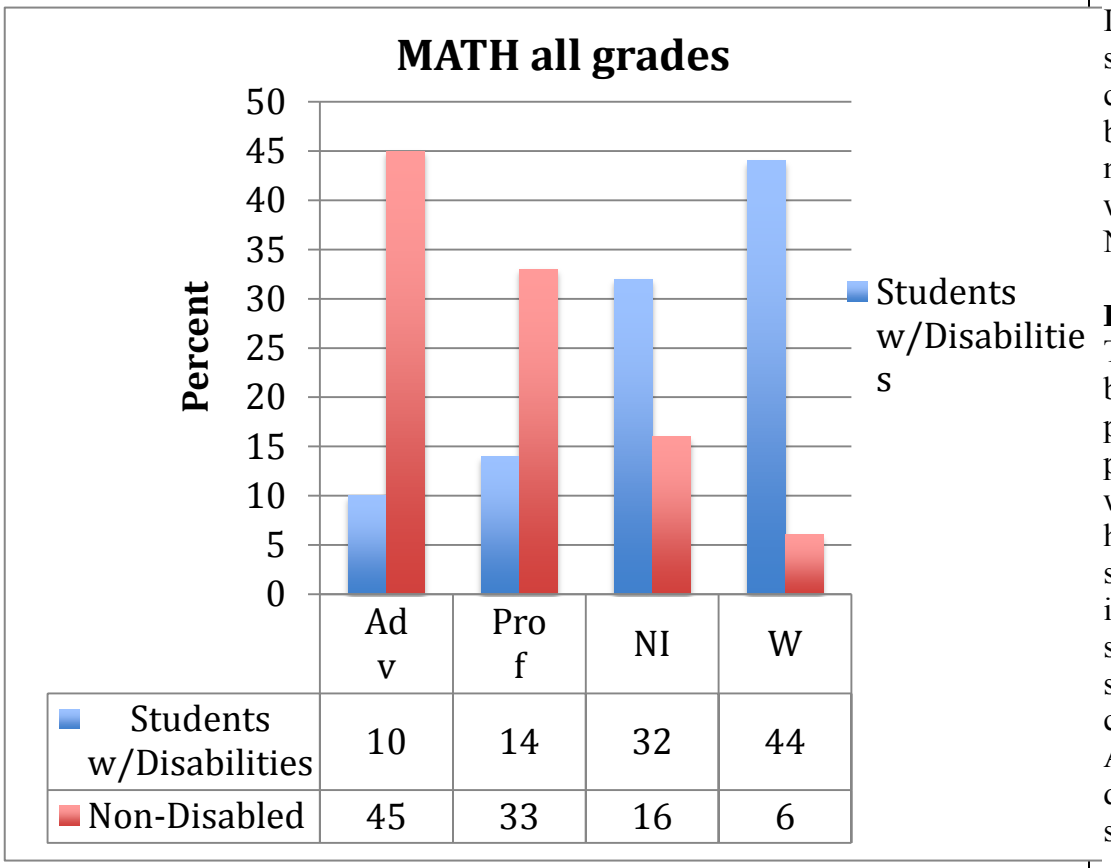
#3		**Observation:** Median SGP in Math is 67. **Hypothesis:** 6,7,8 grade teachers effectively implemented District Curriculum. Each teacher worked closely with Math Coach, and team had weekly meetings for majority of school year. During PLC meeting time, teachers and MC worked to ensure vertical alignment and increasing levels of rigor. Intervention programs both in and out of class. Co-teaching model in 6th grade, Math Para shared between 7th and 8th.	• Intervention Program – targeted support for high needs students. Worked with Literacy Coach/Interventionist 3 times in a 6-day cycle. LC also targeted high needs students during independent practice in Gen Ed classroom. • ELA teams met with Literacy Coach for professional development that focused on vertical alignment. • Weekly (at least) meetings with Literacy Coach to strengthen teacher practice and increase student achievement. • A co-teacher or para worked in the Gen Ed classrooms to meet the needs of all students.
#4		**Observation:** 100% of teachers feel like they work in a safe environment. **Hypothesis:** School building is well maintained, and administration and staff work together to ensure safety for all.	The faculty and staff have come together in a supportive and collaborative manner. The building is one of the newer ones in the district that leads to a cleaner and brighter work environment.

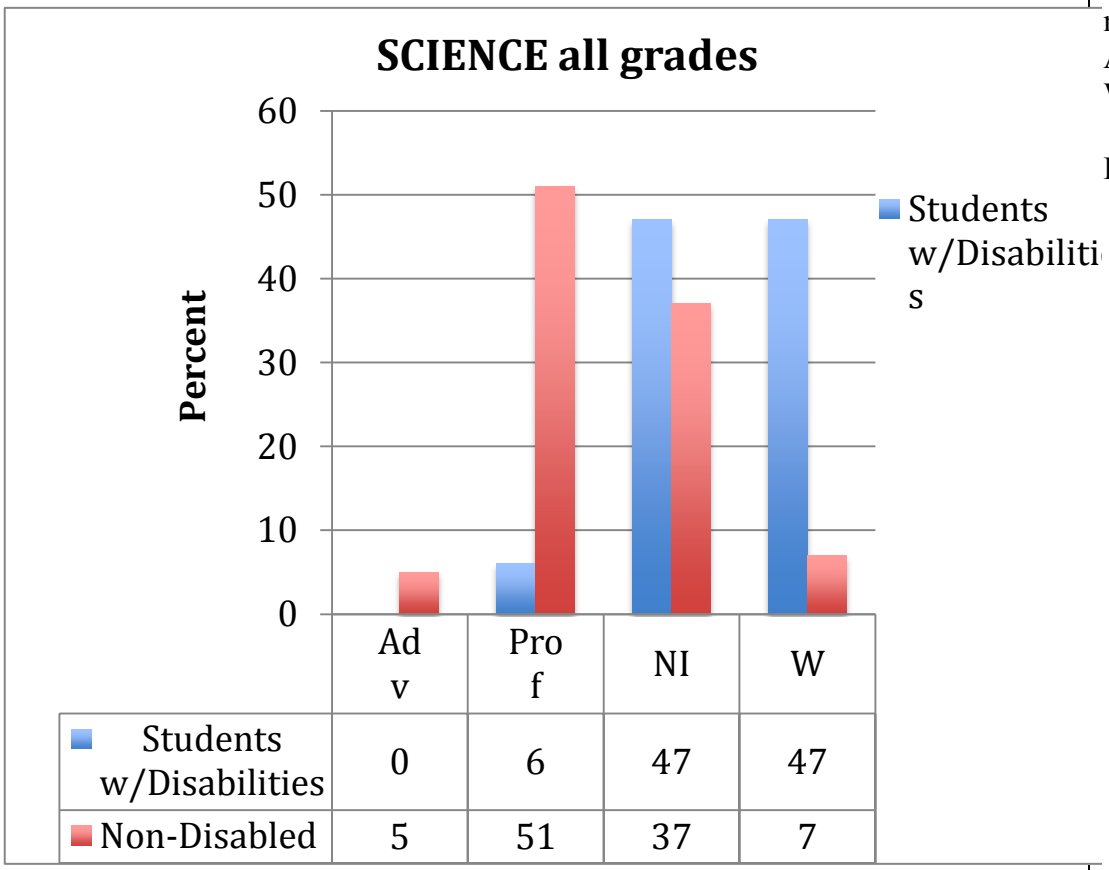
#5		**Observation:** Over 90% of respondents reported that parents and guardians are influential members of the community, and that there is open communication and involvement between home and school. **Hypothesis:** The following programs: • Parent Principal Coffees • School Cite Council • Back to School Night • Night of Excellence • Families of RAUC Parent Group	There is a commitment amongst admin and staff to involve families in the life of the school. We offer many opportunities for families to come into the school community, share questions, opinions, and concerns, and take part in parent education programs. Additionally, we have worked with the family engagement office to reach out to our non-English speaking families. A goal to reach out to every family in our school was met with a personal phone call made to every household to ask how things are going, if there are any questions or concerns and what we can do to help. This was met with great success.

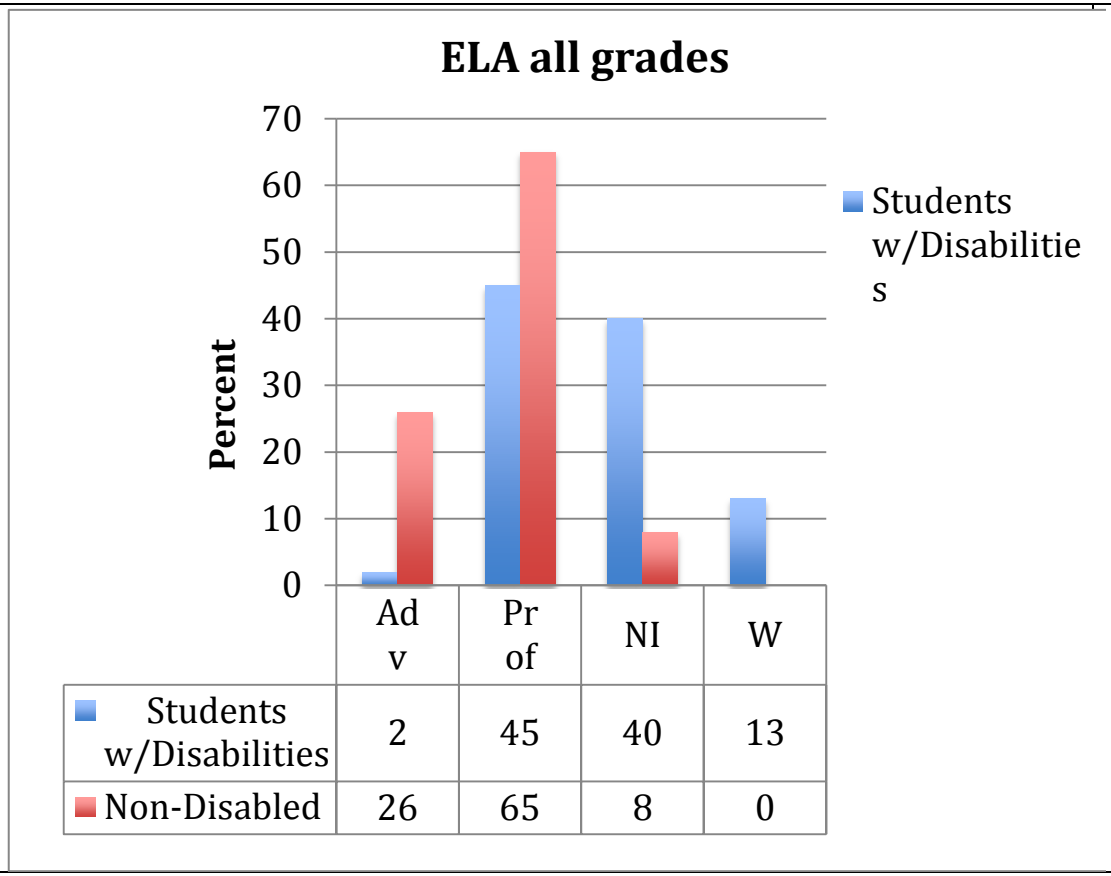
Why do you think these are the most important data points for areas of strength?

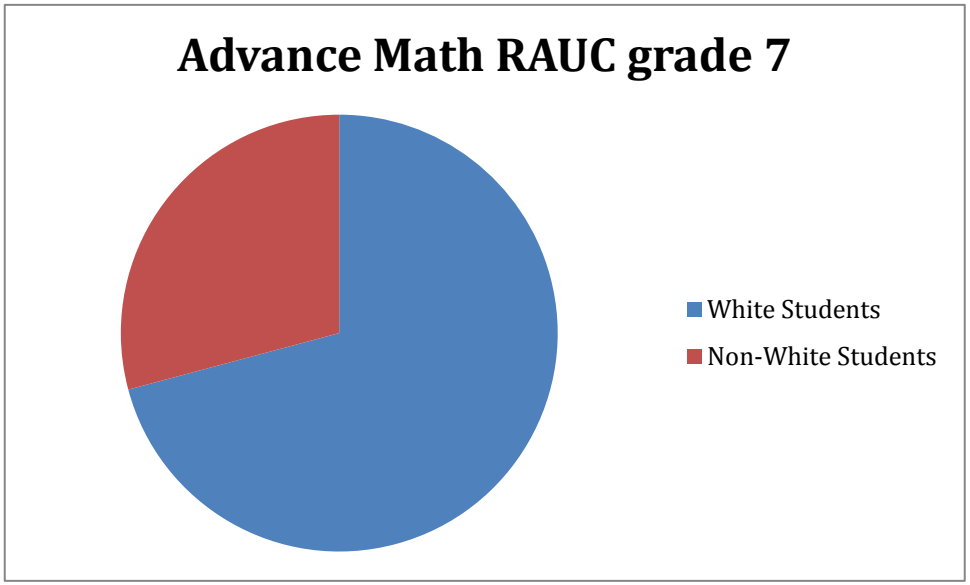
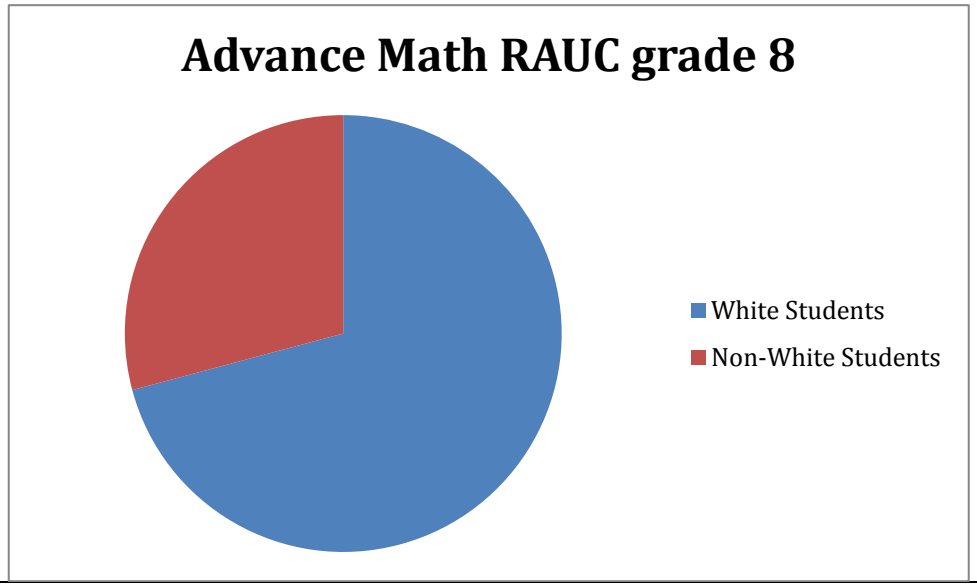
According to several sources of data including MCAS, MassTell, We Teach, these were our highest and lowest areas. We are proud of our areas of strength and believe that we have put specific structures and programs in place to achieve these results.

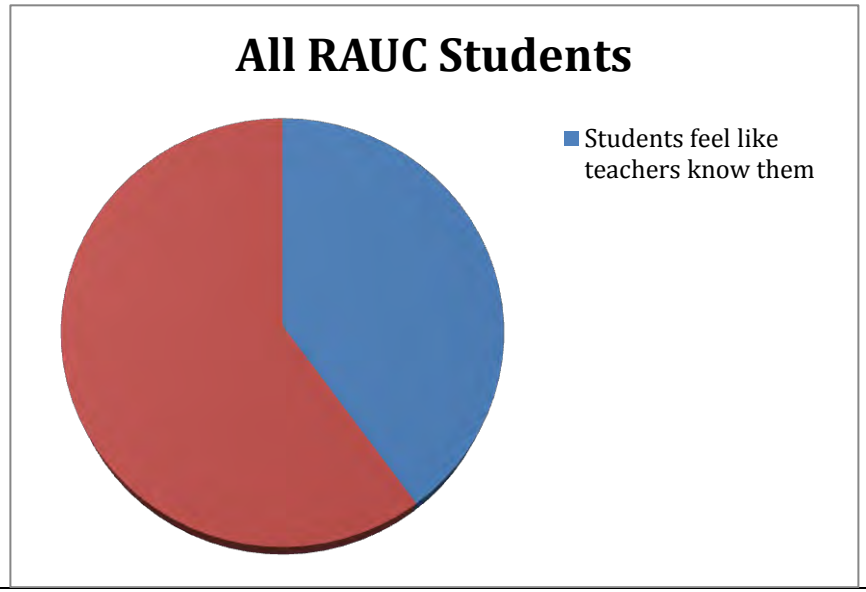
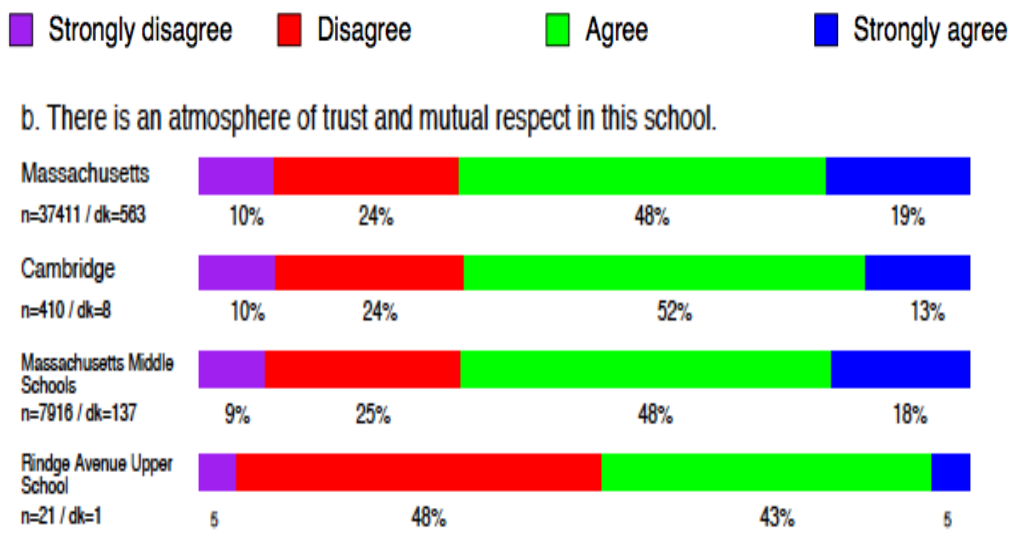
Data Analysis: Areas for Improvement

	Trend data that demonstrates an area for **improvement**	What is your **observations** and **hypothesis of the cause** of this area for improvement?	What **strategic objectives or initiatives** could address this area for improvement? How?
#1		**Observation:** In math, ELA, and science, the gap continues to exist between proficient and non-proficient students with Disabilities and Non-Disabled students. **Hypothesis:** There is a disconnect between our SPED program and Gen Ed program in a variety of ways. Gen Ed teachers have not received sufficient training around inclusion practices of special education students in the Gen Ed classrooms. At times, goals on IEPs don't align to grade level standards.	- Literacy and Math Coach will work more closely with Special Educator team to bridge curriculum and differentiated strategies and instruction to better meet the needs of students with disabilities. - PD needed for Gen Ed teachers to better provide instruction to all students. - SPED teachers will be able to meet weekly as a team.

#2		**Observation:** In math, ELA, and science, the gap continues to exist between proficient and non-proficient African American students and White students Hypothesis:	- School is adopting a set of core values to instill character traits that promote internal motivation and positive cultural diversity. - School (All faculty and students) is engaging in whole day workshop around respect for human differences - School will focus on African Americans students receiving more support for out of school, time (like tutoring) - Targeted instruction during electives for additional support - Meeting the needs of our African American students will be the focus of PD with coaches in content area meetings


ELA all grades
Percent
70
60
50
40
30
20
10
0
Students w/Disabilities
Adv
Prof
NI
W
Students w/Disabilities 2 45 40 13
Non-Disabled 26 65 8 0

#3	 	**Observation:** There are very small percentages of students of color in our accelerated math classes. **Hypothesis:** There is a lack of intervention and direct support for these students throughout the grades. Students enter the middle school with inconsistent skills and preparation. There has been an inconsistent adoption and implementation of a math program that adequately prepares and reaches all students, in particular students of color. The population of students is changing at RAUC and therefore teachers need additional support, coaching around how to meet the needs of an increasingly diverse student population.	- Targeted instruction during electives for additional support - Meeting the needs of our African American students will be the focus of PD with coaches in content area meetings - School is adopting a set of core values to instill character traits that promote internal motivation and positive cultural diversity. - School (All faculty and students) is engaging in whole day workshop around respect for human differences - School will focus on African Americans students receiving more support for out of school, time (like tutoring)

#4		**Observation:** 40% of students reported not feeling like teachers knew them. **Hypothesis:** As a relatively new middle school, teachers are still learning and figuring out how to deeply know 80-100 students as compared to 40-60, which was the norm before we switched to middle schools.	-School is adopting core values - School is adopting a unified Advisory calendar for each grade level - Students are participated and voice in building social contracts (based at grade level). - At every faculty meeting, there are continued conversations about being intentional about building positive relationships between faculty and students.
#5		**Observation:** Teachers reported feeling a lack of trust and awareness about how decisions are made and communicated. **Hypothesis:** As a relatively new middle school, administration and staff are still figuring out ways to effectively communicate.	- Admin created a more formal structure regarding Instructional Leadership Team and Faculty Advisory Committee. - New ILT kicked year off with a 2-day summer retreat. - Google calendar will be created for the school so all members of school are informed. - Admin attending grade level team meetings on a regular basis.

1. Why do you think these are the most important data points for areas of improvement?
   According to several sources of data including MCAS, MassTell, WeTeach, these were our highest and lowest areas. We believe that if we make significant progress in these areas, our school will see great improvements in the identified data.

CPS SIP Section 3: Action Plan

Action Plan for Strategic Objective/Initiative #1: MATH

<table>
<tr><th colspan="4">Year-long description, rationale, and goal</th></tr>
<tr><td>Priority Strategic Objective/Initiative:</td><td colspan="3">Mathematics:
Objective:
Increase cohesion between General Educators and Special Educators to increase student achievement for students with disabilities.</td></tr>
<tr><td>Data that supports this initiative as a priority for your school:</td><td colspan="3">MCAS:
6th grade: 2/20 (10%) of students with disabilities were proficient or above
7th grade: 6/22 (27%) of students with disabilities were proficient or above
8th grade: 1/12 (8%) of students with disabilities were proficient or above</td></tr>
<tr><td>Student outcome at end of school year:</td><td colspan="3">Targeted students will show increased achievement and growth on district assessments (computational fluency) and MCAS (data to be analyzed in Fall 2015)</td></tr>
<tr><th colspan="4">Early Evidence of Change</th></tr>
<tr><td>What are you trying to achieve in this initiative by December 31. 2014?</td><td colspan="3">Use computational fluency diagnostic to analyze targeted students' gaps. Math teachers and math coach will focus on targeted group of students to build basic skills. This work will occur as support in the general math class by math coach on a weekly basis, as well as specific weekly lesson design by classroom teacher to incorporate the skills (or lack of) that students are exhibiting in their weekly check-ins.</td></tr>
<tr><td>How will you know if a change is an improvement by December 31, 2014?</td><td colspan="3">Track progress using computational weekly assessment. Math coach will score assessment and teachers will use data to inform individual conferences with students and daily objectives. While we may not see a dramatic increase in achievement by the December date, continuing this work, as well as weekly PD starting in February to June with the General Ed, OSS teachers and math coach will continue to deepen our knowledge and instructional strategies in order to more effectively provide the supports these students need.</td></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="4">What changes can you make that will result in improvement?

Describe your plan to implement this initiative over the whole school year (you will revisit this plan in Jan., 2015).

Consider students with disabilities, ELLs, and students with high needs.</td><td>Implementation benchmark (process benchmark or early evidence of change benchmark)</td><td>Person/team primarily responsible</td><td>Date/frequency completed</td></tr>
<tr><td>Use diagnostic to analyze students' gaps.</td><td>General Ed and OSS teachers/coaches</td><td>October 15, 2014</td></tr>
<tr><td>Analyze weekly assessment results and provide feedback to students.</td><td>General Ed and OSS teachers/coaches</td><td>October 31 – December 15</td></tr>
<tr><td>Analyze results from Jan. Comp Fluency test to monitor student progress.</td><td>General Ed and OSS teachers/coaches</td><td>Jan. 2015</td></tr>
</table>

	*Note: The math coach will be facilitating weekly PD with the general education and OSS teachers starting in Feb. This work will include • looking at student work, • identifying strategies to support students with disabilities • develop activities that can be modified to meet all students needs in helping us reach our goals.	Math Coach/teachers	June 2015

Action Plan for Strategic Objective/Initiative #2: ELA

Year-long description, rationale, and goal			
Priority Strategic Objective/Initiative:	Objective: Increase cohesion between General Educators and Special Educators to increase student achievement for students with disabilities.		
Data that supports this initiative as a priority for your school:	MCAS: 6th grade: 3/20 (15%) of students with disabilities were proficient or above 7th grade: 9/22 (40%) of students with disabilities were proficient or above 8th grade: 2/12 (16%) of students with disabilities were proficient or above		
Student outcome at end of school year:	Targeted students will show increased achievement and growth on Open Response district assessments, SRI screener, benchmark reading assessments and MCAS (data to be analyzed in Fall 2015)		
Early Evidence of Change			
What are you trying to achieve in this initiative by Dec. 31, 2014?	Weekly professional development between General Educators and Special Educators to focus on 1) specific individual strategies for targeted students, 2) increase in Tier 2, small group instruction in Gen Ed classrooms.		
How will you know if a change is an improvement by Dec. 31, 2014?	1) Teachers have consistently implemented supports and strategies for targeted students as discussed in weekly PD (ie: checklists, GOs, benchmarked goals) 2) Implementation of Tier 2 reading instruction.		
What changes can you make that will result in improvement? Describe your plan to implement this initiative over the whole school year (you will revisit this plan in Jan., 2015). Consider students with disabilities, ELLs, and students with high needs.	Implementation benchmark (process benchmark or early evidence of change benchmark)	Person/team primarily responsible	Date/frequency completed
	Craft PD to ensure cohesiveness and commitment to the above goals. Ensure PD is executed every week and that all participants are increasing knowledge and skills in 1) supporting students with disabilities, 2) understanding, designing, implementing Tier 2 reading instruction	Literacy Coach leads PD. All OSS and ELA teachers attend weekly PD	Every week from September – January.
	Ensure implementation of individual targeted instruction to students with disabilities within GenEd classroom. Ensure implementation and execution of Tier 2 reading instruction	Literacy Coach will coach (plan, observe, provide feedback) on these 2 initiatives. Teachers will execute on initiatives.	January 2015

	Analyze district open response data to monitor progress.	Teachers	January 2015
	Analyze SRI results in January. We might not see any gains in this data as the first ½ of the year has primarily been focused on teacher learning so that they can increase their competencies in the aforementioned areas.	Literacy Coach and Teachers	January 2015

OPTIONAL: Action Plan for Strategic Objective/Initiative #3: SCHOOL CULTURE

Year-long description, rationale, and goal			
Priority Strategic Objective/Initiative:	Objective: Strengthen school community and relationships between staff and students. Initiative: 1) Whole school is working towards adopting and implementing common core values 2) Grade Level Advisory Calendars 3) Grade Level Social Contracts		
Data that supports this initiative as a priority for your school:	MASS TELL 40% of students reported feeling like teachers knew them. 60% of students reported feeling like teachers did not know them.		
Student outcome at end of school year:	60-70% of students will report feeling known by staff on 2014-2015 MassTell Survey.		
Early Evidence of Change			
What are you trying to achieve in this initiative by Feb 2015?	Stronger relationships between staff and students. Less office referrals.		
How will you know if a change is an improvement by Feb. 2015?	Conduct informal interviews with a sample of students from each grade about their relationships to the staff. Check with V.P. about number of office referrals.		
What changes can you make that will result in improvement? Describe your plan to implement this initiative over the whole school year (you will revisit this plan in Jan., 2015). Consider students with disabilities, ELLs, and students with high needs.	Implementation benchmark (process benchmark or early evidence of change benchmark)	Person/team primarily responsible	Date/frequency completed
	• School-wide implementation of advisory • Formal revisiting/chick-in around social contracts. • Public displays created by students, based on core values. • School-wide recognition of students who exemplify the core values. • School-wide assemblies to bring together the school community in a positive and encouraging way.	Advisory teachers Advisory teachers Teachers Teachers/Admin/ILT Teachers/Admin/ILT	On-going with weekly check-ins at team meetings. End of November Quarterly Awards Assembly

Additional Considerations:

1. What additional initiatives from your SIP is your school undertaking this school year (besides those described in the Action Plan above)?

Elective course for targeted students needing additional support.

Team Meetings – Progress Review cycle. In these meetings, teachers discuss students that are in need of additional challenge as well as students who are below or approaching proficiency. Teachers collaboratively discuss strategies to try to target and reach more students. Progress Reviews are conducted approximately once a month and led by Admin and Coaches.

Whole Staff – Focus on assessment led by ILT. Our faculty meetings are focused around using assessment to strengthen and improve teaching and learning. Our staff has read the Assessment chapter from the Skillful Teacher (Saphier) and small PLCs are presenting on specific assessment strategies used in practice. Teachers are setting goals targeting areas to improve in their practice regarding assessment. In future meetings, we plan on watching and analyzing video together, bringing in assessment artifacts (teacher created and student samples) to analyze and discuss in both content and then grade-level teams, as well as engaging in planning formative assessments and providing feedback to students. All of this work always culminates with teacher reflection – How will this meeting impact your instruction? What are the implications for instruction? Admin and Coaches plan on periodically conducting walk-throughs to gauge impact of meetings on practice. Coaches reinforce this work in coaching sessions.

General Educators/Special Educator Weekly Professional Development to analyze student work and create action plans (discussed above).

2. Do you believe the list above is achievable this year? If not, please consider making changes to your improvement plan (Section 2).
   Yes, we are already implementing all of the above initiatives. However, it is unclear if the above changes will have significant impact on student achievement this year. We are really looking at our SIP as a multi-step/multi-year project. We first need to increase the professional culture of the school – we need to increase teacher collaboration as well as develop a common language, vision and expectation for teaching and learning. There is much to do on the staff development side of the equation before we will see large gains in student achievement data. We do believe that we are well on the path to increasing and strengthening staff capacity, and will start to see jumps in student data this year, but large, sweeping gains will come in the next several years.

3. What *professional development* will support all the initiatives your school is undertaking this year? Please identify the professional development included as an initiative on your improvement plan or other professional development that is not included in your improvement plan.

Weekly PD led by coaches. (see sections above)

ILT led PD on assessments. (see above)

4. How are you *aligning your resources* to support all the initiatives your school is undertaking this year?

Everything is aligned: ILT, Coaches, Teachers all working together in this plan. Schedule allows Coaches to run PD with content teams and grade level teams. Working on budget allocation to ensure appropriate resources for Interventions and Tier 2 instruction.

5. Who was involved in the creation of each part of your SIP? In what ways were they involved?

Coaches and Administration drafted plan, and ILT provided feedback and supports implementation of the plan.