

Responses to the Mayor's Action Plan

Action Step 3

Working with the Manager of Social Emotional Learning and building leaders, the Administration has adopted a comprehensive program to meet the needs of students who have experienced trauma and those with other social-emotional needs. All principals, assistant principals, district leaders and school adjustment counselors have received initial training in Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) and in methods to build resiliency in children from Dr. Heather Forkey, a pediatric trauma expert at UMASS/Memorial. All teaching staff throughout the district spent their first September Principal's Meeting engaging with her work under the direction of their school adjustment counselors and administrators. She will train principals and school adjustment counselors in anxiety, transitions, and problems of practice during the school year. School adjustment counselors will then train all WPS staff.

Additionally, all principals and assistant principals participated in a full-day professional development regarding collaborative problem solving and alternative discipline approaches with Dr. Stuart Albon from Massachusetts General Hospital and the Harvard Medical School. He will be providing further training to special education staff throughout the district. His approach supports the needs of all children but is especially effective with students who have delays in social-emotional skill development, as is often the case with students who have experienced trauma. Dr. Albon will be conducting additional training on assessing student skills and interventions during the 2019-20 school year.

Funding for this training is through proposed grants and district funding.

Action Step 4

All district processes and policies have been reviewed for compliance with MGL Chapter 222 by legal counsel and found to be fully in compliance. Legal counsel provided professional development and updates to all principals prior to the start of the 2019-20 school year .

Action Step 11

The Administration has hired Ms. Ivonne Perez as the Chief Diversity Officer. She is currently the Principal of Chandler Elementary School and her resume is included in the Personnel Section of the October 3, 2019 School Committee agenda.