



Human and Social Development

December 2013

---

# Evaluation of the Wraparound Zones Initiative

## Report Three: Analysis of Implementation Progress During Year 2

### Submitted to

Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education  
Kendra Winner, Research and Evaluation Coordinator  
Rebecca Shor, Wraparound Zone Coordinator



# **Evaluation of the Wraparound Zones Initiative**

## **Report Three: Analysis of Implementation Progress During Year 2**

**December 2013**

**Allison Gandhi, Ed.D., Project Manager, Principal Researcher**  
**Wehmah Jones, Ph.D., Senior Researcher**  
**Alexandra Kistner, M.A., Researcher**  
**Jeffrey Poirier, M.A., PMP, Senior Researcher**  
**Emily Rosenthal, M.A., Researcher**  
**Laura Stein, M.A., Researcher**  
**Robin Bzura, Research Assistant**  
**Sandy Williamson, M.Ed., Principal Investigator, Managing Researcher**



AMERICAN INSTITUTES FOR RESEARCH®

201 Jones Road  
Suite 1  
Waltham, MA 02451-1600  
781.373.7005 | Fax: 781.899.3287  
**[www.air.org](http://www.air.org)**

The contents of this report were developed under a grant from the U. S. Department of Education. However, those contents do not necessarily represent the policy of the U. S. Department of Education, and you should not assume endorsement by the federal government.

Copyright © 2013 American Institutes for Research. All rights reserved.

3325\_10/13



# Contents

	<b>Page</b>
Executive Summary .....	1
Data Sources .....	1
Findings.....	2
I. Introduction .....	5
II. Methods.....	7
Data Sources .....	7
Data Analysis .....	9
III. Findings.....	10
Cross-District Findings .....	10
Profile A: Fall River.....	19
Profile B: Holyoke .....	36
Profile C: Lawrence .....	53
Profile D: Lynn .....	63
Profile E: Springfield .....	75
Profile F: Worcester .....	88
IV. Conclusion .....	104
Appendix A: Research Questions, by Data Source .....	107
Appendix B: 2012–13 Wraparound Zones Initiative Districts and Schools.....	113
Appendix C: Sample Interview Protocol .....	114
Appendix D: Coding Guide .....	121
Appendix E: Sustainability Assessment Worksheet.....	133

## List of Tables

	<b>Page</b>
Table 1. WAZ Districts and Schools .....	7
Table 2. Crosswalk of Year 1 and Year 2 Cross-District Findings .....	11
Table 3. Comparison of Year 1 and Year 2 WAZ plans for Fall River Public Schools, by priority improvement area .....	20
Table 4. Crosswalk of Year 1 and Year 2 Fall River Findings.....	23
Table 5. Comparison of Year 1 and Year 2 WAZ plans for Holyoke, by priority improvement area.....	37
Table 6. Crosswalk of Year 1 and Year 2 Holyoke Findings .....	42
Table 7. Comparison of Year 1 and Year 2 WAZ plans for Lawrence, by priority improvement area.....	54
Table 8. Crosswalk of Year 1 and Year 2 Lawrence Findings .....	56
Table 9. Comparison of Year 1 and Year 2 WAZ plans for Lynn, by priority improvement area.....	64
Table 10. Crosswalk of Year 1 and Year 2 Lynn Findings .....	66
Table 11. Lynn School-Based WAZ Teams .....	69
Table 12. Comparison of Year 1 and Year 2 WAZ plans for Springfield, by priority improvement area.....	76
Table 13. Crosswalk of Year 1 and Year 2 Springfield Findings.....	78
Table 14. Comparison of Year 1 and Year 2 WAZ plans for Worcester, by priority improvement area.....	89
Table 15. Crosswalk of Year 1 and Year 2 Worcester Findings .....	94

## Executive Summary

The Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (ESE) Wraparound Zones (WAZ) Initiative is designed to create coordinated district systems that allow schools to proactively and systematically address students' nonacademic needs. The four WAZ Priority Improvement Areas follow:

- **Climate and Culture.** Each participating school creates a climate and a culture that promote mental health and positive social, emotional, and intellectual growth for students, resulting in a new standard of practice understood and practiced by every member of the school community.
- **Identification of Student Needs and Efforts to Address Them.** Each participating school implements a proactive system of identifying student needs in key academic and nonacademic areas, leading to both universal supports and targeted interventions.
- **Community Coalitions.** Each participating school integrates a range of resources to tailor student services from within both the school and the larger community. The range of services includes prevention, enrichment, early intervention, and intensive crisis response services.
- **District Systems of Support.** Each participating district develops district-level systems to support the communication, collaboration, evaluation, and continuous improvement of the WAZ initiative.

American Institutes for Research (AIR)<sup>1</sup> is evaluating how well the WAZ initiative achieves these goals. AIR's research is assessing progress on planning, implementation, outcomes, sustainability, and replication related to the initiative's four Priority Improvement Areas. This evaluation report provides a comprehensive analysis of data collected during the second year of WAZ implementation, with a focus on answering the following research questions:

*How are districts and schools progressing on early indicators of WAZ planning and implementation?*

*What are the outcomes associated with WAZ implementation?*

### Data Sources

The findings in this report are based on analysis of data collected from six WAZ school districts during the 2012–13 school year: Fall River Public Schools, Holyoke Public Schools, Lawrence Public Schools, Lynn Public Schools, Springfield Public Schools, and Worcester Public Schools. Data sources included (a) interviews with WAZ district coordinators and other district leaders, WAZ school coordinators and school principals, and a sample of external partners in each WAZ district; (b) in a small sample of schools, focus groups with teachers, interviews with parents, and

---

<sup>1</sup> AIR ([www.air.org](http://www.air.org)) is a behavioral and social science research organization founded in 1946. AIR carries out its work with strict independence, objectivity, and nonpartisanship. AIR's mission is to conduct and apply the best behavioral and social science research and evaluation to improve peoples' lives, with a special emphasis on the disadvantaged.

an interview with a school-based provider; and (c) district- and school-level documents related to WAZ planning and implementation. All data collection occurred from January to May 2013, representing the second half of Year 2 of WAZ implementation.

## Findings

Each district reported on the varied ways it was seeing progress and experiencing challenges during the second year of WAZ. Several common themes demonstrate change potentially attributable to WAZ and factors potentially related to ensuring long-term sustainability for WAZ. These themes are captured in the following five cross-district findings for Year 2:

1. Staff described progress in WAZ implementation most notably in the area of climate and culture, citing evidence of greater teacher knowledge, decreased discipline referrals, and improved family engagement.
2. Many districts continued to struggle with establishing a district-level infrastructure to support and formalize school-community partnerships.
3. Staff in four of the six districts reported lack of district involvement or support. Without visible and concrete support from district leaders, the WAZ schools sometimes struggled in achieving buy-in among all teachers and staff, which then in turn negatively affected implementation progress.
4. All six districts continued to rely to some extent on WAZ-funded district- and/or school-level staff positions to oversee and carry out their plans. Some districts were finding ways to integrate WAZ oversight responsibilities into existing staff positions, with mixed success. Others districts were finding ways to continue funding for one or both of the positions after the RTTT resources have ended.
5. Staff in all districts reported concerns about sustainability for WAZ, which goes beyond continuing the work of the district-and/or school level staff positions, but districts varied in terms of the concrete steps they were taking toward ensuring sustainability.

Several of these findings touch on themes similar to those found in the Year 1 analysis, but they also show how schools and districts have evolved over the course of the grant. For example, there was increased teacher knowledge of WAZ strategies and family engagement in year two. However, schools and districts did not change as much in terms of their reliance on WAZ-funded positions, struggles in establishing community coalitions, and mixed perceptions of district leadership and involvement in WAZ. Some Year 2 data showed how districts were thinking about and planning for sustainability, and some key differences among districts began to emerge, specifically in terms of priorities, leadership styles, and mechanisms for providing district-level support to the WAZ schools.

According to analysis of the evaluation data gathered to date, Fall River and Lynn stood out as districts most actively focused and engaged in activities likely to achieve sustainability. First, both had strong buy-in and direct, concrete involvement of district leadership. Fall River had a district-level WAZ oversight committee whose members included the Superintendent and other key district leaders. The Superintendent and others leaders in Lynn were also active members of WAZ committees and planning teams. Second, these districts were integrating WAZ coordination responsibilities into existing school-based positions. Lynn didn't use school-based



WAZ coordinators but instead convened teams of staff at each school to oversee implementation of WAZ strategies. Fall River was experimenting with the same model in some of its WAZ schools. Third, both districts were actively replicating WAZ strategies in non-WAZ schools. They discussed WAZ strategies in district-wide principal meetings, and made WAZ-related professional development and support available to non-WAZ schools. Finally, Lynn was the only district with a formal and functional community coalition in place. Fall River, although it did not have a coalition, was implementing strategies at the district level to ensure consistency and systematization of procedures for the development of school-community partnerships. .

Other districts struggled with the district support piece, sometimes because of external factors. Lawrence, for example, was in its second year of state receivership due to its Level 5 accountability status, and many staff felt that their district leaders were unable to adequately focus on WAZ due to other priorities. In fact, following Year 2, Lawrence decided not to apply for continuation funding. Holyoke was experiencing turnover in its district leadership and also did not have anyone at the district level fully dedicated to WAZ. Without consistent district support, it was unable to move forward as quickly as hoped on plans for districtwide expansion of the full-service community school model.

Worcester and Springfield were the largest participating WAZ districts, had the largest number of WAZ schools, and staff in both of these districts reported variations among schools in terms of outcomes and in terms of teacher and administrator buy-in for some of the WAZ strategies. Additionally, staff in both districts reported mixed perceptions of district leadership support and involvement, and a feeling that without strong district support, gaining widespread buy-in at the school level was challenging. Although leaders in both districts were reportedly very enthusiastic about WAZ, interviewees noted that the real driving force keeping the initiative moving was coming from the WAZ-funded district and school coordinators (in the form of City Connects in Springfield). School coordinators in both districts were taking on multiple responsibilities and many respondents reported a feeling that without these positions, progress would stall. Several staff expressed concerns about sustainability and what would happen to these positions once WAZ funding was done.

## **Conclusion**

It is too early in the evaluation to make any definitive statements about the extent to which these districts will or will not be successful in achieving long-term success as a result of WAZ. However, the data collected in Year 2 revealed some important differences among districts that may be associated with differences in short- and long-term outcomes. Data gathered during the final year of implementation will shed further light on this question. In the meantime, AIR recommends that ESE and the WAZ districts focus on four major strategies that are important for achieving sustainability: leadership; financing; partnerships and collaboration; and communication and marketing. Our analysis of the data gathered through this evaluation showed that many of these strategies are already being used by the WAZ grantees. To support sustainability, we recommend continued and increased focus on these strategies during the final year of the grant.

AIR's evaluation efforts are ongoing. Future reports will provide additional analyses of the interview, survey, and document data for each WAZ district. Special emphasis will be placed on an analysis of academic and non-academic student outcomes and how districts plan for sustainability during the final year of implementation. AIR looks forward to producing meaningful results and recommendations that can effectively support district and school WAZ-related planning, implementation, sustainability, and replication.

# I. Introduction

The Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (ESE) Wraparound Zones (WAZ) Initiative is designed to create coordinated district systems that allow schools to proactively and systematically address students' nonacademic needs. The four WAZ Priority Improvement Areas follow:

- **Climate and Culture.** Each participating school creates a climate and a culture that promote mental health and positive social, emotional, and intellectual growth for students, resulting in a new standard of practice understood and practiced by every member of the school community.
- **Identification of Student Needs and Efforts to Address Them.** Each participating school implements a proactive system of identifying student needs in key academic and nonacademic areas, leading to both universal supports and targeted interventions.
- **Community Coalitions.** Each participating school integrates a range of resources to tailor student services from both within the school and the larger community. The range of services includes prevention, enrichment, early intervention, and intensive crisis response services.
- **District Systems of Support.** Each participating district develops district-level systems to support the communication, collaboration, evaluation, and continuous improvement of the WAZ initiative.

American Institutes for Research (AIR)<sup>2</sup> is evaluating how well the WAZ initiative achieves these goals. AIR's research will assess progress on planning, implementation, outcomes, sustainability, and replication related to the initiative's four Priority Improvement Areas.

AIR completed a first evaluation report in fall 2012 that described the 2011–12 WAZ plans, summarized student school climate survey results, and reported school and district coordinator perspectives on strengths and challenges experienced during Year 1. A second evaluation report, in fall 2013, provided a more comprehensive analysis of data collected during Year 1. This third evaluation report builds on the second report by adding an analysis of data from Year 2 of WAZ implementation.

During AIR's three-year evaluation, periodic reports will assess different aspects of WAZ planning, implementation, outcomes, sustainability, and replication. The reports will build on one another, using previously reported findings to contextualize and support future findings and recommendations. Specifically, Reports 1 and 2 focused on answering the first overarching research question:

---

<sup>2</sup> AIR ([www.air.org](http://www.air.org)) is a behavioral and social science research organization founded in 1946. AIR carries out its work with strict independence, objectivity, and nonpartisanship. AIR's mission is to conduct and apply the best behavioral and social science research and evaluation to improve peoples' lives, with a special emphasis on the disadvantaged.

*What are the district, school, and other conditions (e.g., school climate, culture) and supports that are in place at the beginning of the WAZ grants, and how are they facilitating or impeding planning and implementation?*

The focus of this report, Report 3, is on answering the second and third overarching research questions that inform the evaluation design and focus on implementation progress and evidence of impact on outcomes:

*How are districts and schools progressing on early indicators of WAZ planning and implementation?*

*What are the outcomes associated with WAZ implementation?*

Report 4 will focus again on the third research question about outcomes in addition to the fourth research question about sustainability:

*Is WAZ sustainable at the district and school levels, and what supports or hinders (or will support or hinder) sustainability and replication in other districts and schools?*

Appendix A shows the full list of research questions and sub-questions that are guiding the three-year evaluation and the data sources that are being used to inform answers to those questions.

In the remainder of this report, we first present the methods and data used to develop findings. Next, we present the findings, organized in two sections: (a) cross-district findings and (b) district profiles. In the cross-district findings section, we identify common and recurring themes across multiple districts. In the district profiles section we describe, for each of the six districts, findings related to the progress made within each district during Year 2. We conclude with a discussion section focused on the implications of these findings, and on strategies that may warrant further study and attention as potential models for other WAZ schools and districts to replicate.

## II. Methods

The findings in this report are based on an analysis of data collected from six WAZ school districts during the 2012–13 school year: Fall River Public Schools, Holyoke Public Schools, Lawrence Public Schools, Lynn Public Schools, Springfield Public Schools, and Worcester Public Schools. For Lynn and for Holyoke’s Kelly school, which received planning grants in 2011–12, school year 2012–13 represented their first year of WAZ implementation. The other districts were in their second year of implementation, and three of these districts (Fall River, Springfield, and Worcester) added new schools in Year 2. Appendix B lists the 32 schools across these districts from which AIR gathered data. Table 1 shows the number of schools in each district, including how many were new schools.

**Table 1. WAZ Districts and Schools**

School District	Number of Schools Implementing WAZ in 2012–13	Number of New WAZ Schools in 2012–13
Fall River	6	3
Holyoke	3	-
Lawrence	3	-
Lynn	4	-
Springfield	8	3
Worcester	8	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>7</b>

### Data Sources

The data sources used in this report include the following:

1. Interviews with WAZ district coordinators and other district leaders, WAZ school coordinators and school principals, and a sample of external partners in each WAZ district
2. In a small sample of “deep-dive” schools, focus groups with teachers, interviews with parents, and an interview with a school-based provider
3. District- and school-level documents related to WAZ planning or implementation.

All data collection occurred from January to May 2013, which represented the second half of Year 2 of WAZ.

### Interviews

AIR conducted interviews with WAZ district and school coordinators, district administrators, school principals, and key community partners. For Year 2, AIR interviewed 6 district coordinators or their proxies (all districts), 25 school wraparound coordinators (Fall River, Holyoke, Lawrence, Springfield, and Worcester), and 24 school staff taking on WAZ leadership

responsibilities in the schools (Lynn and Fall River). AIR also interviewed 32 principals and 9 community partners.

The majority of interviews were conducted on-site by a member of the research team, who recorded the audio from the interviews. All site visits were conducted from February to May 2013. Community partner interviews were conducted by telephone. All interviews were transcribed using the audio recording. AIR used semi-structured interview protocols, guided by the research questions and designed to last approximately 45 minutes. Appendix C shows a sample protocol used for the school coordinator interviews. The protocols included questions asked of all participants to facilitate a systematic analysis of the data as well as questions specific to each respondent's role with respect to WAZ.

### **Additional Data from “Deep-Dive” Schools**

In addition to the interviews conducted at each WAZ school, AIR selected (in consultation with ESE) one or two schools in each WAZ district to serve as “deep-dive” schools. These schools were selected because they were considered to represent strong implementation of WAZ or a unique approach or circumstance that was worthy of further study. Researchers conducted extra data collection in these schools, including a teacher focus group, interviews with one or more parents, and an interview with a school-based provider (e.g., nurse, guidance counselor). During the analysis phase, data gathered from these schools were integrated with all other data and were intended to provide a more comprehensive picture of factors that were supporting WAZ implementation.

### **Review of WAZ-Related Documents**

AIR gathered and reviewed several extant school and district documents related to WAZ. These included grant applications, school and district implementation plans, notes from interagency coalition and school meetings, school and district policy manuals or guidance documents related to key wraparound functions (e.g., positive school climate, tiered student support delivery system), and district and school monitoring reviews (conducted by ESE).

The WAZ plans included descriptions of strategies for each of the aforementioned Priority Improvement Areas. The plans provided important baseline information on WAZ initiatives, but not all wraparound-related activities were listed in the WAZ plans. Some wraparound activities were already under way in districts and schools at the start of the WAZ initiative, and districts and schools did not use WAZ resources to fund these activities. The information in this report draws on WAZ plans and other contextual documents to inform the analysis of interview data. For example, if interview data were unclear or offered incomplete information about the background or context of a particular WAZ strategy, researchers often referred to documents as a way to get a better and more thorough understanding of the issue. Documents also were an important resource for obtaining facts that interviewees sometimes did not know (e.g., the timing of a particular initiative).

## Data Analysis

The data analysis for this report focused on identifying a set of findings within each district that best summarized early indicators of progress and challenges that existed in the district during the second year of WAZ. First, researchers reviewed the Year 2 WAZ plans and compared them with the Year 1 plans to gain an understanding of the planned activities in each district and how they had changed between the two years. Next, researchers reviewed and reflected on the findings from the Year 1 data to gain an understanding of where districts started from and how their Year 2 plans did or did not explicitly address any of the issues identified in the Year 1 findings. These initial activities were conducted by the full research team, so that researchers could share insights and resolve any conflicting interpretations of the data. The team then developed and worked from a common outline and set of guiding questions when analyzing the coded data and writing findings.

Researchers coded the Year 2 interview data by using a set of codes that aligned topically with the WAZ priorities. A copy of the code guidebook that was used for Year 2 data analysis is shown in Appendix D. During the analysis phase, researchers sought to identify findings that (a) had the strongest weight of evidence (e.g., were supported by evidence from multiple respondents), (b) were the most relevant (e.g., were directly connected to district WAZ plan or WAZ goals in general, or overarching research questions), and (c) built on previous findings. A lead researcher for each district conducted the initial review of data and identification of findings. A second researcher then reviewed the findings and their supporting evidence. This process often led to refinement in how findings were worded or to a more detailed exploration of the data to help clarify or contextualize data that were not clearly connected to the larger finding. The findings in this report reflect this collaborative, comprehensive, and iterative approach to analyzing the data.

## III. Findings

### Cross-District Findings

The focus of this evaluation report is on answering the second and third overarching research questions:

*How are districts and schools progressing on early indicators of WAZ planning and implementation?*

*What are the outcomes associated with WAZ implementation?*

Each district reported on the varied ways in which it was seeing progress and experiencing challenges during the second year of implementation (or first for Lynn). Several common themes demonstrate early indicators of change potentially attributable to WAZ and factors potentially related to ensuring long-term sustainability for WAZ. These themes are captured in the following five cross-district findings for Year 2:

1. Staff described progress in WAZ implementation most notably in the area of climate and culture, citing evidence of greater teacher knowledge, decreased discipline referrals, and improved family engagement.
2. Many districts continued to struggle with establishing a district-level infrastructure to support and formalize school-community partnerships.
3. Staff in four of the six districts reported lack of district involvement or support. Without visible and concrete support from district leaders, the WAZ schools sometimes struggled in achieving buy-in among all teachers and staff, which then in turn negatively affected implementation progress.
4. All six districts continued to rely to some extent on WAZ-funded district- and/or school-level staff positions to oversee and carry out their plans. Some districts were finding ways to integrate WAZ oversight responsibilities into existing staff positions, with mixed success. Others districts were finding ways to continue funding for one or both of the positions after the RTTT resources have ended.
5. Staff in all districts reported concerns about sustainability for WAZ, which goes beyond continuing the work of the district-and/or school level staff positions, but districts varied in terms of the concrete steps they were taking toward ensuring sustainability.

Table 2 presents the cross-district findings for Year 2 together with the cross-district findings from Year 1. As illustrated in Table 2, several of the findings across years touch on similar themes, but show the ways in which the schools and districts have evolved over the course of the grant. For example, in Year 1, data showed that schools and districts were struggling with family engagement and teacher knowledge on how to implement WAZ strategies (Year 1 Finding #3 and #5). In Year 2, these were areas in which interview respondents reported the most progress (Year 2 Finding #1). In Year 1, districts and schools found ways to connect WAZ strategies with related initiatives, demonstrating a strong level of buy-in among district school leaders for WAZ (Year 1 Finding #3). In Year 2, this overall buy-in continued, but interviewees in many districts



also reported what they perceived to be low levels of direct involvement or genuine commitment to WAZ among district leaders (Year 2 Finding #3).

On the other hand, schools and districts did not change as much in terms of some of the other Year 1 findings. For example, most districts and schools continued to rely on WAZ-funded positions (Year 2 Finding #5 and Year 1 Finding #2), although in Year 2 some districts were experimenting with ways integrate WAZ oversight responsibilities into existing staff positions. Most districts also continued to struggle with establishing a district-level infrastructure to support school-community partnerships (Year 2 Finding #2 and Year 1 Finding #4).

Finally, in the Year 2 data, concerns about sustainability were a much strong theme than they had been in Year 1. In all districts, interviewees reported concerns about how WAZ would be sustained after the grant period was over. However, some districts were more planful and active than others about taking steps to ensure sustainability (Year 2 Finding #5).

**Table 2. Crosswalk of Year 1 and Year 2 Cross-District Findings**

Year 2 Findings	Related Year 1 Findings
<p>Year 2 Finding 1: <i>Staff described progress in WAZ implementation most notably in the area of climate and culture, citing evidence of greater teacher knowledge, decreased discipline referrals, and improved family engagement.</i></p>	<p>Year 1 Finding 3: <i>Although staff buy-in to the goals of WAZ was strong at all levels, knowledge among school staff about how to implement many of the WAZ strategies was limited.</i></p> <p>Year 1 Finding 5: <i>Engaging families in the WAZ work was an ongoing struggle that was one of the top challenges reported by all interviewees.</i></p>
<p>Year 2 Finding 2: <i>Many districts continued to struggle with establishing a district-level infrastructure to support and formalize school-community partnerships.</i></p>	<p>Year 1 Finding 4: <i>In all WAZ districts, schools were developing strong partnerships with community agencies; however, a district-level infrastructure for supporting and formalizing these partnerships was slower to develop.</i></p>
<p>Year 2 Finding 3: <i>Staff in four of the six districts reported lack of district involvement or support. Without visible and concrete support from district leaders, the WAZ schools sometimes struggled in achieving buy-in among all teachers and staff, which then in turn negatively affected implementation progress.</i></p>	<p>Year 1 Finding 1: <i>Most districts and schools were able to align WAZ strategies with other related initiatives, but some encountered challenges in making these connections clear and relevant for staff.</i></p>

Year 2 Findings	Related Year 1 Findings
<p>Year 2 Finding 4:</p> <p><i>All six districts continued to rely to some extent on WAZ-funded district- and/or school-level staff positions to oversee and carry out their plans. Some districts were finding ways to integrate WAZ oversight responsibilities into existing staff positions, with mixed success. Others districts were finding ways to continue funding for one or both of the positions after the RTTT resources have ended.</i></p>	<p>Year 1 Finding 2:</p> <p><i>WAZ-funded staff positions all played key roles in facilitating implementation and planning during the first year even though the form and function of these positions varied by district.</i></p>
<p>Year 2 Finding 5:</p> <p><i>Staff in all districts reported concerns about sustainability for WAZ, which goes beyond continuing the work of the district-and/or school level staff positions, but districts varied in terms of the concrete steps they were taking toward ensuring sustainability.</i></p>	

In this section, we summarize the evidence supporting the Year 2 cross-district findings. The subsequent district profiles describe the district-specific findings.

**Cross-District Finding 1: Staff described progress in WAZ implementation most notably in the areas of climate and culture, citing evidence of greater teacher knowledge, decreased discipline referrals and improved family engagement.**

In general, interviewees in all districts made positive comments about the ways WAZ was progressing and contributing to change in their schools during Year 2. When asked to describe where they thought WAZ was making the biggest difference in terms of improved outcomes, interviewees most often cited school climate and family engagement. For example, many interviewees described improvements in how teachers and staff managed behavior. One respondent noted that *“the kids are behaving a lot better”* and another described the school as *“an entirely different building...the children are respectful, they follow the rules, they understand those rules, the teachers work with them to understand we have to have order.”* In Year 1, data had shown that staff needed more training in the areas of behavior management. In Year 2, staff reported a stronger sense of teacher buy-in and knowledge about how to implement behavior management strategies. One interviewee described this as a *“huge cultural shift”* and noted that they had *“made big strides in the climate and culture.”* Another described staff as having a *“deeper understanding of the importance of prevention [and] recognizing positive behaviors.”* Several interviewees noted a decrease in office discipline referrals and referrals to the nurse’s office during Year 2. As one staff member explained, *“The language that teachers are using, the results of actually some of that work from responsive classroom actually fed into them updating their referral processes.”*

Many staff also reported improved family engagement in Year 2, pointing especially to increased attendance at family events. As one respondent reported, *“Our family fun nights were like crazy.*

*Everybody wanted to come.*” Another described a more open and welcoming environment for families, saying that *“the parents are just very impressed, and they feel very open and willing to come into the school.”* Holyoke stood out as a district placing a particularly strong emphasis on family engagement strategies and seeing great changes as a result of these efforts. One interviewee explained that family members were volunteering in the school buildings and described this as a *“cultural shift of seismic proportions.”* Another reported that *“our families are telling us or having a say in what is actually happening.”*

## **Cross-District Finding 2: Many districts continued to struggle with establishing a district-level infrastructure to support and formalize school-community partnerships.**

In Year 1, data showed that none of the districts made progress in establishing a district-level infrastructure to oversee community partnerships. This continued to be the case in Year 2, with the exception of Lynn. Lynn began Year 2 (its first year of implementation) by establishing a Community Advisory Committee and two related subcommittees that brought together representatives from community agencies and the district to establish partnerships focused on two target areas—family engagement and behavioral health education. Interviewees across the board in Lynn spoke positively about the work of this committee, noting better communication between the district and community agencies and a stronger understanding of one another’s priorities.

For the other five districts, all Year 2 plans included an explicit focus on developing some type of infrastructure at the district level to support community partnerships, but there was little evidence of progress on this front. Lawrence was the only district that had a district-level infrastructure for supporting partnerships in place prior to WAZ—the Agency Partnership Advisory Network (APAN). However, the data gathered in Year 2 showed that although the APAN continued to be a valuable resource for school staff and community partners in terms of sharing information and learning about one another, Lawrence struggled in creating consistency across schools in community agency referral processes. This suggested that the APAN was not fulfilling its full potential of providing district-level support in the area of partnerships.

The other districts continued to operate without a formal district-level community partnership infrastructure, but they varied in terms of the degree to which the district was supporting the development of school-community partnerships. In Fall River for example, school-community partnerships reportedly expanded and flourished. Many staff attributed this expansion to the active role that the new district coordinator took in building relationships and making connections between schools and community agencies. This district coordinator was also moving forward with two activities to provide better district support for partnerships: (1) a standardized Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to use when developing new partnerships and (2) an online system for agencies to register with the district as potential partners.

In Holyoke, Springfield, and Worcester, staff also reported an increase in the quantity and quality of school-community partnerships, but they attributed this to the work of the WAZ school coordinators. Many interviewees in both Springfield and Worcester expressed frustration at what they perceived as insufficient support from the districts in establishing and maintaining these partnerships. In Holyoke, stakeholders generally acknowledged a lack of district support

related to community partnerships, but they also varied in their perceptions of the extent to which district support was needed.

**Cross-District Finding 3: Staff in four of the six districts reported a lack of district involvement or support. Without visible and concrete support from district leaders, the WAZ schools sometimes struggled in achieving buy-in among all teachers and staff, which then in turn negatively affected implementation progress.**

During interviews, leaders from all six districts praised the WAZ initiative and indicated their support. However, how they demonstrated support through their actions, and the perceptions of that support among school staff, varied across districts. Interviewees in Lynn and Fall River consistently described the support and involvement from their leadership as strong. For example, an interviewee in Lynn characterized the superintendent's office as "*sincere*" and "*invested in the process.*" In Fall River, an interviewee described the Superintendent as "*the driving force behind all of this*" and key leaders were members of a WAZ oversight committee at the district level. In both districts, the superintendent and other leaders were actively involved in WAZ-related committees and planning meetings, found ways to embed WAZ strategies in broader district priorities, and were focused on replicating WAZ strategies in non-WAZ schools (for example, by discussing WAZ strategies at monthly principal meetings, or making training on WAZ-funded social-emotional curricula available to all schools ). Staff touted these types of support as indicators of genuine commitment to the initiative from their leaders. Additionally, in both of these districts, interviewees consistently reported strong levels of buy-in across all staff in the WAZ schools.

In other districts, perceptions of district leaders' commitment to and involvement in WAZ were mixed. For example, in Springfield, many staff praised the Superintendent for being a "*big fan*" of City Connects, which was the organization implementing many of the components of WAZ in the district. Many staff in Springfield also noted that their district leaders were taking more steps to raise visibility for WAZ and City Connects by mentioning and praising them several times in public forums. However, staff also reported a general feeling that district leaders were committed and "*like the idea of it*" but were "*not involved.*" A similar dynamic existed in Worcester and Lawrence, where some staff felt that WAZ was a priority for district leaders and others felt that it was not and that the real leadership was coming solely from the WAZ district coordinator. In these three districts, interviewees also reported varying levels of buy-in among staff at the school level, which negatively affected implementation progress. For example, a school coordinator in Springfield reported that teachers at her school "*didn't really see the value*" of WAZ, and that the school struggled in moving forward with some of the WAZ strategies as a result.

In Holyoke, district leaders were very intentional about granting autonomy to the WAZ schools and giving them "*the leeway*" to implement WAZ and the full-service community school model in their own way. District leaders were involved by participating in some of the WAZ school planning activities and in the district's community of practice initiative. However, staff noted that district support was "*intermittent*" and "*not there all the time.*" One interviewee reported that support for WAZ from Holyoke leadership seemed to have decreased from the previous year, and that it has "*become almost invisible.*" Interviewees also reported that buy-in from staff at one school had decreased from the previous year.

**Cross-District Finding 4: All six districts continued to rely to some extent on WAZ-funded district- and/or school-level staff positions to oversee and carry out their plans. Some districts were finding ways to integrate WAZ oversight responsibilities into existing staff positions, with mixed success. Others districts were finding ways to continue funding for one or both of the positions after the RTTT resources have ended.**

In Year 1, data revealed a strong reliance in each district on WAZ-funded, dedicated, full-time staff positions to implement the strategies in its plans. These included a district WAZ coordinator to provide general oversight and support at the district level and school-level coordinators in each WAZ school. The only exception was Holyoke, which did not hire a district coordinator but instead designated a district staff person to serve as a WAZ district liaison. Additionally, Lynn, which was still in a planning year, had not yet decided if and how it would use WAZ to support school-based staff positions.

In Year 2, the ways districts used WAZ funding to staff positions remained largely the same as in Year 1, with two exceptions. First, Lynn decided not to hire full-time school coordinators but instead to have existing school staff serve on WAZ-related teams that would be charged with overseeing the implementation of WAZ strategies. Second, Fall River, which brought on three new WAZ schools in the second year, invested in school coordinators (called Student Support Coordinators, or SSCs) for only half of its WAZ schools (two of the original cohort's schools and one of the three new schools). The other three schools designated existing school personnel to take on WAZ oversight and implementation responsibilities. Fall River's decision to do this was partly driven by constrained resources but also by concerns among district leadership about sustainability and the need to ensure a more seamless integration of WAZ priorities into the day-to-day responsibilities of existing school staff.

For those schools that did fund a full-time school coordinator, respondents consistently acknowledged the importance of the position in terms of making progress in implementing WAZ strategies. The reliance on these staff positions to oversee WAZ strategies remained largely the same in Year 2 as in Year 1. Coordinators described their responsibilities as wide reaching and encompassing tasks such as establishing and managing systems for identifying and addressing student needs; communicating with families; connecting students and families with services; establishing and maintaining partnerships with community agencies; communicating with and supporting teachers and other staff around WAZ-related strategies; and gathering and analyzing relevant data. In some cases, school coordinators reported taking on additional responsibilities because of a lack of districtwide systems, infrastructure, or support. For example, in Worcester, the planned rollout of its district-wide data management system was delayed, and as a result many coordinators were developing and monitoring their own referral and data-gathering systems. In Springfield, a district-led community coalition kickoff event that took place in Year 1 reportedly had “*no follow-through*” and the responsibility for building and maintaining new partnerships rested with the school coordinators. In Holyoke, which did not have a district coordinator, the school-based coordinators took on the added roles of facilitating planning meetings across the district and communicating with district leadership. One of the Holyoke school coordinators was described as “*the de facto WAZ coordinator for the district.*”

For those schools that integrated WAZ oversight responsibilities into existing staff roles, respondents noted some positive outcomes but also challenges. In Fall River, staff in schools

without SSCs communicated some resentment about the lack of this position, noting that the schools with SSCs seemed to be making more progress. Nonetheless, they also reported success in their own schools and commented that “*sustainability is a given*” because they were able to implement WAZ “*with no budget.*” In Lynn, staff seemed pleased with the team approach and especially its implications for sustainability. However, some staff pointed out that the team approach resulted in inconsistent WAZ-related protocols and procedures across schools, because there wasn’t a point person at each school to connect with and systematically share strategies and resources with other schools. The result was that schools would sometimes be using different professional development providers, or implementing different strategies related to family engagement. Some staff felt that this type of inconsistency was compromising their ability to support future replication of a common set of strategies district-wide.

With respect to the district coordinator position, interviewees in all districts continued to emphasize the importance of that role for moving the WAZ work forward. This was especially so in districts where staff reported relatively low levels of involvement by district leadership. For example, in Lawrence, school staff reported on the accessibility and helpfulness of the district coordinator because “*we don’t see other support*” from district leaders other than the coordinator. Interviewees in Worcester described their district coordinator as the “*driving force*” behind WAZ and other district support as “*ambiguous.*” In Springfield, the district coordinator was also described as the “*greatest support*” for WAZ. In Lynn and Fall River, where involvement of district leadership was reportedly very strong, interviewees still attributed much of the progress and action to the coordinator position: “*She’s moving things forward.*” In Holyoke, the one district that did not have a district coordinator position, several staff noted a need for a full-time person at the district level to “*coordinate all the pieces of what’s happening.*”

**Cross-District Finding 5: Staff in all districts reported concerns about sustainability for WAZ, but districts varied in terms of the concrete steps they were taking towards ensuring sustainability.**

Interviewees from all six districts expressed concerns about the sustainability of WAZ. Staff at all levels were aware that WAZ funding was limited and worried about what would happen when the grant period was over. As one interviewee explained, “*Everything we do has to be able to be sustained because we can’t really fund it.*” Another interviewee was concerned that “*if they eliminated the position [WAZ-funded school coordinator], we go back to where we were three years ago.*”

While concerns about sustainability were universal, districts varied in terms of the steps they were taking to ensure sustainability. Some districts were beginning to find room in their budgets to continue to fund WAZ-created staff positions. For example, Springfield leaders reported that their intention was to continue to support City Connects, and Lynn leaders reported that they were committed to continuing to fund the district coordinator position. Further, as described in Finding 2 above, Lynn and Fall River were experimenting with ways to integrate WAZ responsibilities into existing school-based staff positions.

Some districts talked about and were beginning replication of WAZ strategies districtwide. For example, the school coordinators in Holyoke were meeting regularly to discuss the possibility of replicating the full-service community school model districtwide. Fall River and Lynn were both

beginning to integrate WAZ into broader district initiatives and intentionally replicating WAZ strategies in non-WAZ schools. For example, both districts were implementing social-emotional curricula such as Responsive Classroom and Playworks in WAZ and non-WAZ schools and using the WAZ schools as models for the non-WAZ schools. Both districts also were working to develop partnerships with community agencies at all schools, not just the WAZ schools, and they were using a common district-level infrastructure to support those partnerships. In these districts, replication was viewed as essential for achieving sustainability. An interviewee in Lynn described the conversation about replication in the district as *“How do we sustain what’s going on in these building as well as bringing more buildings on so we can help sustain?”* The ultimate goal for these districts was to use WAZ as a starting point for promoting broader districtwide change around providing comprehensive non-academic and academic supports to students.

## Summary

Data gathered during Year 2 of WAZ implementation showed that staff in all districts reported progress, especially in terms of improved school climate and family engagement. Staff also reported increases in the quantity and quality of school-community partnerships, yet there was variation in the extent to which staff felt supported by their district in establishing and maintaining these partnerships. The extent to which these positive outcomes will be sustained over time remains to be seen. Analysis of some of the Year 2 data showed ways that districts were thinking about and planning for sustainability, and some key differences among districts began to emerge, specifically in terms of priorities, leadership styles, and mechanisms for providing district-level support to the WAZ schools.

Fall River and Lynn stood out as districts most actively focused and engaged in activities likely to achieve sustainability. First, they had strong buy-in and direct involvement of district leadership. Fall River had a district-level WAZ oversight committee whose members included the Superintendent and other key district leaders. The Superintendent and others leaders in Lynn were also active members of WAZ committees and planning teams. Second, these districts were integrating WAZ coordination responsibilities into existing school-based positions. Lynn didn’t use any school-based WAZ coordinators but instead convened teams of staff at each school to oversee implementation of WAZ strategies. Fall River was experimenting with the same model in some of its WAZ schools. Third, both districts were actively replicating WAZ strategies in non-WAZ schools. They discussed WAZ strategies in district-wide principal meetings, and made WAZ-related professional development and support available to non-WAZ schools. Finally, Lynn was the only district with a formal and functional community coalition in place. Fall River, although it did not have a coalition, was implementing strategies at the district level to ensure consistency and systematization of procedures for the development of school-community partnerships.

Other districts struggled with the district support piece, sometimes because of external factors. Lawrence, for example, was in its second year of state receivership due to its Level 5 accountability status, and many staff felt that their district leaders were unable to adequately focus on WAZ due to other priorities. In fact, following Year 2, Lawrence decided not to apply for continuation funding. Holyoke was experiencing turnover in its district leadership and also did not have anyone at the district level fully dedicated to WAZ. Without consistent district

support, it was unable to move forward as quickly as hoped on plans for districtwide expansion of the full-service community school model.

Worcester and Springfield were the largest districts, had the largest number of WAZ schools, and staff in both of these districts reported variations among schools in terms of outcomes and in terms of teacher and administrator buy-in for some of the WAZ strategies. Additionally, staff in both districts reported mixed perceptions of district leadership support and involvement, and a feeling that without strong district support, gaining widespread buy-in at the school level was challenging. Although leaders in both districts were reportedly very enthusiastic about WAZ, interviewees noted that the real driving force keeping the initiative moving was coming from the WAZ-funded district and school coordinators (in the form of City Connects in Springfield). School coordinators in both districts were taking on multiple responsibilities and many respondents reported a feeling that without these positions, progress would stall. Several staff expressed concerns about sustainability and what would happen to these positions once WAZ funding was done.

Overall, the data gathered in Year 2 begin to identify some key factors that may support long-term sustainability of WAZ and its associated outcomes. The data gathered during Year 3 will build even further on these and address our fourth and final research question:

*Is WAZ sustainable at the district and school levels, and what supports or hinders (or will support or hinder) sustainability and replication in other districts and schools?*

In the following sections, we present profiles for each district, which include details on the findings unique to each district.



## Profile A: Fall River

This profile describes progress made in Fall River during Year 2 of the WAZ initiative and presents key findings related to early indicators of change with respect to WAZ implementation. The data sources used to inform this profile are (a) stakeholder interviews conducted during the spring of 2013 and (b) WAZ-related documents provided by the district and schools. The analysis of these data was informed by the findings that emerged in Report 2 on conditions and supports during Year 1 of WAZ implementation. For example, researchers paid particular attention to analyzing the extent to which progress did or did not occur on issues that were identified as challenges or potential early indicators of success during Year 1.

### WAZ Schools and Planned Strategies in Year 2

Fall River implemented WAZ in three schools in Year 1: Doran and Viveiros Elementary Schools and Kuss Middle School. These schools were selected because they were either Level 4 schools (Doran and Kuss) or a feeder school (Viveiros) to the Level 4 middle school (Kuss). During Year 2, three additional schools were added (Fonseca Elementary School, Talbot Middle School, and BMC Durfee High School). Fonseca was selected because it *“is a really needy school very much like Viveiros. A very large school, a very poor school.”* The district added Talbot and Durfee because they receive students from the other WAZ schools (Fonseca is a feeder school for Talbot, and Durfee is the only high school in the district and therefore receives students from both WAZ middle schools).

Overall, the Year 2 WAZ plan for Fall River was similar to its Year 1 plan (see Table 3). For example, under both the Climate and Culture and Identify and Address Student Needs priority improvement areas, the Year 2 plan focused on continuing strategies from the Year 1 plan in the Year 1 WAZ schools and introducing these strategies to the three new WAZ schools. There were a few additions, including a focus on building home-school connections and reviewing consistency of school climate policies under the Climate and Culture improvement area and the implementation of positive youth development opportunities under the Identify and Address Student Needs improvement area.

The differences between Fall River’s Year 1 and Year 2 plans fell mostly within the Community Coalition and District Systems of Support priority improvement areas. Regarding Community Coalition, the Year 2 plan had an explicit, stronger focus than the Year 1 plan did on developing a community coalition. It identified district-level efforts to put the coalition in place, including developing a partnership team, convening the team on a regular basis to “identify areas of needs and to pool resources to meet those needs,” prioritizing areas of focus for this team, and leveraging existing community coalitions to mobilize community resources to support WAZ strategies.

Finally, for District Systems of Support, the Year 2 plan included a focus on building WAZ capacity and on branding the initiative, which was not evident in the Year 1 plan. The Year 1 plan included strategies such as developing a Community Wellness Team and a resource directory, for example. In contrast, the Year 2 plan included strategies focused on building the capacity of student support coordinators through weekly meetings with the district WAZ coordinator and mentoring, along with developing a District Social Emotional Vertical Team, providing social-emotional professional development, and branding the WAZ initiative.

**Table 3. Comparison of Year 1 and Year 2 WAZ plans for Fall River Public Schools, by priority improvement area**

Priority Improvement Area	Year 1 WAZ Plan	Year 2 WAZ Plan
Climate and Culture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Implement social emotional learning or healthy behavior curricula: Responsive Classroom and Playworks (elementary schools) and Guided Discipline (middle school).</li> <li>▪ Conduct a school climate and culture survey (students, staff, parents) to establish baseline and determine areas of need.</li> <li>▪ Continue implementation of the middle school advisory program designed to develop positive and collaborative relationships between students and promote student connection to school.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Implement tier one social emotional learning/pro-social behavior curriculum in in-coming WAZ schools. Implement tier two social emotional learning/pro-social behavior curriculum in existing WAZ schools: Responsive Classroom, Playworks (elementary schools), Guided Discipline (middle and high schools).</li> <li>▪ Conduct school culture and climate survey (student, staff, parents) to gather baseline data on incoming WAZ schools and to monitor effectiveness of current programs in existing WAZ schools.</li> <li>▪ Establish advisory program in incoming WAZ middle school. Continue implementation of current advisory program in existing WAZ middle school with a focus on strengthening that program.</li> <li>▪ Conduct systematic review of current policies and procedures in all schools with the goal of developing consistency and alignment.</li> <li>▪ Continue to develop and expand parental involvement. Develop stronger home-school connection to enable families to feel connected and invested in their schools.</li> </ul>
Identify and Address Student Needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Use existing CAT teams (Curriculum Accommodation Teams) as main referral, intervention, and case management team that fields teacher referrals, develops individualized student academic and social-emotional support plans, and tracks support.</li> <li>▪ Develop/recast school-based Wellness Teams and use as main team responsible for WAZ implementation in building and developing strategies that support overall needs of student body.</li> <li>▪ Conduct resource mapping and needs assessment to identify existing resources</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Continue to use existing CAT team model as main referral, intervention, and case management team that will field teacher referrals, develop individualized student academic and social-emotional support plans, and monitor interventions.</li> <li>▪ Develop school-based wellness/student support teams in incoming schools. In current schools, continue using existing teams, which are responsible for building and developing strategies that support overall student needs and WAZ programming.</li> </ul>

Priority Improvement Area	Year 1 WAZ Plan	Year 2 WAZ Plan
	<p>and parent interests.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Use findings of needs assessment to identify resource gaps and WAZ development priorities.</li> <li>▪ Expand or develop activities, programs, or services designed to meet priority student and climate and culture needs.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Expand and develop activities, programs, and services to meet priority student needs, including developing positive youth development opportunities</li> <li>▪ Pilot the use of a Positive Youth Development Plan/Student Support Plan to monitor student interventions and supports.</li> </ul>
Community Coalition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Identify valuable community WAZ partners and appropriate level and types of engagement.</li> <li>▪ Establish more routine methods for reviewing and coordinating resources.</li> <li>▪ Leverage existing community coalitions and mobilize support for wraparound strategies.</li> <li>▪ Develop a Community Wellness Team or coalition to advise the district on school-community collaboration and develop strong student/wrap strategies.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Develop partnership team/emerging coalition utilizing data previously collected identifying valuable partners.</li> <li>▪ Have partnership team meet on a regular basis to identify areas of needs and to pool resources to meet those needs.</li> <li>▪ Identify high need priority areas that partnership team will address.</li> <li>▪ Leverage existing community coalitions to mobilize support for WAZ strategies.</li> </ul>
District Systems of Support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Provide professional development and coordination support for school-based WAZ implementation.</li> <li>▪ Establish consistent systems, practices, and protocols across schools for core WAZ activities.</li> <li>▪ Develop and maintain a community resource directory.</li> <li>▪ Establish strong collaboration with FRPS parent engagement office and develop core WAZ activities for parents.</li> <li>▪ Develop a Community Wellness Team.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Use weekly meetings facilitated by the WAZ District Coordinator to assist new Student Support Coordinators in their duties and assist existing Student Support Coordinators to deepen their work based on the priorities identified in their school based WAZ plans.</li> <li>▪ Assign a mentor SSC to each new SSC to additionally assist the new SSC in his or her duties.</li> <li>▪ Develop a District Social Emotional Vertical Team.</li> <li>▪ Continue professional development in social emotional curriculum.</li> <li>▪ Begin district branding initiative.</li> </ul>

## Year 2 Key Findings

AIR's data collection during Year 2 revealed the following five overall findings related to the implementation of WAZ in Fall River during the second year:

1. District leadership in Fall River focused on replicating WAZ strategies in non-WAZ schools and integrating WAZ strategies into district and school improvement efforts, demonstrating their continued buy in and strong support for WAZ.
2. Fall River continued implementing programs at the elementary and middle school levels to support positive school climate and culture. Numerous interviewees attributed improvements in the WAZ schools to these efforts.
3. Improving home-school connections was a priority in Fall River's Year 2 WAZ plan. Although this continued to be a challenge, progress was evident across WAZ schools and at the district level, with increased attendance at family events and improved two-way communication with families.
4. Although a district-led community coalition was not in place in Year 2, school-community partnerships were expanding with support from the district WAZ coordinator, and formal procedures for district-level support were being planned.
5. Fall River was beginning to experiment with different sustainability strategies by implementing two specific strategies in different sets of schools. Three schools had WAZ-funded Student Support Coordinators (SSCs) while another three schools coordinated WAZ through a team of existing staff, and reported both challenges and successes.

Table 4 presents Fall River findings for Year 2 together with related Fall River findings from Year 1. Data gathered in Year 2 revealed that during the second year of WAZ implementation, district buy-in and commitment to WAZ and wellness efforts in Fall River continued to be very strong (Year 2 Finding #1). In Year 1, data found strong buy-in from district leadership, largely due to alignment of WAZ with other district improvement efforts (Year 1 Finding #1). However, Year 1 data also showed that schools varied in terms of the foundational work related to WAZ that they were able to build off of (Year 1 Finding #2). In Year 2, the district was much more intentional and proactive about infusing WAZ-related strategies into improvement efforts at all schools districtwide.

In Year 2, interview respondents reported that progress was made in the areas of school climate (Year 2 Finding #2) and home-school connections (Year 2 Finding #3). This included family engagement strategies in all six WAZ schools and an increased district-level focus on building parent capacity to support student learning. These findings demonstrate progress from Year 1, where data showed home-school connections in particular to be a challenge (Year 1 Finding #4). In Year 2, schools also continued to leverage strong partnerships with community agencies to support parent engagement efforts (e.g., learning events) and to connect students with services. The WAZ district coordinator, who took on the position in December 2012, was also moving forward with several efforts to develop a consistent protocol for partnering with external agencies (e.g., a standard MOU) and to support the implementation of WAZ strategies in non-WAZ schools (Year 2 Finding #4). Again, this was an area where Fall River demonstrated

progress compared to Year 1. Data in Year 1 had shown that systematizing procedures to enhance and maintain community-school partnerships was a challenge (Year 1 Finding #4).

Finally, at the district level Fall River continued to provide infrastructure to support WAZ coordination, but in Year 2 took steps in some schools to expand the school adjustment counselor position to take on the WAZ coordination responsibilities. This demonstrated Fall River’s focus on sustainability planning in Year 2 (Year 2 Finding #5).

**Table 4. Crosswalk of Year 1 and Year 2 Fall River Findings**

Year 2 Findings	Related Year 1 Findings
<p>Year 2 Finding 1: <i>District leadership in Fall River focused on replicating WAZ strategies in non-WAZ schools and integrating WAZ strategies into district and school improvement efforts, demonstrating their continued buy in and strong support for WAZ.</i></p>	<p>Year 1 Finding 1: <i>Upon launching the WAZ grant, there was evidence of strong buy-in for the initiative at both the district and school levels, due in large part to recent district efforts that aligned with WAZ priorities.</i></p> <p>Year 1 Finding 2: <i>During Year 1, schools varied in terms of the foundational work related to wellness that they were able to build on when implementing WAZ.</i></p>
<p>Year 2 Finding 2: <i>Fall River continued implementing programs at the elementary and middle school levels to support positive school climate and culture. Numerous interviewees attributed improvements in the WAZ schools to these efforts.</i></p>	
<p>Year 2 Finding 3: <i>Improving home-school connections was a priority in Fall River’s Year 2 WAZ plan. Although this continued to be a challenge, progress was evident across WAZ schools and at the district level, with increased attendance at family events and improved two-way communication with families.</i></p>	<p>Year 1 Finding 4: <i>Facilitating better home–school connections had been a longstanding challenge.</i></p>
<p>Year 2 Finding 4: <i>Although a district-led community coalition was not in place in Year 2, school-community partnerships were expanding with support from the district WAZ coordinator, and formal procedures for district-level support were being planned.</i></p>	<p>Year 1 Finding 3: <i>Fall River entered into its WAZ grant with a strong infrastructure of community–district relationships and community services in place in many schools. However, systematizing procedures to enhance and maintain these relationships was an ongoing challenge.</i></p>

Year 2 Findings	Related Year 1 Findings
<p>Year 2 Finding 5:</p> <p><i>Fall River was beginning to experiment with different sustainability strategies by implementing two specific strategies in different sets of schools. Three schools had WAZ-funded Student Support Coordinators (SSCs) while another three schools coordinated WAZ through a team of existing staff, and reported both challenges and successes.</i></p>	

Further details regarding the Year 2 findings, and the evidence that supports them, follow.

**Finding 1: District leadership in Fall River focused on replicating WAZ strategies in non-WAZ schools and integrating WAZ strategies into district and school improvement efforts, demonstrating their continued buy in and strong support for WAZ.**

District leaders spoke directly about their efforts to infuse the WAZ priorities into their school improvement plans. They provided guidance to all schools on WAZ-related strategies and regularly shared with non-WAZ schools what the WAZ schools were doing around wellness so this would reach more schools in the district. They established a WAZ oversight committee at the district level, which included the Superintendent and other key leaders, and worked to create consistency district-wide in the implementation of WAZ-related policies and procedures. One interviewee commented:

*We’re trying to embed it into regular practice at this point. We required all schools to put it in the school improvement plans as part of our accelerated improvement plan. The initiatives around positive youth development and positive school and classroom climate, home school connections and using partnerships to do all that work. So that’s in every single plan....We learn what the individual wraparound schools have done and we’re trying to bring that out to a bigger audience at this point.*

Additionally, the district coordinator position was an important support to schools and WAZ oversight at the district level. The new coordinator previously directed the district’s Coordinated Family and Community Engagement (CFCE) Program and had a lengthy history collaborating with child-serving agencies in the community. Her transition to the WAZ coordinator role was also seen as a smooth one because of her history with the district and relationships with outside agencies. As part of her support to WAZ schools, the district coordinator convened monthly meetings with the SSCs and other representatives from the schools, which participants considered beneficial. One interviewee commented that the district coordinator “pulls out the SSCs and they meet as a group so they’re sharing practices” and the newer SSCs and team representatives “learn from the more experienced ones, which is really nice.” The SSCs/teams were also a resource to each other: “They’re a great group about sharing information. I would say that’s probably one of the bigger supports that they have.”

Third, the district continued to convene a meeting of all school principals twice monthly that helped build school capacity. One school leader commented that although still a challenge, communication from the district “*has increased tremendously*” and the meetings were a valuable opportunity for schools at all levels to “*support each other*” around WAZ and other district priorities. The district was working to expand this support and establish a social-emotional learning (SEL) vertical team with representatives from each school SEL team.

Finally, the district coordinator established a WAZ oversight committee with members including the superintendent, the assistant superintendent, the Title I director (who was also supporting efforts around positive youth development), and the district WAZ coordinator. This oversight committee was created to oversee and provide direction to four subcommittees that were also established to address health and nutrition, parent engagement and learning, positive youth development, and SEL. They were established to provide additional district-level resources to “*do the work*” specific to their areas of focus and then “*bring that back*” to the oversight committee, which will then review and “*approve it as district policy.*” This approach helped establish expected practices and procedures, leading to a more consistent approach to WAZ implementation as well as to replication of the district’s wellness priorities across the district.

Hence, strong district buy-in and support for WAZ was evident in Year 1 and continued in Year 2. This was considered a key foundation for the WAZ work. When asked about district-level buy-in for WAZ, one interviewee said, “*There’s not only buy-in, there is true leadership there and by that I mean they use the WAZ initiative as a lens for all of their districtwide initiatives. They make sure that it is like I said in the school improvement in the accelerated intervention plan for the district.*” Numerous school-level interviewees commented on the district’s “*excellent*” leadership of WAZ and related district priorities and that district staff are “*a wealth of resources.*” Another interviewee commented about being able to “*call them at any time and they will help me with whatever I need.*”

The superintendent was seen as a strong support for WAZ: “*I’m going to...hug my superintendent because really she is the force behind all of this....It’s just amazing the support that we have at that level...[She has] put things in place to make sure that it gets done at the school classroom level.*” A second interviewee commented that the superintendent “*puts kids first,*” and another that the superintendent “*addresses us on the importance of the work, community partnership, wellness, everything from culture to nutrition to parent involvement*” at the principal meetings. The assistant superintendent for curriculum was also noted as a key support for WAZ-related progress in Fall River. For example, one noted that “*over the past couple of years, there really has been a shift...[to prioritizing the] social-emotional needs of kids*” and that “*the assistant superintendent is really the one who’s kind of taken charge of the whole social-emotional push in the city.*” Another commented that she “*has been a huge, huge proponent*” of WAZ and “*knows that the way to get kids to become successful is to hook them up to something....she’s very, very committed to it.*”

**Finding 2: Fall River continued implementing programs districtwide at the elementary and middle school levels to support positive school climate and culture. Numerous interviewees attributed improvements in WAZ and non-WAZ schools to these efforts.**

Fall River continued implementing Responsive Classroom and Playworks at the elementary school level, as well as Guided Discipline at the middle school level. The district supported implementation of these programs through staff training, ongoing professional development, and observation walk-throughs. For Responsive Classroom, a consultant visited the schools regularly and provided professional development to staff as part of monthly staff meetings. This consultant conducted observations and shared “*feedback as to what she saw around climate and culture, teacher language, behaviors in the classroom*” and she conducted “learning walks” with the district WAZ coordinator, SSCs, and other school staff using a Responsive Classroom assessment tool. This team observed and assessed the quality of the curriculum’s implementation, such as the morning meetings, and then went back to look at trends and write “*a report with specific feedback*” to all teachers addressing strengths and development needs.

Following district-led efforts to replicate WAZ strategies districtwide, these programs were being implemented at WAZ and non-WAZ schools alike. Numerous interviewees pointed to these supports as important strategies affecting school climate and student outcomes. For example, when asked about challenges related to climate and culture strategies, one respondent noted:

*Responsive classroom and guided discipline has really made that easy.... There’s a visible difference, principals are very happy with the training and the programs. Teachers are, as far as I know from what I observed and the conversations I’ve had with teachers, they’re happy, they see the difference in their classrooms. Just that morning meeting, starting the day like that, has made a huge difference. The language that teachers are using, the results of actually some of that work from responsive classroom actually fed into them updating their referral processes, like you’re not going to refer a child to the office because he broke his pencil.... [This has] fed into better responses to children’s behavior. Again, the language has changed. People are using more positive language in schools.*

As part of its larger efforts under the climate and culture priority improvement area, the district was also implementing SEL teams in each school, with a group of SEL team staff meeting at the district level. Feedback on the programs was widely positive with strong buy-in evident. For example, one interviewee noted that “*all four middle schools are loving*” Guided Discipline and that “*it’s changing the climate in their schools.*”

Significantly, informants pointed to specific improvements in student outcomes that they had observed since the prior school year. Examples included decreased disciplinary referrals, fewer referrals to school nurses (because of decreased incidents during recess), and decreased suspension rates. For example, at a non-WAZ school, “*office referrals went down from about 400*” to approximately 100 for the same period, which was attributed to several factors including social-emotional programming. Another interviewee noted that the climate at Viveiros “*is completely different than it was two years ago*” and that Doran is “*thriving*” with great successes relative to its climate and culture. Relative to Playworks, an interviewee shared the following about positive outcomes due to the program:

*That has decreased the number of discipline referrals and referrals to the nurse’s office[s]. You would see kids lined up during recess [at the] nurse’s office because they really had no direction out there, so all they did was chase each other, knock each other*



*down and they'd get hurt or get in trouble. Push each other. But now that they have actual activities that they can join in on out there, they go out and there's like six difference games or activities going on that they have the option of moving back and forth. ... There's stuff for them to do, they don't want to go to the nurse, they don't want to miss out on the game or nobody's pushing or chasing one another*

Others responded similarly, noting that students *“are playing a little bit more safely, which has been really nice.”*

Teachers reflected these perspectives, speaking quite favorably about these strategies: *“It's definitely working. ... We're learning different ways to approach students in a more effective way.”* With respect to Responsive Classroom, one teacher said, *“There's a difference even from last year and this year. Responsive Classroom was implemented last year. ... One thing I've noticed is there is a consistency across the board. With other classrooms, you see the things that teachers are saying and doing, there's very much a consistency.”* Another teacher said about Guided Discipline, *“A lot of these kids are not taught how to mediate their problems at home. ... Through Guided Discipline, you know, talking to them differently and things like that, it helps not only to build that relationship but to kind of mediate a lot of the problems.”*

Improvements were also evident at two of the Year 2 WAZ schools. An interviewee noted that Talbot, which had always had *“pretty good attendance,”* improved even more in this area and that the students were making positive connections with adults in the school. At Fonseca, improvements were evident since the beginning of Year 2: it is *“an entirely different building... than it was in October in terms of the feel when you walk in. The children are respectful, they follow the rules, they understand those rules, the teachers work with them to understand we have to have order.”*

Some concerns emerged in the data related to program fidelity and sustainability. Some key informants were concerned about how staff turnover would affect their school's ability to sustain quality implementation of these strategies and these positive outcomes. One noted that *“I think some of the challenge is that we have that percentage of turnover every year and it's getting those people coming in to see where we are, where we're going, and to help them fit in.”* Another interviewee noted a need to ensure fidelity to Responsive Classroom and was planning to use the program's evaluation tool to monitor implementation: *“I feel like some teachers really embrace it and really love the program and do an excellent job, other teachers use different pieces of it, so our push moving forward is going to be to ensure fidelity of the initiative.”*

Finally, although Durfee did not have a social-emotional program in place during Year 2, it was in the process of planning a freshmen academy with an advisory component. The school was planning to implement this during the 2013–14 school year. As one interviewee said, the academy would *“make this large school smaller for these kids, because they come from much smaller schools and then they come to this huge school and have a lot of challenges with wandering and not making it to class.”* Also, the school selected Guided Discipline to use as part of the academy because the school had *“heard such good things about what's happening at the middle school”* because of it.

**Finding 3: Improving home-school connections was a priority in Fall River’s Year 2 WAZ plan. Although this continued to be a challenge, progress was evident across WAZ schools and at the district level, with increased attendance at events and improved two-way communication with families.**

In Year 1, facilitating home-school connections was widely reported as a longstanding challenge in Fall River. As part of its Year 2 WAZ plan, the district acknowledged this challenge by including a strategy to continue developing and expanding parental involvement. Evidence from Year 2 suggested that (1) parent engagement strategies were under way at all six WAZ schools, with some reported successes; (2) the district infused parent engagement into school improvement plans and was in the early stages of working with principals to implement more advanced parent engagement strategies; and (3) despite these efforts, home-school connections continued to be a challenge.

Strategies to engage families continued at the Year 1 WAZ schools. Teachers in one focus group noted it was their school’s *“main thrust this year. How to get parent engagement. ...How to get them involved.”* One school conducted a survey of parents, *“asking our parents what they want for the extracurricular activity piece, educational workshops.”* The survey results directly informed the school’s parent engagement strategies for the year, including providing ESL classes.

Family engagement strategies were also under way at the three schools new to WAZ during Year 2, building on strategies that were already in place during the previous year. For example, these strategies included parent cafés and family fun nights at Fonseca and communication with parents through a school website that *“some teachers have found success with...they’ve got parents checking their websites daily for homework and homework help.”* At one of the school’s family events on effectively raising children, approximately 45 parents participated. In addition to a multicultural night, because it is *“the gateway school for English learners in the city,”* Talbot likewise was holding events such as a family fun night when more than 20 community agencies were available to talk with families. Talbot also conducted a parent survey to understand parent comfort and connection with the school and their interest in educational workshops—and had a high participation rate by administering the survey through the school’s Parent Teacher Organization (PTO).

Two Year 2 WAZ schools were in the process of planning, or aiming to plan, for a centralized place for families to access services directly in the community. One was Durfee, which had *“a large majority”* of its students living in public housing in the city. In collaboration with the public housing authority, the school was looking to *“utilize the community centers at the public housing sites to begin building, sort of this idea of a hub”* where services *“would be closer to the parents and the students.”* Talbot was likewise aiming to work with a community center to develop a similar *“hub”* with *“not just student programs, but parent programs as well.”* Several successes and positive perspectives about family engagement were evident. One interviewee noted that *“you’ll see wonderful things going on at the WAZ schools”* relative to family engagement. Another interviewee noted that all the schools *“had pockets of success”* relative to family engagement. Doran in particular was *“thriving”* and parent engagement had expanded. One coordinator noted that *“each year we do so much better”* with parent engagement. A parent also noted that her school had *“tried many things to encourage parent involvement,”*

which was helpful despite disappointing turnout in some cases. One SSC also noted that the school has “done a pretty good job about publicizing what we can offer and parents have done a good job about communicating what their needs are” to the school. As a specific example of school strategies around family engagement, one interviewee noted that their school:

*coordinated a parent café where parents came together with the help of outside providers and they facilitated conversation around raising teenagers and how to deal with Facebook and all the drama and girl stuff, all of that, and parents have requested more of those. We had about 45 parents, I think, attend and they really enjoyed the opportunity to talk with other parents about raising kids. ... So, we tried in a number of ways, and I think our staff kind of, understand that it’s not all about bringing parents in but getting that two-way communication with parents, so they’re trying different ways to make that happen.*

Another school rolled out a parent survey that asked them “about their comfort level with the school, whether or not they feel safe, if they think their children are safe” and whether they feel that the school honors and respects their cultural heritage and their needs. This school plans to use this information to work with families and become more of a community center, including a parent academy with activities, services, and educational opportunities for families.

Teachers also had favorable views of these efforts, such as bowling events as part of family fun nights. One teacher said, “I think that as really, really helpful.... Seeing my parents outside of school in a social situation has really helped build the relationships....I think they feel a lot more comfortable when we see them outside of school when it’s not necessarily academic.” Another teacher noted, “I think when you establish that relationship with your parents, if it’s out there and their child knows about it, your student, I felt like my students grow a stronger love for me, like ‘you’re my mom’s friend.’ It’s their ideal, like ‘you talked to my mom,’ and that’s special to them, important to them. I felt that.”

At the time of data collection, the district was in the early stages of working with schools to advance their family engagement strategies from a “1.0 level,” which included events such as open houses and spaghetti dinners, to a “2.0 level.” This shift meant working with schools to implement strategies that built parents’ capacity to support student learning and further progress toward each school’s academic goals. The goal was “to engage them around academics, engage them around a goal.” The WAZ cross-district training session on family involvement held in January 2013 influenced this district framing of family engagement. One school interviewee noted that it shifted their “paradigm” for thinking about parent engagement and another noted the session was “excellent,” providing valuable information for their school’s parent engagement approaches.

The district was considering offering professional development (PD) to principals to help them understand what family engagement 2.0 looks like: “We can’t just ask principals to do it without some PD, so we would have to offer some principals PD and tell them what 2.0 is, what it looks like, what it should be, what it supports parent engagement 2.0.” Further, to ensure that schools had a greater focus on parent engagement, each school’s 2012–13 improvement plan included family engagement as a priority area. The district wanted to ensure that each 2013–14 school plan included at least one advanced (2.0) family engagement strategy.

Despite this progress, family engagement continued to be a challenge in Fall River. As one interviewee noted, *“It’s very difficult in the whole city.”* Another commented that *“everybody is still struggling”* with engaging parents. One school interviewee noted that parent engagement efforts, while successful at increasing the number of parents becoming engaged, were not reaching the parents who most needed to connect with the schools: *“The parents that we draw in are never the parents we need to bring in.”*

**Finding 4: Although a district-led community coalition was not in place in Year 2, school-community partnerships were expanding with support from the district WAZ coordinator, and formal procedures for district-level support were being planned.**

The development of school-community partnerships remained largely decentralized in Year 2, with WAZ schools continuing to leverage multiple partnerships in a myriad of ways to try and meet student needs: *“Every school has their own partnerships.”* There was no evidence that a formal district partnership team or coalition, as laid out in the district’s Year 2 WAZ plan, was under way. One interviewee noted the importance of this: *“One of the things that we really are hoping to see happen is that there’s sort of like a district-level stakeholders team because I think we could really make a lot more headway with the idea of the school being wrapped with the community, but we need some of those team players that can really make decisions.”* The district also had not conducted a scan of community resources, which had been part of its Year 1 WAZ plan.

Nonetheless, interviewees noted improved school-community partnerships at the Year 1 WAZ schools. As one stakeholder said, *“The outside partnerships in all three [Year 1 WAZ] schools has grown.”* An interviewee reported that partnerships at Doran *“started out pretty small”* but had strengthened and that Year 2 of WAZ was focusing on *“bringing in more of those partnerships.”* Viveiros also continued its collaboration with Child & Family Services, which had been in the school for *“a while,”* but during the last two years had evolved into a stronger partnership. Kuss also continued to experience strong relationships with its community partners. The school had *“long-standing relationships”* with some of its partners, with whom it had developed *“very good, professional relationships.”* Additionally, Durfee, which was a Year 2 WAZ school, already had in place a formal system to coordinate with external agencies prior to becoming a WAZ school and saw its relationships with community providers expand during Year 2. For example, during Year 1 of WAZ, the school hosted *“meetings periodically with community agencies, more specifically related to mental health.”* By learning about the services the providers could offer, the school developed *“a stronger referral process”* for connecting students with supports. The school also had *“so much now”* that the school needed *“to take that next step to wrap”* services around students. Further, during Year 2, Durfee launched a school-community partnership initiative primarily to identify extracurricular activities agencies could offer for students in the school.

Many interviewees attributed the expansion of school-community partnerships to the new district WAZ coordinator and to school-level staff including SSCs, who expanded school-community collaboration efforts in a number of schools. The new WAZ district coordinator was leveraging her connections as the previous director of the CFCE Program to support school-community partnerships. Building on her 20-year history collaborating with child-serving agencies in the Fall River community, she was focusing on supporting both district- and school-level efforts to

collaborate with community partners. She also had experience from participating in a community-level advisory council of partners that met monthly during the school year to address services for families with young children. One interviewee described her as someone who “*knows everybody in the city.*” For example, she connected a non-WAZ school that lacked recreational facilities to a local Boys Club, which led to “*the principal redoing her schedule to have a double block of gym*” and using the Boys Club for the gym period.

The district coordinator carried out several activities to support school-community partnerships and implementation of WAZ strategies. This included establishing a WAZ oversight committee and developing district-level protocols for community outreach: “*a consistent process that the whole district can use.*” As part of the oversight committee, the coordinator created four subcommittees focused on health and nutrition, parent engagement and learning, positive youth development, and SEL. These subcommittees, which were intended to support district-level WAZ planning and coordination, included outside partners to engage them in WAZ strategies.

As part of her role, the district coordinator was also moving forward with systematizing protocols for community partnership with schools through (1) a standardized MOU and (2) an online system for agencies to register as potential partners. These were considered strategies to “*tighten...up a little bit*” the various school-level approaches to partnering with community agencies, resulting in “*a consistent, general way for the whole district to access partners.*” These were intended to also benefit “*non-WAZ schools who need to recruit partners to meet the needs of their families and students.*” The purpose of the MOU was to help maintain partnerships, to “*make sure everybody’s getting what they are expecting,*” and to avoid any “*confusion*” as agreements were made about services to be provided in the schools. As a second resource to more efficiently coordinate community partner resources, the online system would enable efficient compilation of information on agencies interested in working in Fall River schools: “*If you’re a new agency, a program in the city, and you’d like to work in the schools, partner with the schools, you can apply online just by putting the name of your agency in, a couple of things about what you could offer a school, and submit*” that information to the district. This information would then go to the district coordinator for review. If an agency was selected to provide services, the next phase would entail engaging that agency “*as a partner at a school.*” The online system was also described as a tool to efficiently compile information that Fall River wanted to collect, including the number of partners working in the school district and what they offered. The district coordinator was planning to use this information to maintain “*a uniform list of programs and agencies that any school can access.*” This would also provide information on available supports that parents can easily access through the district website or resource book.

To further support school-level partnership efforts, the district coordinator was meeting with the SSCs on a regular basis and working with them to address recruiting, maintaining, and evaluating community partners. These meetings benefitted from the state’s technical assistance (TA) efforts, which during Year 1 of WAZ “*did a lot of work around coalition building*” and supported school efforts to develop collaborative partnerships. The district coordinator shared TA partnership-related resources with the SSCs. One SSC noted that these meetings helped “*increase the scope of what we’re able to offer*” to students.

SSCs were actively fostering and expanding school-community partnerships as well. For example, one SSC talked about identifying and then contacting potential partners: “*I do research*

*online, I talk to people, I call people, and I call them and call them and call them until they agree to come here.”* Viveiros also saw one of its partnerships strengthen by Year 2, but experienced challenges in this priority area because it lacked an SSC. The school really “*wanted to branch out into the community*” as part of its next step in the WAZ work, but this “*came to a screeching halt*” with the loss of the SSC position. However, staff at Durfee, which did not have a funded SSC position, were holding monthly meetings with community agencies to identify and coordinate resources, in particular those related to mental health, and develop “*a stronger referral process.*”

**Finding 5: Fall River was beginning to experiment with different sustainability strategies by implementing two specific strategies in different sets of schools. Three schools had WAZ-funded Student Support Coordinators (SSCs) while another three schools coordinated WAZ through a team of existing staff, and reported both challenges and successes.**

During Year 2, Fall River continued to use its WAZ grant to invest in school-level personnel at three of the WAZ schools: two Year 1 WAZ schools, Doran and Kuss, and one school new to WAZ during Year 2, Fonseca. These three schools each had a full-time SSC, who was responsible for overseeing and managing implementation of WAZ-related strategies in the school. At the other three schools, existing school support personnel were taking on WAZ coordination responsibilities. Viveiros, a Year 1 WAZ school, which had lost its SSC halfway through the first year, did not receive a new SSC and was moving forward with a team-based approach. The school psychologist and a school adjustment counselor were supporting WAZ coordination through the school’s wellness and SEL teams. At Talbot, a new Year 2 school, multiple staff, including the principal, were involved in implementing the school’s WAZ strategies, but these efforts were led primarily by the school adjustment counselor and the redesign coach. The redesign coach was hired in August 2012 when the school became an innovation school. The coach collaborated with the school’s SSC to establish systems and protocols, and assisted with rolling out various school strategies including the wellness initiative and social-emotional curriculum. Additionally, the coach helped to build connections with outside agencies and service providers. Durfee, also a new Year 2 school, was also using a team-based approach with three staff (two school adjustment counselors and a dropout prevention specialist) coordinating the implementation of WAZ activities.

The decision to not hire SSCs for some schools was related in part to district leaders’ concerns about sustaining WAZ: “*The key is really just to change the role of someone in the building, whether it’s a school adjustment counselor or vice principal, to lead the work. That is how we’re going to make it sustainable.*” As this district leader said, “*The SACs or administrators...need to take on a larger leadership role*” around wellness, including WAZ-related strategies. Recognizing that the WAZ funding would end, the district was changing the roles of school adjustment counselors to take on wellness coordination efforts and adding more of these positions to schools. According to one respondent, the district was “*continually adding school adjustment counselors*” in the district. For example, at Talbot, the school’s school adjustment counselor moved from providing one-on-one supports to students all day to taking on schoolwide initiatives and leading teams in the building. Much of the direct service work was taken on by community partners working with the school. However, the district did not anticipate eliminating the existing SSC positions. It was planning to finance some of the SSC positions in 2013–14

through Race to the Top funding and then embedding the positions into the district's regular budget (e.g., with Title I funds) after RTTT funds end.

Interviewees at the three schools with SSCs reported a myriad of supports and benefits from having these coordinators in their schools. The funded SSC positions were seen as a key form of district support for WAZ and capacity building to support its implementation, contributing to parent outreach and support as well as community partnerships. One principal shared that the SSC was “*invaluable*,” “*spearheads*” the school's social-emotional work, and has been “*instrumental*” to building the school's community partnerships. The SSC in that school had helped expand supports to parents by being “*very visible and very present to parents' needs*” and connecting the school and families to outside resources such as English as a Second Language (ESL), nutrition, and parenting classes. Similarly, at another school the SSC had expanded supports for parents, such as through parent cafes, and was seen as skillfully connecting students and families with appropriate providers to meet their needs and address crises. The SSCs also held key roles in these schools, serving on wellness teams and school administrative/leadership teams.

Significantly, the SSC positions were seen as influencing WAZ progress and observed outcomes. The two SSCs at the Year 1 WAZ schools were seen as a key factor contributing to observed improvements in school climate and culture since the previous school year. For example, referring to a school that had experienced “*a tremendous transformation*” (due to WAZ as well as work related to the school's Level 4 status), one interviewee noted that the SSC “*has contributed to the kind of [positive] climate that we have within the building.*” Another principal noted that the school already had “*more kids that need supports than I can serve*” and that the SSC was “*critical*” to WAZ, which “*wouldn't have happened without the coordinator.*”

For the three schools without SSCs, some concerns were evident about the unexpected lack of this supporting position. In one school, because of lack of funding for the position, the school “*lost a lot of traction*” at the beginning of the year, which was “*challenging*” and raised concerns about “*who's going to do this work.*” This was especially concerning because of hectic conditions in the school at the beginning of the school year with “*so many new students, new families...by the time you have a minute to breathe, it's December.*” In another school, an interviewee shared the following perspective that reflected these concerns:

*It was a huge initiative taken on, of course by the district, but one that was truly necessary. And we have embraced it because of the necessity and the needs of our students, but I have to be totally honest with you it has been an overwhelming amount of work in that we don't have full-time people doing that. We don't have a coordinator, we have taken on that work ourselves and people in different positions....Realistically we need more supports, because it's very hard to do what we're doing every day with the other responsibilities ...this is a full-time job, having someone coordinate parents, coordinate community members...And just triaging it out amongst the staff that I have and myself included can be overwhelming at times, and it's such important work that as to use my own words is nonnegotiable we can't let it go, we need to keep it going but the truth of the matter is that we need more help doing it to do it well.*

The loss of the coordinator position at Viveiros was also a challenge that affected its community networking and outreach efforts because the SSC had been “available to commit so much time into that community piece.” As one interviewee said:

*It’s difficult because we wanted to branch out into the community and really send fingers out there ... that was our next step. We felt like we really had a solid grasp of the climate and the culture as well as the adjusting student needs. We were definitely full steam ahead with that and then with the losing of that position it just kind of came to a screeching halt. We still do things within the community, but not with stakeholders necessarily.*

Another interviewee commented that “the schools that got a coordinator, I think, are at a very different place than we are. We’re doing it organically where they’re doing it very specifically because they have a coordinator and that’s that person’s job.”

Despite these concerns, interviewees in each of these three WAZ schools pointed to multiple areas of progress related to their WAZ strategies. For example, at one school the school adjustment counselors were increasingly “going out, meeting with service providers, trying to find partners that can provide services to our kids,” leading to more outside therapists and counselors coming to the school to provide direct services to students and reducing the school adjustment counselors’ time providing therapy to students. Also, some interviewees in these three schools still viewed the work as sustainable: “We’ve done it with no budget so I think sustainability is a given.” At another school, an interviewee noted that “we don’t really have any money, so everything we do has to be able to be sustained because we can’t really fund it.” Further, some interviewees reported that WAZ-related work was happening before the grant and would continue: “I would love to have the luxury of having one person just focused on building that capacity, but I don’t. It doesn’t mean we’re not going to do the work. I mean, frankly we’ve been doing it before WAZ was even was an idea.”

## **Summary**

During the 2012–13 school year, Fall River continued implementing the WAZ initiative, guided by a Year 2 plan that expanded on and refocused some strategies in the district’s Year 1 plan. The district continued implementation efforts that began in 2011–12 in three schools (an elementary school, a middle school, and a school serving both levels) and added three schools (an elementary school and a middle school, along with the district’s only high school) in Year 2 of WAZ.

In Year 2, district leadership in Fall River focused on replicating WAZ strategies in non-WAZ schools and integrating WAZ strategies into district and school improvement efforts, continuing a trend of strong district support for WAZ that was also demonstrated in Year 1. At the school level, staff reported feeling strongly supported by the district, and understood WAZ as a major district-wide priority that was aligned with overall school and district improvement goals.

Fall River also continued implementing three programs to support positive school climate and culture, including Playworks and Respectful Classroom in its elementary schools and Guided Discipline at the middle school level. Numerous key informants expressed satisfaction with these programs and reported changes, such as improved student attendance and behavior, which they



attributed at least partly to these efforts. As was the case in Year 1, improving home-school connections was a challenge in the district. Fall River added this as a priority area in its Year 2 plan and progress was evident across WAZ schools. Using information from the state's WAZ TA, the district was also planning to expand parent engagement strategies that would enhance their capacity to support student learning and further progress toward schools' academic goals. Additionally, although a district-led community coalition was not in place in Year 2, school-community partnerships were expanding with support from the district WAZ coordinator. Efforts were also under way to develop formal procedures for district-community partnership, including a standard MOU.

Finally, Fall River was beginning to plan for sustainability, partly by experimenting with ways to integrate WAZ oversight responsibilities into existing school staff positions. While the district continued to fund full-time SSCs at three schools, at three other schools, WAZ was coordinated through a team of existing staff. The district was also expanding the number of school adjustment counselors in schools to provide more school-level capacity for WAZ and wellness coordination. Although the three schools without SSCs reported some challenges, they also reported progress, specifically in the area of community partnerships and access to services.

## **Profile B: Holyoke**

This profile describes progress made in Holyoke during Year 2 of the WAZ initiative and presents key findings related to early indicators of change with respect to WAZ implementation. The data sources used to inform this profile are (a) stakeholder interviews conducted during the spring of 2013 and (b) WAZ-related documents provided by the district and schools. An analysis of these data was informed by the findings that emerged in Report 2 on conditions and supports during Year 1 of WAZ implementation. For example, researchers paid particular attention to analyzing the extent to which progress did or did not occur on issues that were identified as challenges or potential early indicators of success during Year 1.

### **WAZ Schools and Planned Strategies**

In Year 2, Holyoke's WAZ initiative was supporting the implementation of its full-service community school (FSCS) model in three schools: Kelly Elementary School, Morgan Elementary School, and Peck Elementary School. All three schools served Grades K–8. Peck was entering its fourth year of implementation of the FSCS model, Morgan was entering its second year, and Kelly was beginning its first year, following a year of planning funded through WAZ. This model utilizes full-time FSCS managers at each school, who oversee implementation of the model at the school and whose responsibilities include ensuring that programs and services appropriately address student and family needs, are data-driven, and aligned with overall school improvement planning. FSCS managers are also responsible for reaching out to and developing partnerships with community agencies, increasing family engagement, and communicating with stakeholders about the FSCS model.

Just as in its Year 1 WAZ plan, in Year 2, Holyoke laid out school-specific plans for two WAZ priority areas, Climate and Culture and Identifying and Addressing Student Needs, and districtwide plans for the other two WAZ priority areas, Community Coalition and District Systems of Support (see Table 5). The Year 2 WAZ plan also included school-specific strategies related to Climate and Culture and Identifying and Addressing Student Needs for Kelly Elementary, which had not been included in the Year 1 WAZ plan because it did not officially begin implementing WAZ until Year 2.

With regards to Climate and Culture, Peck's and Morgan's Year 2 plans did not change significantly from Year 1 and continued to focus on developing behavioral response systems. Peck added one new strategy, a social skills curriculum, and Morgan removed most of its strategies specifically related to increasing family engagement. Kelly's plan for Climate and Culture focused on increasing family engagement and meeting families' needs.

With regards to Identifying and Addressing Student Needs, in Year 2 both Peck's and Morgan's plans shifted from focusing on discrete steps, such as establishing partnerships, hiring staff, and conducting needs assessments, to developing coordinated sustainable systems for identifying and addressing student needs. Kelly's Year 2 plans for this priority area were similar to Peck's and Morgan's Year 1 plans and included conducting a needs assessment, hiring a project manager, and establishing community partnerships.

Holyoke’s Year 2 WAZ plans with regard to the Community Coalition priority area did not change significantly from Year 1; the Year 2 strategies simply included more detail about how the Year 1 strategies would be implemented. With regard to District Systems of Support, the Year 2 WAZ plan called for continuing district-level planning that had begun in Year 1 as well as the Community of Practice (CoP) that had been established among FSCS managers as the primary avenue for sharing tips and best practices and providing support for each other.

**Table 5. Comparison of Year 1 and Year 2 WAZ plans for Holyoke, by priority improvement area**

Priority Improvement Area	Year 1 WAZ Plan	Year 2 WAZ Plan for Peck	Year 2 WAZ Plan for Morgan	Year 2 WAZ Plan for Kelly
Climate and Culture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Begin schoolwide teacher training and ongoing consultation on new Behavioral Responsive System (for both Peck and Morgan).</li> <li>▪ Establish the middle school CAT (Caring Adult Team) (Peck).</li> <li>▪ Establish schoolwide intensive behavioral support program for targeted students (Peck).</li> <li>▪ Assess and make improvements to existing schoolwide positive and responsive behavior management system (Morgan).</li> <li>▪ Establish comprehensive system to meet parents and</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Develop a Positive School Climate Theory of Action and implement a corresponding action plan.</li> <li>▪ Build a new comprehensive Behavioral Response System.</li> <li>▪ Establish a Behavioral Response Team.</li> <li>▪ Introduce a Social Skills curriculum.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Provide professional development for all faculty and staff.</li> <li>▪ Collaborate with consultant for ongoing Behavior Intervention Support.</li> <li>▪ Focus the work of the Behavior Management Work group on improving climate and culture through clarifying behavioral response system.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Establish a comprehensive system to meet parents’ and families’ needs.</li> <li>▪ Reconvene HUB (Family Assistance Team) to provide communication and problem-solving tool for students and families in crisis.</li> <li>▪ Hire and train a Family Access and Engagement Coordinator.</li> <li>▪ Establish a process for ongoing communication with families.</li> <li>▪ Based on current data, provide parent workshops that assist parents in playing an active role in their child’s education.</li> </ul>

Priority Improvement Area	Year 1 WAZ Plan	Year 2 WAZ Plan for Peck	Year 2 WAZ Plan for Morgan	Year 2 WAZ Plan for Kelly
	<p>family needs, including establishing a parent resource center, conducting a parent survey, hiring a family engagement coordinator, and offering family events (Morgan).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Establish meaningful roles for parents in school (Morgan).</li> <li>▪ Reconvene HUB family assistance team to provide communication and problem solving for students and families in crisis (Morgan).</li> <li>▪ Offer a variety of parent and family workshops (Morgan).</li> </ul>			
Identify and Address Student Needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Identify target families in Peck attendance zone.</li> <li>▪ Arrange ongoing visits to families (Peck).</li> <li>▪ Establish relationships with local formal and informal early education and care providers (Peck).</li> <li>▪ Design, recruit for, and facilitate monthly</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Build infrastructure into the Referral and Results Review Team so that services are established and assessed for all identified students in need.</li> <li>▪ Build infrastructure into the Family Case Management Program so that</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Identify goals and objectives for work groups, organized in accordance with priority areas defined in planning process, which are tasked with addressing student needs identified in the needs and assets assessment during Morgan’s</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Continue to collect and analyze data that will show needs and aspirations of the Kelly School students and their families.</li> <li>▪ Hire a project manager within the school to review data.</li> <li>▪ Identify priority areas and begin to align</li> </ul>

Priority Improvement Area	Year 1 WAZ Plan	Year 2 WAZ Plan for Peck	Year 2 WAZ Plan for Morgan	Year 2 WAZ Plan for Kelly
	<p>readiness workshops, March–August 2012 (Peck).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Conduct a needs and assets assessment (Morgan).</li> <li>▪ Identify community partners to provide programs and services that align with identified student needs (Morgan).</li> <li>▪ Create FSCS project manager position that includes structures and systems to support an ongoing cycle of needs and assets identification and responsive programming (Morgan).</li> <li>▪ Create a Family Access and Engagement Coordinator position.</li> </ul>	<p>services are established and coordinated for targeted students and families in need.</p>	<p>planning period.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Reconvene HUB (Family Assistance Team) to provide communication and problem-solving tool for students and families in crisis.</li> </ul>	<p>community partners with the school to address priority areas.</p>
Community Coalition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Expand Peck FSCS Full Partnership to become district-level FSCS partnership.</li> <li>▪ Prepare for a districtwide FSCS feasibility study or planning process.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ A coordinated Holyoke Public Schools District-level Partnership AND sustained school-level partnerships at each of the Districts FSCS.</li> <li>▪ Formal planning process in the SY12-13 defines</li> </ul>		

Priority Improvement Area	Year 1 WAZ Plan	Year 2 WAZ Plan for Peck	Year 2 WAZ Plan for Morgan	Year 2 WAZ Plan for Kelly
		<p>District priorities for FSCS, identifies additional partners, conducts research and assessment, and engages in formal planning process.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ District expands current support for thriving, existing, and nascent school-level partnerships by identifying additional potential partners and sharing them with FSCS staff for their consideration. Any partners not matching school-level priorities will be integrated into District-level work via resource development and supporting needs at other schools.</li> </ul>		
District Systems of Support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Implement a district-level community of practice as a learning community for the three FSCSs.</li> <li>▪ Identify issues benefiting from district action or</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The CoP will continue meeting for both school-level learning and support and for identification of areas for district action and support.</li> <li>▪ The District</li> </ul>		

Priority Improvement Area	Year 1 WAZ Plan	Year 2 WAZ Plan for Peck	Year 2 WAZ Plan for Morgan	Year 2 WAZ Plan for Kelly
	district-level policy implications.	Planning team will plan district-level work, such as the Formal Planning District-wide Planning Process, as well as continue meeting with ESE and School and Main Institute consultants.		

**Year 2 Key Findings**

AIR’s data collection during Year 2 revealed the following five overall findings related to the implementation of WAZ in Holyoke during the second year:

1. New initiatives and work groups were implemented at all three WAZ schools to address issues with student behavior and help improve school climate.
2. Family engagement improved at all three WAZ schools, as demonstrated by reports of a more welcoming school atmospheres, newly created opportunities for parent volunteerism, and increased parent participation in school events and activities, such as ESL classes.
3. Teacher involvement in and buy-in to the process of identifying and addressing student needs varied across schools.
4. Stakeholder perspectives varied on which strategies and structures best supported school-community partnerships, but individual schools continued to strengthen their partnerships across the board.
5. District staff in Holyoke took a hands-off approach with the WAZ schools; however, staff at all three schools, and at the district level, expressed interest in having a designated district WAZ coordinator.

Table 6 presents the Holyoke Year 2 findings together with related Holyoke Year 1 findings. In Year 1, Holyoke used WAZ funding to build on and broaden their existing FSCS model from one school to three (Year 1 Finding #1), including a careful, data-driven planning process at one of those schools (Year 1 Finding #2). By Year 2 the FSCS model was well-established in two schools (Peck and Morgan) and gaining traction in the third school (Kelly). According to one district leader, at Kelly, *“They very quickly have gotten the staff in place, are getting the community partners, and so you see it moving.”* Kelly continued to look at the other WAZ schools as models for FSCS implementation. For example, staff reported that Kelly used Peck’s and Morgan’s referral and review forms as models to guide the development of and discussion

about its own referral forms. All three schools were implementing new initiatives and work groups focused on student behavior and school climate (Year 2 Finding #1).

In Year 1, interviewees reported strong buy-in from staff and principals at all three WAZ schools (Year 1 Finding #3). Data gathered in Year 2 also suggested that WAZ planning and implementation at Peck and Kelly continued to be supported by strong school principal and staff buy-in to the FSCS model. However, at Morgan, there were some reports that staff buy-in waned as a result of staffing changes at the school level—a new principal in 2010-11 when FSCS planning beginning—and uncertainty about the district’s future with regard to the FSCS model. According to one Morgan staff member, *“The two other full service community schools have a really conscious active intention to become a full service community school...This school had a principal who did that, who then left, and then the [new] leader...didn’t consciously say let’s become a full service community school. I think that the messaging to the staff has been not hitting strong with why we’re doing this.”*

Finally, Year 1 data revealed a lack of formal district support for WAZ. Rather than hire a full-time district coordinator, Holyoe instead used WAZ to support a part-time district liaison (Year 1 Finding #4). Data gathered in Year 2 revealed that in the absence of a full-time WAZ district coordinator, WAZ schools continued to rely heavily on one another for support. According to reports from staff at all three WAZ schools, Peck staff often served as de facto district liaisons for Morgan and Kelly. Despite this support from Peck, many interviewees expressed interest in having a designated district WAZ coordinator (Year 2 Finding #5). Also in Year 2, both district- and school-level staff continued to talk about the possibility of expanding the FSCS model to additional schools but recognized that the district’s support for the FSCS model would depend largely on the new superintendent. As one district leader put it, *“We’re in this period where we don’t know what the changes are going to be...It’s going to be interesting to see with the new superintendent where that [the FSCS model] goes.”*

**Table 6. Crosswalk of Year 1 and Year 2 Holyoke Findings**

Year 2 Findings	Year 1 Related Findings
<p>Year 2 Finding 1:</p> <p><i>New initiatives and work groups were implemented at all three WAZ schools to address issues with student behavior and help improve school climate.</i></p>	<p>Year 1 Finding 1:</p> <p><i>WAZ funding in Holyoke built on and broadened the existing FSCS work at one school and expanded the FSCS model to two additional schools.</i></p> <p>Year 1 Finding 2:</p> <p><i>Holyoke engaged in a purposeful, intensive, and data-informed planning process at Kelly, similar to its approach that supported FSCS implementation at Morgan and Peck.</i></p>



Year 2 Findings	Year 1 Related Findings
<p>Year 2 Finding 2: <i>Family engagement improved at all three WAZ schools, as demonstrated by reports of a more welcoming school atmospheres, newly created opportunities for parent volunteerism, and increased parent participation in school events and activities, such as ESL classes.</i></p>	
<p>Year 2 Finding 3: <i>Teacher involvement in and buy-in to the process of identifying and addressing student needs varied across schools.</i></p>	<p>Year 1 Finding 3: <i>WAZ planning and implementation were supported by strong school principal and staff buy-in for the FSCS model.</i></p>
<p>Year 2 Finding 4: <i>Stakeholder perspectives varied on which strategies and structures best supported school-community partnerships, but individual schools continued to strengthen their partnerships across the board.</i></p>	
<p>Year 2 Finding 5: <i>District staff in Holyoke took a hands-off approach with the WAZ schools; however, staff at all three schools, and at the district level, expressed interest in having a designated district WAZ coordinator.</i></p>	<p>Year 1 Finding 4: <i>Holyoke used WAZ to support a part-time district liaison rather than a full-time district coordinator and established a Community of Practice among the WAZ schools as a vehicle for providing district support. In the absence of a formal system of district support, WAZ schools were relying heavily on one another for support.</i></p>

Further details regarding the Year 2 findings, and the evidence that supports them, follow.

**Finding 1: New initiatives and work groups were implemented at all three WAZ schools to address issues with student behavior and help improve school climate.**

In Year 1, student behavior posed a significant challenge in all three WAZ schools, and concerns about student behavior and behavior management arose in both survey and interview data. Some strategies to improve behavior management implemented in Year 1 yielded unexpected results and did not reduce problematic student behaviors. In Year 2, all three WAZ schools in Holyoke implemented new initiatives for managing behavior, although the specifics varied by school. As the largest school and furthest along in implementation, Peck had the most involved initiative, with many different pieces implemented in response to an increase in student behavior problems during the previous school year.

At Peck, school staff, including the school coordinator, principal, and teachers, all noted the difficulties. One said, “We had a rough year last year. . . Survey data showed that students weren’t feeling as respected [or] as safe as we would want students to be. With the faculty, the same thing.” In light of this, “It was really clear we needed to do something to not only update our behavioral response system, but really do something to strengthen relationships at the school.” In response, the school made changes including adding morning meetings and advisory groups for students, implementing the Unconditional Positive Regard (UPR) team, and focusing on consistency in behavior enforcement through “clearly articulated consequence ladders” that teachers created over the summer and revised on the basis of administration feedback. To create structures in which students could share problems and teachers could learn about issues their students were dealing with, Peck instituted morning meetings and advisory periods. A staff member described morning meetings as “a daily structure, an opportunity to strengthen and develop relationships and classroom community in the elementary school.” For students in kindergarten through fourth grade, “morning meeting allows kids to come in and ease their way into the normal day routine, allows them to process what’s happening at home or in the weekend or things that are bothering them.” For middle school students in grades 5 to 8, “advisory [groups] allow kids to see an advisor or a mentor once a week to discuss whatever is going on throughout the week.” The advisories were small groups consisting of seven to nine students with one or two adults. In addition, Peck split its original behavioral response work group into two groups in Year 2: “The Unconditional Positive Regard [UPR work group] is focusing on culture and climate work, and then the [Behavior Management work group] is looking at the systems and structures we have in place to increase safety through our protocols and systems.” The UPR work group was “a series of things focusing on strengthening relationships at the school,” including having groups of students lead the Peck Pledge each morning, while the Behavior Management work group met regularly and “really [focused] on what’s causing some of these issues. They [also tried] some various interventions.”

Results of these efforts at Peck were positive as “teachers and students [talked] about feeling. . . majorly different than [they] did last year, like a real change in a sense of calm and a sense of order and that sort of thing.” In addition, a school staff member noted, “I think the kids are behaving a lot better, which, for the most part, says they feel safe.” To ensure continued focus on these issues, a staff member reported that “we’ve also committed to having one full faculty meeting a month devoted to culture and climate.”

Kelly also separated its work groups in Year 2. Kelly began the school year with a single climate and culture work group, but staff soon realized that the participants had two different areas of interest related to the overall topic and split it into two separate work groups: one centered on “*procedures and protocols, making sure we’re consistent, we’re fluent*” and the other focused on “*the overall heart and spirit of the school.*” These would serve as the main groups guiding work on climate and culture in the next school year. Kelly also implemented uniforms, which many felt had a positive impact on behavior. As one interviewee noted, uniforms were implemented and “*an immediate change in the climate of the school happened. It gave a sense of formality.*”

At Morgan, the school decided “*to focus on behavior and...ownership by the staff and the students over creating that climate and culture*” in Year 2. It implemented Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) to address behavior problems. A school staff member said, “*I feel like we’ve made big strides in the climate and culture.*” A district official also noted that

Morgan made “a huge cultural shift, and that shift really took place from the release of last year’s mid-cycle review visit to this year around how do you stop externalizing reasons and making it be the function of somebody else’s responsibility and make it more about how to fix it in the school.” In addition, a district staff member noted hearing about “the teachers [at Morgan] feeling that they’re having more support to really learn... We’re seeing the staff become more active... and more aware and take it less as a separate system but really something they’re a part of.”

Despite the wide variety in initiatives implemented at the three schools, each WAZ school focused on addressing behavior issues as a way to help improve the climate and culture of the school. These diverse tactics all garnered success in Year 2, as evidenced by reports from staff at both the school and district levels about improved student behavior and school climate.

**Finding 2: Family engagement improved at all three WAZ schools, as demonstrated by reports of a more welcoming school atmospheres, newly created opportunities for parent volunteerism, and increased parent participation in school events and activities, such as ESL classes.**

Increasing family engagement was a high priority in Year 1. Despite some success, the data also revealed that barriers to family engagement still existed and parents had minimal involvement in school decision making. In Year 2, staff at all three WAZ schools reported an increase in parent participation in a variety of school-sponsored events and adult education classes. As one principal said, “Parent-family engagement, volunteerism, things of that nature has increased. We didn’t have that at all—zero last year.”

One school coordinator reported that parents had the opportunity to weigh in on decisions about school-sponsored events and that their requests directly influenced which events and support services the school offered. According to the coordinator, “Our families are telling us or having a say in what is actually happening...we’ve got a series of housing workshops that is actually across all three full service community schools, that was based on what families said they wanted.” Other support services offered by the schools included offering assistance in signing up for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) benefits, helping newly arrived families meet with medical personnel, and walking parents through the Individualized Education Plan (IEP) process.

In addition to trying to be responsive to specific requests, a staff member from one school explained that the schools strived to hold events at which *all* families would feel welcome, explaining, “In terms of engagement...we have huge events that draw many and then some that draw a few. For me the common denominator is making sure that families don’t feel anonymous in the process.” To create a welcoming environment in the schools, staff at all three schools had to address the language barrier that existed for their majority Spanish-speaking families. To address this issue, two of the schools offered parent ESL classes in the lobby of their buildings. This setup allowed school visitors, students, and teachers to see the parents learning and helped create a more positive view of the parents by some school staff. As one school coordinator explained, “Sometimes parents can get a bad rap. ‘They don’t care. The kids don’t have a coat. What’s wrong with their parents?’ To see that the parent is in school, I think that’s huge.” In addition, “Teachers are saying that the students are doing much better, having just been able to see mom in school. It’s been powerful.” Schools modeled some of the ESL classes on what the

children of the parents were learning. For example, “*If it is a unit on biographies, the parents were writing their own biographies and learning at the same time what their kids [were] learning about biography so that they could go home and help their kids with their homework with those terms that they were learning in English.*” Instead of offering ESL classes, the third school helped connect parents to ESL resources in the community.

All three schools also brought in parent volunteers, which meant more Spanish-speaking people at the schools. This, in turn, helped parents, who previously may have hesitated to visit the school for fear of not being understood, feel more comfortable at their child’s school. As one principal reported, “*[The parents] started helping out in the office. Because they don’t speak good English, it [was] really hard. Then we did some workshops to help them transition to work in the classrooms...[Our ELL coaches] got together and really empowered the parents to understand what it [was] going to be like in the classroom and what they [were] going to see.*” At another school, the school coordinator said, “*We have a parent volunteer program, so when parents walk in the door, they see our greeters right there. I think that makes them feel more at home that it’s...a place that’s more relatable to see that parent they can ask a question to [instead of] some administrators they may shy away from or feel like, ‘Oh, they don’t speak Spanish.’*”

The increase in family engagement at all three schools helped improve the climate of the schools. As one school coordinator noted:

*I feel like bringing our families and having them play really a lead role in changing the climate and the culture of the school in terms of being really visible, coming in and taking ESL classes and being in the classroom and volunteering in the classroom, I think that we have the tangible, physical results of that...It feels like there is a different feeling in the school now than there was at the beginning when we started working.*

District leaders also noticed the change in family engagement. One leader described the scene at one school: “To walk into Morgan and see parent volunteers on a regular basis and teachers sharing the teachers’ lounge is a cultural shift of seismic proportions. I mean, it’s just huge. Family literacy centers. There are parents in and out of that building all day long.” District leaders were impressed with the successes that WAZ schools saw in family engagement. One noted that the WAZ schools in particular “are doing a very good job at sustaining [family engagement].” According to one district leader, even if WAZ or the FSCS model went away, “I think the staff has seen the benefit of parent engagement...and if anything is sustainable, that will be.”

### **Finding 3: Teacher involvement in and buy-in to the process of identifying and addressing student needs varied across schools.**

The extent of teacher involvement in and buy-in to the process of identifying and addressing students’ needs varied across schools. This variation occurred despite the fact that all three WAZ schools used a team-based approach to identifying and addressing student needs that involved teachers in some way.

Peck, for example, continued to use the Referral and Results Review Team (RRRT) that had been established in Year 1 to identify and address student needs, and added a dedicated RRRT

coordinator—a social work intern from Smith College. Peck staff reported that having a central point of contact for the RRRT was key to the team’s ability to identify and address student needs in a timely fashion, and data collected from parents affirmed the responsiveness that school staff reported. One parent remarked, *“I’ve had a lot of good support here...once issues have arisen...they’ve addressed the issue in an appropriate way...not saying, ‘okay, we’re going to wait to attend to it later.’”* Although Peck staff reported general satisfaction with the RRRT process, the data collected in Year 2 suggested limited teacher involvement and some concerns about teacher buy-in. A teacher reported that once a referral form had been submitted and the RRRT received the action plan, *“It might say on the form refer to guidance, but that’s it. So are they actually being seen by guidance at that point, or is it going to be a week before guidance sees them based on their case load? So you don’t have a sense of that.”* For students whose needs have been adequately addressed, *“there is a process by which they discharge people...but I don’t think we usually hear about anything being closed out.”* Reports from teachers at Peck suggested that the work of the RRRT may not be visible or transparent enough. For example, one teacher reported that *“team meeting[s] in terms of the teacher, the guidance counselor, the administrator...It doesn’t seem like that really happens.”* Teacher reports on this were at odds with reports from other school stakeholders who stated that these happen weekly, suggesting a disconnect between the way in which teachers and other stakeholders experience and receive communication about this part of the process.

In Year 2, Morgan split its “Hub” team, which existed prior to WAZ, into two separate “Wrap Teams,” one for elementary and one for middle, to identify and address student needs. The Wrap Teams each consisted of *“the project manager, the family access and engagement coordinator, the school outreach worker...the school nurse, and the two counselors.”* In the absence of a coordinator like Peck’s team had, Morgan’s Wrap Team members were each responsible for bringing *“the data, or the evidence, or whatever they know about this particular student—whether it’s attendance or behavior”* on students who had been referred. During its meetings, the Wrap Team developed an action plan for each student and set a time to check back in on the student’s progress.

To increase teacher buy-in, and in direct response to feedback received in Year 1, the Wrap Teams at Morgan made specific efforts in Year 2 to better communicate with teachers regarding student action plans. A team member stated: *“The teacher gets the [referral form] back, the actual plan so they know.”* When asked about teacher buy-in, a Morgan school leader reported that *“it’s high. I think that teachers realize that we have more things in this school and more supports for students because we are a full-service community school.”* However, as a result of changes in school leadership, other school staff reported that there was still room for improvement in terms of teacher buy-in, with one leader reporting, *“I think that the messaging to the staff has been not hitting strong with why we’re doing this.”*

The Kelly team was modeled after systems in place at Morgan and Peck. As one school leader put it, *“Since we’re the baby full community service school, we get to borrow from our big sisters.”* Kelly’s student referral team included *“adjustment counselors, nurses, the parent coordinator, project manager, the two vice principals...teachers...the team leader for IEP...,”* as well as district attendance officers as needed. At Kelly, just like at the other schools, referrals came from *“any teacher or student or even parent”* and then once a week the team *“looks at all those referrals and triages them out and makes an action plan for that week.”* After the referral

team meetings, “one of the interns types up...what action step is going to happen...those go out to not only the referral team but those referring teachers, do they know that no one is just sitting on that information or they’re not left out of the loop.”

Data collected from teachers at Kelly revealed that they understood the process—a teacher gets a referral form and “there’s a team that meets that’s made up of administrators, and the nurse, and a bunch of [others]”—and appreciated the school’s efforts to involve teachers. School leaders at Kelly engaged teachers in the process from the start, so, as one said, “Everyone felt like they had buy-in.” According to one teacher, when asked about the process for follow-up on student referrals, “There’s such an open line of communication.” Another Kelly teacher described her belief in and commitment to the WAZ initiative:

*I’m a convert...I was like this is just not going to work, point blank...There are too many roadblocks...[But] I’ve seen it happen with so many kids in my class...It’s just been, honestly, an amazing thing...We define our students by a lot more than whether or not they passed the test...And now we have a lot of resources to help us and help take care of those parts of the students we weren’t able to take care of before.*

When asked specifically about teacher buy-in to the referral process at Kelly in Year 2, school leaders, external support providers, and teachers themselves all reported that teacher buy-in “definitely has grown” and “there are more people enthusiastic about it.” Although all three WAZ schools used a team-based approach to identifying and addressing student needs that involved teachers to some extent, the data collected in Year 2 suggested that the understanding of, involvement in, and buy-in to the process were strongest at Kelly.

**Finding 4: Stakeholder perspectives varied on which strategies and structures best supported school-community partnerships, but individual schools continued to strengthen their partnerships across the board.**

In Year 2, although coordinators succeeded in sustaining and growing community partnerships, opinions differed on which approaches best supported this collaboration. All three WAZ schools reported using work groups to structure their collaboration with community partners. In these work groups, community partners would self-select into one of several priority areas focused on pressing service needs, such as basic needs, behavior management, family engagement, classroom instructional partnerships, and access (at Peck only), and then would develop shared goals during regular work group meetings.

Although all schools utilized this work group model, two out of three schools reported that this strategy had limitations. One school coordinator voiced concern that the work group model created the wrong dynamic and caused service providers to overstep their bounds: “I don’t need [service providers’] voices to direct what we’re going to do. The data is telling us what we got to do...I don’t need them to tell me what we need to do with their services.” The same coordinator felt that the monthly frequency of work group meetings was counterproductive; partners could be using that time to provide services, and the frequency was unsustainable given the partners’ busy schedules. However, the coordinator conceded that it was helpful to have “a dedicated group of people” focused on addressing students’ nonacademic needs. A second school coordinator recalled a time when one provider was eager to partner with the school, but the provider did not fit neatly within the established work groups. The coordinator described feeling “stressed out

*about we can't do it because [a FSCS consultant] said it doesn't fit into [our defined areas]. I'm like, but he's great for our school, this is awesome."* However, staff at a third school did not cite any drawbacks to using the work group model. Specifically, staff at that school felt that the work group model had been effective in integrating partners into the school's work. The school coordinator described how *"a lot of community partners will come and enhance and work with teachers rather than bring their own new stuff...that was directly a result of the workgroup that made that process more streamlined and made sure that when they came in they understood our students' needs."*

Perspectives on best practices with respect to community partners varied not only across schools, but also across district leadership. For example, in Year 1, interviews revealed that stakeholders were interested in a district-level coalition to facilitate stronger partnerships, but in Year 2, district leaders had conflicting views on this ongoing need. When one district leader was asked if there had been discussion on creating a district-level coalition, the interviewee replied, *"That's just it, there's been a lot of discussion...there is not a lot of buy-in for either at the district or the community agencies. It sounds good, but practically it's—each agency competes against each other."* However, another district leader endorsed the idea, stating that *"there is an awareness that we need to have a district-wide coalition"* and that someone needs to *"facilitate and run and oversee this sort of district coalition."* Changes in leadership, however, complicated things. One district leader said, *"I think that the reason that we didn't establish [a districtwide coalition] is because the discussion in the planning meetings was we need to know the direction the district is moving in."*

There was a lack of consensus within the district about whether a dedicated WAZ staff person at the district level needed to oversee school-community partnerships. When one district leader was asked whether the district was helping schools develop relationships with community partners, the leader replied that the district was pursuing a *"school-based approach...more of a hands-off [approach]."* In contrast, another district leader saw a need to assign a district-level person who could *"coordinate all of the pieces of what's happening...to facilitate where community-wide partners can and can't fit in to the practice, to determine if this community partner doesn't have the capacity."* Opinions also diverged with respect to formalizing community partnerships. One district administrator expressed reluctance to formalize school-community partnerships, saying *"If the district is to oversee [school-community partnerships] or to assist in that, it's more of a, 'How can we assist you?' role as opposed to, let's come up with MOUs and formalize it."* However, one school coordinator specifically requested more support for formalizing partnerships because the coordinator found that some partners were unreliable in the absence of this obligation.

Despite differing views about the best strategies for sustaining and growing community partnerships, all school coordinators reported that they had expanded partnerships within their schools during Year 2 of WAZ implementation. One school coordinator affirmed that their relationships had been *"steadily strong"* throughout the year, but said they were continuing to nurture their relationships. Another school coordinator said of their partners, *"It was amazing because some of them have been so committed...that's the kind of shift that I'm noticing, that it's been more hands-on and 'what do you need' and 'yes, we want to help out.'"* The third school coordinator expressed that several relationships had grown over the past year. This school was also singled out by a district administrator as being particularly successful in recruiting strong

partners. Overall, school-community partnerships continued to evolve since implementing WAZ, but there was little consensus about how best to engage and maintain community partners moving forward.

**Finding 5: District staff in Holyoke took a hands-off approach with the WAZ schools; however, staff at all three schools, and at the district level, expressed interest in having a designated district WAZ coordinator.**

The data collected in Year 1 revealed that Holyoke used WAZ funds to support a part-time district liaison rather than a full-time WAZ district coordinator and established a Community of Practice (CoP) among the WAZ schools as a vehicle for providing district support. The FSCS managers at each school who oversaw WAZ implementation comprised the CoP and used the CoP as their primary venue for sharing experiences, asking questions, and providing support to each other with regards to FSCS implementation. In the absence of a formal system of district support, WAZ schools reported relying heavily on one another for support in Year 1, and some expressed a desire for more dedicated district support in the form of a full-time staff person. Data collected in Year 2 revealed that the generally hands-off approach to district support established in Year 1 continued in Year 2; however, staff at all three schools and at the district level expressed interest in having a dedicated WAZ coordinator for Holyoke.

When asked about the ways the district supported WAZ implementation in Year 2, one district leader and staff from one of the schools pointed to the district’s commitment to school autonomy regarding implementation of WAZ and the FSCS model as the primary way the district supported WAZ schools. In other words, the district supported WAZ schools by allowing schools to implement the FSCS model in any way they saw fit. As one district leader explained, “*We are supporting them in a way to let them flourish, to give them access, the readiness and the leeway to do some certain things.*” A teacher in one school reported that the district gave them “*some autonomy regarding our faculty meeting time and our PD time*” not granted to non-WAZ schools. One district leader pointed to support for planning activities, both at Kelly and for future FSCS schools, as another major way the district supported WAZ implementation in Year 2. One school leader reported that as part of the planning activities, district staff facilitated focus groups at non-WAZ schools across Holyoke to gauge interest in expanding the FSCS model to additional schools; however, staff from another school reported that the Peck FSCS I manager, not district staff, facilitated many of these.

Staff from all three schools referred to the CoP as the primary vehicle for district support in Year 2, and a district staff member indicated that “*the director of student services has been sitting on [the CoP meetings].*” However, staff at two schools reported that the district’s involvement with the CoP was “*intermittent*” and that district staff are “*not there all the time.*”

Given the district’s interest in sustaining and potentially expanding the WAZ initiative through the FSCS model, all school and district staff recognized the need for a full-time district-level WAZ coordinator. According to one school leader, “*I just don’t feel like there’s anyone at the district level driving the work.*” Another school leader reported that district support had lessened in Year 2, stating that last year district support “*was fuzzy at best and this year it’s just become almost invisible.*” At the district level, one interviewee observed that “*there’s a need for a district-level position to be able to coordinate all of the pieces of what’s happening... There has*



*to be somebody who's not the principal of the school...to oversee and get all of those pieces together."* School staff echoed these sentiments, with one school leader noting, *"We need to clearly assign someone to be proactively thinking about both how to strengthen the development of this work at the three full service community schools and then how to expand this work."* In lieu of a district coordinator, an interviewee reported that Peck staff took responsibility for *"facilitating the district full service community school [focus groups], planning team meetings, [and] being the point person for the Wraparound Zone district coordinator meetings."* One school leader, when asked about the Peck FSCS manager, said, *"She's representing the district a lot at statewide things. It's like she's the de facto WAZ coordinator for the district."*

However, given the district's commitment to school autonomy, one district leader expressed concerns about hiring a district coordinator, stating, *"If we do get a full service community guru, I hope that person...puts guidelines across the district but doesn't instill one way to do it."* As one school staff member put it, Holyoke needs *"a district mother who just loves all her three children, and each one she loves equally and uniquely because they're all so special."*

Some district staff wanted to bolster district systems of support even further by making Holyoke an FSCS district, not just a district with FSCS schools. According to one district leader, *"I think that we need to have a Wraparound district. I think that the full-service community school model fits well, but...I would like to see the model replicated across the district and be a district initiative rather than a school-by-school initiative."*

## **Summary**

In Year 2 of the WAZ Initiative, Holyoke continued to build on and broaden the existing FSCS work in three schools, and schools made progress in several WAZ priority areas. For example, in terms of climate and culture, the three WAZ schools implemented new initiatives in Year 2 to address lingering student behavior issues, and reports from all three schools indicated that these initiatives had been successful. In addition, schools continued to increase family engagement. According to school staff, these efforts taken together helped improve WAZ school climate and culture overall. In terms of identifying and addressing students' needs, data collected revealed that teacher buy-in to the process varied, and the barriers to teacher buy-in that had been identified in Year 1, including uncertainty about the district's future and the possibility of state takeover, remained relevant in Year 2.

In terms of community coalitions, individual WAZ schools continued to develop partnerships with community organizations; however, data collected suggested that little to no progress was made in terms of developing the coordinated district-level partnership described in the Year 2 WAZ plan. In terms of district systems of support, Holyoke operated without a full-time WAZ district coordinator, and relied instead on a part-time "district liaison" to facilitate coordination of activities across WAZ schools. . Although FSCS managers and other school staff appreciated the support provided, staff at all schools indicated that a full-time district coordinator was needed to adequately support the WAZ initiative and to expand the FSCS model to additional Holyoke schools. The data revealed that little to no progress was made in Year 2 in developing district systems of support, and school staff at all levels reported relying primarily on one another, through the formal CoP and other less formal avenues, for support.



## Profile C: Lawrence

This profile describes progress made in Lawrence during Year 2 of the WAZ initiative and presents key findings related to early indicators of change with respect to WAZ implementation. The data sources used to inform this profile are (a) stakeholder interviews conducted during the spring of 2013 and (b) WAZ-related documents provided by the district and schools. The analysis of these data was informed by the findings that emerged in Report 2 on conditions and supports during Year 1 of WAZ implementation. For example, researchers paid particular attention to analyzing the extent to which progress did or did not occur on issues that were identified as challenges or potential early indicators of success during Year 1.

### WAZ Schools and Planned Strategies in Year 2

Lawrence implemented WAZ in three schools in Year 1 (Arlington Elementary, Arlington Middle, and Humanities & Leadership Development High School). Arlington Elementary and Arlington Middle were selected to participate because they had already started to build the foundation for the wraparound work through a Promise Neighborhoods Planning Grant, and the schools were located in a “*needy section of town*,” according to a district administrator and WAZ application documents. Humanities & Leadership Development High School (HLD High) was selected because, as one district administrator put it, “*Our superintendent truly believed that that was truly the best one [of the high schools] to place it in and have it flourish and then we can move it to the others.*” In addition, according to WAZ application documents, staff members at HLD High School had seen an increase in the number of students with mental health issues that affected their ability to consistently be successful in the academic setting. The staff members therefore believed a need existed for the school to support more of these needs. These three schools continued to implement WAZ during Year 2 of the grant.

Overall, the Year 2 WAZ plan for Lawrence differed only slightly from the Year 1 plan (see Table 7). In most instances, the Year 2 plan focused on building on the strategies in the Year 1 plan and included new details about how to implement those strategies. With regard to the first priority area, Climate and Culture, whereas the Year 1 plan focused on implementing PBIS at all schools, the Year 2 plan focused on implementing PBIS at the high school level specifically. In addition, the Year 2 plan indicated that professional development specifically on student behavioral issues would be provided to parents and staff at all levels. For the second priority area, Identify and Address Student Needs, the Year 2 plan focused on the continued use of teams (Student Support Teams) and tools (Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire) developed in Year 1. In addition, the Year 2 plan indicated that existing systems for identifying academic and social-emotional needs would be linked to “*formulate an accurate assessment of the level of need*” among students. Plans to implement a school-based case management system in Year 1 carried over to the Year 2 plan; however, in Year 2, the plan indicated that this system would be monitored and supported at the district level. With regard to the third priority area, Community Coalition, the Year 2 plan indicated continued and expanded use of the Agency Partnership Assistance Network (APAN) and existing school-based agency partnerships. Areas of expansion specified in the Year 2 plan included having partners provide after-school and evening programs and professional development for support staff. Plans for creating an electronic bulletin board and consistent referral system for support services did not change from Year 1 to Year 2. For the fourth priority area, District Systems of Support, the Year 2 plan focused on the continued use of

district-level support and the same strategies included in Year 1 (e.g., review existing support systems for redundancy and communicate changes in the system). In addition, the Year 2 plan indicated that the district would “*facilitate the utilization of school level data, including discipline, academic, and survey data to identify trends and alternate interventions.*”

**Table 7. Comparison of Year 1 and Year 2 WAZ plans for Lawrence, by priority improvement area**

Priority Improvement Area	Year 1 WAZ Plan	Year 2 WAZ Plan
Climate and Culture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Survey staff, students, and parents about climate and culture and analyze data to assess overall needs.</li> <li>▪ Introduce or reintroduce PBS to each school.</li> <li>▪ Have the district team and the consultant monitor and support school-based PBS teams.</li> <li>▪ Provide professional development to staff and parents on key issues identified in survey data.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Implement PBIS at all WAZ schools using Tier 1 and 2 intervention strategies, primarily at HLD High School. Other schools have already implemented PBIS.</li> <li>▪ Provide professional development to staff and parents on the behavioral issues that are affecting the school’s culture and climate.</li> <li>▪ Re-introduce PBS to each school staff and continue to support representative teams in each school to work with May Institute Consultants to develop and implement school-based plans.</li> </ul>
Identify and Address Student Needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Establish school-based support teams to address overall wellness issues.</li> <li>▪ Conduct annual social-emotional or behavioral or health screening for all students.</li> <li>▪ Assess the interventions available at each school for addressing SHE needs and bolster options as needed.</li> <li>▪ Implement a school-based case management system.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Continue using the identified screening tool in addition to linking existing systems of identification, both academic and social-emotional, to formulate an accurate assessment of the level of need among individual/groups of students.</li> <li>▪ Continue using Student Support Teams to focus supports on the overall wellness of individual students and to ensure that student success plans are being implemented.</li> <li>▪ Implement a school-based case management system that is monitored and supported at the district level.</li> </ul>
Community Coalition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Expand the Agency Partnership Assistance Network</li> <li>▪ Formalize partnerships with the schools through an MOU.</li> <li>▪ Create an electronic bulletin board where information on services can be shared.</li> <li>▪ Create a consistent referral system</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Continue using and expand APAN and continue supporting the current school-based agency partnerships while expanding the services to include after-school and evening programs specific to the needs assessment in each school site.</li> <li>▪ Expand agency partnerships to include professional development opportunities</li> </ul>

Priority Improvement Area	Year 1 WAZ Plan	Year 2 WAZ Plan
	for support services.	for school support staff. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Create an electronic bulletin board where information on available community services can be posted and updated regularly for easy access by school personnel.</li> <li>▪ Create a consistent referral system for support services within the system and through community agencies.</li> </ul>
District Systems of Support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Establish a district leadership team to spearhead and monitor implementation efforts.</li> <li>▪ Review existing support systems for redundancy and needed revisions.</li> <li>▪ Communicate changes in the support service access and delivery system and train school personnel on the new approach.</li> <li>▪ Review the current wellness programs for vertical alignment and fidelity of implementation.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Continue district-level support and collaboration for school-based coordinators, school principals, and district-level staff.</li> <li>▪ Facilitate the use of school-level data, including discipline, academic, and survey data, to identify trends and alternative interventions.</li> <li>▪ Review existing support systems for redundancy and needed revisions to develop a comprehensive approach</li> <li>▪ Communicate changes in the support service access and delivery system to stakeholders; train school personnel on this new comprehensive approach.</li> </ul>

## Year 2 Key Findings

AIR’s data collection during Year 2 revealed five overall findings related to the implementation of WAZ in Lawrence during the second year:

1. The intensive case manager (ICM) played a key role in the implementation of WAZ in Lawrence.
2. Although stakeholders reported that PBIS had been successfully implemented at Arlington Middle, reports from both district and school leaders suggested that PBIS had not yet been successfully implemented at Arlington Elementary or HLD High School.
3. Staff at all levels described the Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ), along with regular team meetings, as a productive method for *identifying* student needs. However, district staff and partner agencies reported challenges related to *addressing* student needs, particularly in terms of limited staff expertise and scheduling conflicts.
4. The district continued to rely on the APAN and successfully expanded community-school partnerships in Year 2 by incorporating community agency-led professional development for WAZ school support staff. However, the district struggled to accomplish other goals related to the Community Coalition priority improvement area.

5. School-level staff did not perceive support for WAZ at the district level from anyone other than the WAZ district coordinator.

Table 8 presents the Lawrence Year 2 findings together with related Lawrence findings from Year 1. Data gathered in Year 2 revealed that the conditions in Lawrence in Year 2 remained very similar to the conditions that existed in Year 1. For example, the ICMs, along with the district WAZ coordinator, continued to play a key role in implementing WAZ (Year 2 Finding #1). The finding that the ICM is a driving force for WAZ implementation – particularly with respect to addressing the needs of students and families - is consistent with the Year 1 finding that the ICM played a crucial role in implementing WAZ strategies (Year 1 Finding #1). The existing infrastructure of community-district relationships, bolstered specifically by APAN, continued to provide efficient and effective avenues for WAZ schools to develop and maintain strong partnerships with community organizations (Year 2 Finding #4). The role of APAN as a facilitator of partnerships and a provider of professional development is similar to the Year 1 finding that Lawrence entered the grant with an infrastructure for district-community partnerships in place (Year 1 Finding #2).

Data gathered in Year 2 also revealed that during Year 2 of WAZ implementation, Lawrence was experiencing many of the same challenges as in Year 1. For example, district leaders and school staff at all levels continued to report anxiety related to the Level 5 designation, or state takeover (Year 1 Finding #4). With regard to the elementary school, in particular, where an educational management organization (EMO) had already taken over some grades, one district leader noted, *“It’s very difficult to implement anything school-wide when the school doesn’t know what their future is.”* This made it particularly challenging to gain buy-in for PBIS (Year 2 Finding #2). With EMOs taking over more and more schools in Lawrence, district leaders worried that getting teacher buy-in for the WAZ initiative would continue to be a challenge.

However, both district- and school-level staff also explained that in addition to WAZ, the district takeover and associated turnaround plans had made improving school climate and culture a top priority in all Lawrence schools. According to one district leader, *“There is truly a focus on making [the school] a welcoming environment.”* At all levels, school staff reported that any implementation of PBIS, even extremely minimal implementation, had had a positive impact on school climate and culture. Although staff acknowledged that some behavioral issues were still apparent, concerns about school climate and culture that existed in Year 1 (Year 1 Finding #3) had diminished overall.

**Table 8. Crosswalk of Year 1 and Year 2 Lawrence Findings**

Year 2 Findings	Year 1 Related Findings
Year 2 Finding 1: <i>The ICM played a key role in the implementation of WAZ in Lawrence.</i>	Year 1 Finding 1: <i>The role of the ICM was key to the implementation of the Lawrence Wraparound Zone strategies.</i>

Year 2 Findings	Year 1 Related Findings
<p>Year 2 Finding 2:  <i>Although stakeholders reported that PBIS had been successfully implemented at Arlington Middle, reports from both district and school leaders suggested that PBIS had not yet been successfully implemented at Arlington Elementary or HLD High School.</i></p>	<p>Year 1 Finding 3:  <i>Stakeholders in Lawrence had concerns about school climate and culture.</i></p> <p>Year 1 Finding 4:  <i>Anxiety among staff relating to the Level 5 designation interfered with staff willingness to support or implement the WAZ initiative.</i></p>
<p>Year 2 Finding 3:  <i>Staff at all levels described the SDQ, along with regular team meetings, as a productive method for identifying student needs. However, district staff and partner agencies reported challenges related to addressing student needs, particularly in terms of limited staff expertise and scheduling conflicts.</i></p>	
<p>Year 2 Finding 4:  <i>The district continued to rely on the APAN and successfully expanded agency partnerships in Year 2 by incorporating agency-led professional development for WAZ school support staff. However, the district struggled to accomplish other goals related to the Community Coalition priority improvement area.</i></p>	<p>Year 1 Finding 2:  <i>Lawrence entered into its WAZ grant with a strong infrastructure of community-district relationships (e.g., APAN).</i></p>
<p>Year 2 Finding 5:  <i>School-level staff did not perceive support for WAZ at the district level from anyone other than the WAZ district coordinator.</i></p>	

Further details regarding the Year 2 findings, and the evidence that supports them, follow.

**Finding 1: The ICM played a key role in the implementation of WAZ in Lawrence.**

In Year 1, stakeholders reported that the role of the ICM was key for implementing WAZ strategies in Lawrence. In Year 2, interviewees continued to report that the ICM played an essential role, particularly in terms of identifying and addressing student needs. When discussing WAZ, almost all stakeholders interviewed at both district and school levels talked about the ICM as integral to helping families and students. A teacher at the high school level explained that teachers just don't "have the resources and connections [the ICM] does." As one district leader explained, "And I think every principal would agree, that position [the ICM] is vital to the work." In addition, community partners reported that the ICM was invaluable for the

communication and coordination necessary to streamline their ability to provide services. According to one provider, having the ICM *“makes a huge difference in how quickly we can help the people access care...If we didn’t have that, this probably wouldn’t be as successful.”*

All three ICMs interviewed reported that both school leaders and other school staff understood their roles; however, each also reported doing work outside the scope of the official WAZ role, suggesting that the ICM’s role may need to be further clarified for school staff. For example, one ICM explained that teachers would occasionally ask for help making copies or covering the classroom, which the ICM noted is *“not in my job title.”* Another ICM said, *“I kind of get rolled into doing a little bit of everything, so sometimes I have to stop myself and say, well that’s not what I’m supposed to be doing. Let me direct you to the right person.”*

**Finding 2: Although stakeholders reported that PBIS had been successfully implemented at Arlington Middle, reports from both district and school leaders suggested that PBIS had not yet been successfully implemented at Arlington Elementary or HLD High School.**

Data collected in Year 2 revealed that little, if any, progress had been made with regard to the implementation of PBIS despite Lawrence’s Year 2 goal of implementing PBIS at all WAZ schools, particularly HLD High School. Staff at both school and district levels reported that PBIS had successfully been implemented at Arlington Middle, despite unsuccessful efforts to implement PBIS at Arlington Middle prior to WAZ. Multiple school staff members indicated, as one said, *“The PBIS system really works,”* and a district leader noted that with regard to PBIS, *“Arlington Middle is doing very well.”* At Arlington Elementary, where PBIS was first introduced in Year 1 of WAZ, there was a disconnect between what the district reported and what school-level staff reported. When asked about the implementation of PBIS, a school-level staff member reported that *“the school has implemented [PBIS] beautifully”* and that staff were fully on board. In contrast, district leaders reported little progress had been made in Year 2. As one said, *“With the EMO taking over part of the school, it’s really having a difficult time getting [PBIS] off the ground.”* According to one district leader, *“The core components of PBIS are there, but it really is not going to move forward without knowing what is in store for that school.”*

HLD High School did not have PBIS previously and began implementing PBIS during Year 2 of WAZ. According to a staff member at the high school, *“We have a ways to go with [PBIS]”* A district leader explained that PBIS is *“easier to roll out in elementary and middle school than a high school,”* and HLD leaders indicated they continued to struggle with teacher buy-in. According to one school leader, *“There’s a lot of stuff coming from the state[related to the receivership and the district improvement plan] that the teachers and the principals have to make sure that they take care of, and right now, I don’t think [PBIS is] 100 percent priority.”* Another school leader reported that the school would continue to work to ensure *“that all teachers and student understand the mission and the vision of PBIS.”* Despite continued implementation challenges, staff at the high school level reported that even partial implementation of PBIS had, as one interviewee said, *“created a deeper understanding of the importance of prevention [and] ... of recognizing positive behaviors.”* According to one teacher, *“PBIS has made you think about more positive interactions,”* and another teacher said, *“It’s been a huge step to make a positive change.”* However, a teacher interviewed also reported that the commitment to PBIS *“depends on the day and how much energy the staff member has.”*



According to staff at the district level, there were concerns that t[he] HLD teachers had not fully bought into PBIS.

**Finding 3: Staff at all levels described the Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ), along with regular team meetings, as a productive method for *identifying* student needs. However, district staff and partner agencies reported challenges related to *addressing* student needs, particularly in terms of limited staff expertise and scheduling conflicts.**

All WAZ schools continued to use the SDQ in Year 2, and both WAZ coordinators and district-level staff reported using data from the SDQ to identify students in need of support. According to one district leader, “*Ninety percent of the time the students that do come up as considered in need were already known about...but it also flags other kids.*” Another district leader explained that the SDQ “*is important because that gives you a very quick, easy glance early in the beginning of the year about who you are monitoring especially if they’re new students.*” One district leader suggested using the SDQ midyear as well to identify additional students who may have come into the system after the SDQ was administered.

In addition to data from the SDQ, all ICMs reported getting student referrals from a variety of stakeholders, including teachers, parents, administrators, counselors, and even the students themselves, and discussing student needs during regular team meetings. In two schools, both school leaders and ICMs reported that referrals were typically handled by a team comprising the principal, the counselor, coaches, nurses, and any other relevant staff. In the other school, the school leader indicated using a team approach, but the ICM reported handling referrals himself, without much involvement from other school staff. In all schools, the ICM, the student support team, or both were involved and informed before any services were provided to the student. The stakeholders interviewed did not suggest that the SDQ data were being linked to existing systems of identifying academic and social-emotional needs, as described in the Year 2 plan.

All three ICMs reported being responsible for following up with students referred for services, and two ICMs indicated they do this weekly. Each ICM reported tracking his or her referrals and providing this information to the WAZ district coordinator; however, no standard tracking process seemed to exist and each ICM reported using his or her own tracking methods. For example, one ICM described using a binder for all referrals, another used a binder along with electronic files for each student served, and another described using a log and “*bright sticky notes*” to track referrals and follow up. According to one ICM, this information was used to prepare a monthly report for the WAZ district coordinator of “*how many visits you’ve had with certain people...how many cases you’ve closed and how many cases you’ve opened, how many outside referrals.*”

In Year 1, interview data suggested that although WAZ schools were doing a good job *identifying* student needs, there were challenges connecting students to services, particularly as a result of language barriers and transportation issues. In Year 2, the concerns about addressing student needs related more to ICM staffing issues and service provider scheduling challenges than language barriers and transportation issues. One district leader indicated that the ability to address student needs was “*dependent upon staff*” and the ICM must be able to “*maneuver the system and have background knowledge*” of the relevant agencies, including the Department of Child and Families and the Department of Youth Services, so that he or she would know “*when a*

*child need to be referred out and...how to prioritize.”* Unfortunately, district staff worried that one ICM did not meet these criteria. In addition, two community partners indicated that scheduling time to meet with students was a common challenge and limited the number of students the providers were able to serve. When asked for suggestions for improving the process through which the agency works with the school to provide student services, one provider noted, *“It would be great if we had a little more access to the kids [during the school day].”* Another provider agreed that the most challenging thing about working with schools to meet students’ nonacademic needs, *“is scheduling. Because the kids have to be in their classes during the core academic time.”*

**Finding 4: The district continued to rely on the APAN and successfully expanded community-school partnerships in Year 2 by incorporating community agency-led professional development for WAZ school support staff. However, the district struggled to accomplish other goals related to the Community Coalition priority improvement area.**

The APAN continued to play a key role in Year 2 as the primary venue for school and district leaders, as well as community partners, to share information about student needs and available community resources. One district staff member reported that the APAN continued to grow: *“As word gets out this is a good place to come and...share what’s happening with your agency.”* Two of the partner agencies described the APAN as a helpful venue for gathering and sharing information, and a staff member from one agency explained that unlike *“these types of meetings in other school districts, where there’s a lot of providers in there and there tends to be a little bit of competition...it’s a very different culture here in Lawrence...It’s been a very good experience.”* The same partner agency staff member also explained that the APAN was particularly helpful during the past school year for communicating changes related to the receivership.

As part of the Year 2 plan goals, the district indicated that existing agency partnerships would be expanded to include professional development for support staff at the WAZ schools. District leaders reported that each partner agency wrote a proposal for professional development opportunities and the district ultimately created a calendar including *“thirty hours of professional development in a variety of areas”* for support staff. One community partner reported that attendance for the professional development *“was terrific. We had anywhere from 80 to 100 [participants] ...school psychologists, guidance counselors, nurses, case managers.”* Another community partner reported similar attendance for his agency’s professional development offerings and remarked that they *“would’ve loved to see more teachers at these professional development trainings”* in addition to support staff.

Plans to expand the partnerships to include after-school and evening programs, however, were not as far along at the time of data collection. An interviewee from one of the partner agencies that had started providing these additional services for families explained that *“it’s very challenging in this community”* to get families to attend after-school or evening programs. Another community partner reported similar issues with attendance. District leaders reported that they had still not been able to establish the electronic bulletin board described in both the Year 1 and Year 2 plans. One attributed the delay in part to the focus on *“individual autonomous school plans”* in lieu of districtwide initiatives in the Receiver’s Turnaround Plan. Staff at both school and district levels also reported that they were still struggling to implement a common referral

form across partner agencies, and the lack of consistency in referral processes continued to be a challenge. According to one district leader, there was always some reason the proposed common referral form “*won’t work for this group or it won’t work for that group.*” Another district leader noted, “*They’re working on it, but I can’t see it happening anytime soon.*” As a result, the referral process continued to be a challenge for some schools; according to one district leader, one partner agency “*had a really extensive intake process that at the start of the school year was a hindrance on getting students serviced*” because it often involved back and forth between the ICM, the parents, and the agency just to get the appropriate paperwork completed. One community partner reported, however, that at least having the referral forms come from a single point person at the school—the ICM—“*made the referral process easier.*”

**Finding 5: School-level staff did not perceive support for WAZ at the district level from anyone other than the WAZ district coordinator.**

District leaders reported widespread understanding of and buy-in to the WAZ initiative at the district level. For example, according to one district leader, “*People here are clear on what it [WAZ] means and what’s happening,*” as a result of regular district-level team meetings where updates on WAZ were shared. Another district leader indicated that the WAZ coordinator kept him “*pretty well informed.*” One district staff member, other than the WAZ coordinator, also reported conducting regular school check-ins to stay informed about what was happening in the WAZ schools. In addition, one district leader indicated that each WAZ school had a Central Office (district) liaison who “*gets you whatever information you need to be successful.*”

Despite these reports from district-level interviewees, staff in two of the three schools felt an overall lack of support for WAZ by staff at the district level. Data collected from staff at the third school were less conclusive; one school leader reported feeling content with the level of support received from the district while another was not sure who at the district level was involved aside from the WAZ coordinator. According to one school leader, the WAZ coordinator was great, but “*we don’t see other support...maybe it’s not a priority...There’s a lot going on.*” When asked who at the district level knew what the school was doing in terms of WAZ, another school leader responded, “*I don’t know who has knowledge and who doesn’t...but I do expect them [Central Office] to know what’s going on or at least have a cursory knowledge and understanding of what our goals are and what the expectations are and what the support is that we need.*” Teachers also perceived a lack of support from the district. When asked to what extent they thought district leaders supported the WAZ initiative, one teacher said, “*I don’t think they do anything. I know that sounds harsh, but...everything now is academic, academic, academic.*” Other teachers in the group explained that district staff did not understand their students’ needs or the extent to which the ICM helped their school. School staff reported that instead of supporting the WAZ initiative, the district seemed more focused on academics and test scores than on social and emotional well-being, and they attributed this focus in part to the state takeover.

All WAZ school coordinators, however, reported continued satisfaction with the level of support provided by the WAZ district coordinator. WAZ school coordinators reported meeting regularly with the district coordinator and appreciated how available and responsive he was. School leaders at all levels also recognized that the district coordinator provided valuable support directly to WAZ school coordinators. According to one school leader, “*Just being accessible and having the meetings with the ICMs*” were the key supports the WAZ district coordinator

provided last year. When asked about the quality and strength of district leadership for the WAZ strategies by anyone other than the district coordinator, however, one WAZ school coordinator remarked, “*I don’t see much.*”

In terms of Year 2 plans for this priority area, it was not clear whether district staff addressed any of their stated goals beyond continued district-level support for the ICM. When asked, respondents made no mention of specific efforts in Year 2 to review existing support systems for redundancy, communicate changes in the support service access and delivery system to stakeholders, or further train school personnel on the comprehensive approach.

## **Summary**

In Year 2 of the WAZ initiative, Lawrence continued to implement many of the strategies identified in its Year 1 plan and elaborated in its Year 2 plan. As indicated by the data collected, some strategies were more successfully implemented in Year 2 than others. In terms of climate and culture, PBIS had been fully implemented at Arlington Middle, but Arlington Elementary and HLD High School continued to struggle with PBIS implementation. Uncertainty about the future of Arlington Middle, given the partial takeover by an EMO, and lack of buy-in from the HLD High School teachers continued to hinder PBIS implementation.

In terms of identifying and addressing students’ needs, all three schools continued to use the SDQ in Year 2 to identify student needs and reported increased use of regular team meetings for discussing student needs. However, district leaders and partner agencies reported room for improvement with regard to addressing student needs, particularly in terms of limited staff expertise and scheduling conflicts. In terms of community coalitions, Lawrence continued to rely on the APAN in Year 2 as its primary means of fostering connections and developing collaborative relationships with community partners and successfully expanded agency partnerships to include professional development opportunities for support staff at schools. At the time of data collection, Lawrence had not yet been able to create an electronic bulletin board where information on available community services could be posted or to implement a common referral form to be used across partner agencies, as outlined in both the Year 1 and Year 2 plans. In terms of district systems of support, ICMs continued to feel supported by the WAZ coordinator in Year 2. However, ICMs as well as other school staff perceived a lack of support from anyone at the district level other than the WAZ coordinator. Aside from the continued support for the ICM, which staff at all levels observed, it was not clear from the data collected that Lawrence had made any progress toward the other Year 2 goals related to this priority area.

## Profile D: Lynn

This profile describes progress made in Lynn during Year 2 of the WAZ initiative and presents key findings related to early indicators of change with respect to WAZ implementation. The data sources used to inform this profile are (a) stakeholder interviews conducted during the spring of 2013 and (b) WAZ-related documents provided by the district and schools. The analysis of these data was informed by the findings that emerged in Report 2 on conditions and supports during Year 1 of WAZ. For example, researchers paid particular attention to analyzing the extent to which progress did or did not occur on issues that were identified as challenges or potential early indicators of success during Year 1.

### WAZ Schools and Planned Strategies

Lynn received a WAZ planning grant in 2011–12 and selected four schools to participate in the initiative (Cobbet, Connery, and Harrington Elementary Schools and Marshall Middle School). These schools were selected because they were Level 4 schools (Connery and Harrington) or Level 3 schools that were close to Level 4 status (Cobbet and Marshall). In addition, Cobbet and Harrington are feeder schools for Marshall, and the district felt that including these schools in the initiative could provide a level of continuity in WAZ-related practices for students as they moved from elementary to middle school. During Year 2, Lynn moved into its first year of WAZ implementation.

Because Year 1 was a planning year for Lynn, the strategies outlined in its WAZ plan were not organized by the four priority areas, as they were in other districts. Instead, the Year 1 plan outlined activities that would lay the groundwork for implementing WAZ across all priority areas. The components of the Year 1 plan focused on (1) generating buy-in and support for the initiative, (2) establishing planning committees and working groups, (3) gathering information about community organizations and the existing needs of the district as they related to the four WAZ priority areas, and (4) developing a professional development and implementation plan (Table 9).

Lynn's Year 2 WAZ plan outlined specific activities within each priority area. An analysis of this plan revealed that the Climate and Culture and Identify and Address Student Needs priority areas targeted school-level strategies, whereas the other two priority areas, Community Coalition and District Systems of Support, targeted district-level strategies. With regard to the first priority area, Climate and Culture, strategies focused on providing professional development to increase school staff capacity to implement their school's behavioral curriculum (which was already in place prior to WAZ implementation) and establishing functioning staff leadership teams to address climate and culture. For the second priority area, Identify and Address Student Needs, the plan focused on bringing school and district leaders together to form a professional learning community (PLC) to explore new ways to identify and address student learning support needs. For the third priority area, Community Coalition, Lynn reported plans to develop a coalition of community partner organizations. Unlike the previous two priority areas, there was no mention of direct involvement of the WAZ schools in this aspect of the work. Instead, the main work for this priority was to be led by the district, with the involvement of the superintendent specifically outlined in the plan (*The Superintendent attends at least 75% of scheduled meetings of the full Community Advisory Committee, The Superintendent presents to the Lynn WAZ Community*

Advisory Committee on her strategic goals and initiatives) and significant involvement of community stakeholders. The fourth priority area, District Systems of Support, focused on strategic planning and district-led piloting of supports for student support professionals and the development of school-community partnerships.

A key theme inherent in the latter two priority areas was the districtwide expansion of WAZ priorities. Both priority areas outlined strategies that would integrate a focus on nonacademic supports into district planning. Specifically, for priority area 3, Lynn reported plans to have the superintendent directly engage with the Community Advisory Committee “to ensure that the committee’s work is aligned with district goals and initiatives.” For priority area 4, Lynn reported plans to have the district’s senior leadership team engage in “a strategic planning process during SY13 to develop a framework for student achievement that incorporates both instructional and non-instructional learning supports as essential priorities.” If successful, the implementation of these strategies could help move WAZ beyond the four schools and into schools across the district, increasing the likelihood of sustainability for WAZ-related strategies.

**Table 9. Comparison of Year 1 and Year 2 WAZ plans for Lynn, by priority improvement area**

Year 1 WAZ Plan	Year 2 WAZ Plan
<p><b>Generate Buy-in</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Secure buy-in and engagement from all individuals to be included in the WAZ Planning Committee.</li> </ul> <p><b>Form Working Groups</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Form a working group that will develop a job description and requirements for a WAZ program manager, report to the Planning Committee for action, and hire one.</li> <li>▪ The committee will form a working group to identify a Behavioral Curriculum to be implemented in all four schools.</li> </ul> <p><b>Data Collection</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The WAZ Planning Committee will create working groups that will actively collect and analyze all data required to successfully plan and implement the WAZ.</li> </ul> <p><b>Professional Development and Implementation Plan</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The Committee will identify a Provider of services that the district may require [Provide training and support for the WAZ Project Manager (professional development and</li> </ul>	<p><b>Climate and Culture</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Invest in ongoing professional development to support each school’s behavioral curriculum.</li> <li>▪ Develop staff leadership capacity at the Level 3 schools to strengthen their collaborations between faculty and staff and administration in the area of student behavioral supports.</li> <li>▪ Develop staff leadership capacity at the Level 4 schools to increase their administrative resources for continuous improvement of the school climate.</li> </ul> <p><b>Identify and Address Student Needs</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Principals, other representatives from all four schools, and district administrators participate in a professional learning community that meets monthly to explore new strategies for identifying and addressing a broad range of student learning support needs.</li> </ul> <p><b>Community Coalition</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The Wraparound Program Specialist convenes and facilitates regular meetings of a representative coalition of community partner organizations (the Lynn WAZ Community Advisory Committee).</li> </ul>

Year 1 WAZ Plan	Year 2 WAZ Plan
<p>ongoing support)] and establish a schedule for delivery of services.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The Committee will develop a cohesive and comprehensive implementation plan.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The Community Advisory Committee adopts a collaborative structure and process that are based on best practices in community coalition development.</li> <li>▪ The Superintendent directly engages with the Lynn WAZ Community Advisory Committee to ensure that the committee’s work is aligned with district goals and initiatives.</li> </ul> <p><b>District Systems of Support</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The district’s senior leadership team engages in a strategic planning process during SY13 to develop a framework for student achievement that incorporates both instructional and noninstructional learning supports as essential priorities.</li> <li>▪ The district pilots districtwide supports for student support professionals.</li> <li>▪ The district pilots central office supports for school-community partnership development.</li> </ul>

**Year 2 Key Findings**

AIR’s data collection during Year 2 revealed the following four overall findings related to implementation of WAZ in Lynn during the second year:

1. The district coordinator was essential in helping the district transition from WAZ planning to WAZ implementation at the district and school levels. District support beyond the support of the district coordinator also remained strong.
2. WAZ efforts at the school level were coordinated by multiple teams of school-based staff. This approach reflected the district’s emphasis on school autonomy and was effective at moving school-level WAZ strategies forward, but it also created challenges for developing a model to help the district achieve their goal of districtwide expansion.
3. During its first WAZ implementation year, Lynn established a community coalition (the Lynn Community Advisory Committee). Through this district-led effort, Lynn had begun to create a more systematic mechanism for initiating and supporting school-community partnerships.
4. Data suggested that Lynn was proactively setting the foundation for districtwide replication of WAZ.

Table 10 presents the Year 2 Lynn findings together with related Lynn findings from Year 1. Data gathered in Year 2 revealed that during the first year of WAZ implementation, Lynn had made progress with respect to these Year 1 planning findings. For example, in Year 1, progress

toward developing a comprehensive implementation was slow and many interviewees attributed the slow pace to the lack of a district coordinator (Year 1 Finding #1). A district coordinator was finally hired in spring 2012, and provided essential direction and guidance to help the district finalize and begin carrying out an implementation plan (Year 2 Finding #1). Her support was particularly helpful for making progress in the establishment of a community coalition (Year 2 Finding #3).

Year 1 data also showed that the Level 4 schools were further along than the non-Level 4 schools in the area of climate and culture (Year 1 Finding #2). However, in Year 2, staff at all schools reported improvements in their school’s climate and culture. The Level 3 schools in particular took a more targeted approach to improving their schools’ climate and culture. Cobbet used the Playworks model to address behavior issues on the playground, and Marshall focused on developing consistent student discipline practices (Year 2 Finding #2).

In Year 1, staff demonstrated strong buy-in for WAZ but expressed concern about how this new initiative would be integrated into existing activities. In particular there were concerns about how this would affect responsibilities for staff (Year 1 Finding #3). As part of the Year 2 WAZ plan, schools were expected to adopt a team-based approach in lieu of hiring school coordinators and were given autonomy to determine the number and focus of teams (Year 2 Finding #2). However, some evidence suggested that this autonomy made it difficult to establish common practices across schools, which affected progress towards Lynn’s goal of district-wide replication (Year 2 Finding #4). For example, although each school gathered data as part of its WAZ implementation strategy, these activities were not coordinated and the district was unable to develop a district-based data collection and management system. This particular challenge carried over from Year 1 (Year 1 Finding #4).

**Table 10. Crosswalk of Year 1 and Year 2 Lynn Findings**

Year 2 Findings	Year 1 Related Findings
<p>Year 2 Finding 1:  <i>The district coordinator was essential in helping the district transition from WAZ planning to WAZ implementation at the district and school levels. District support beyond the support of the district coordinator also remained strong.</i></p>	<p>Year 1 Finding 1:  <i>During the planning year, progress toward developing a comprehensive implementation plan occurred at a slower pace than originally intended.</i></p>
<p>Year 2 Finding 2:  <i>WAZ efforts at the school level were coordinated by multiple teams of school-based staff. This approach reflected the district’s emphasis on school autonomy and was effective at moving school-level WAZ strategies forward, but it also created challenges for developing a model to help the district achieve their goal of districtwide expansion.</i></p>	<p>Year 1 Finding 2:  <i>The Level 4 schools were further along than the non-Level 4 schools in their efforts to develop processes that addressed students’ nonacademic needs, particularly with regard to school climate and culture.</i></p> <p>Year 1 Finding 3:  <i>Although there was evidence of strong buy-in for the importance of addressing student social and emotional (i.e., nonacademic)</i></p>



	<i>needs among school leaders and school staff, some staff members expressed concern about how the addition of a new initiative would affect their existing school improvement efforts.</i>
Year 2 Finding 3: <i>During its first WAZ implementation year, Lynn established a community coalition (the Lynn Community Advisory Committee). Through this district-led effort, Lynn had begun to create a more systematic mechanism for initiating and supporting school-community partnerships.</i>	Year 1 Finding 1: <i>During the planning year, progress toward developing a comprehensive implementation plan occurred at a slower pace than originally intended.</i>
Year 2 Finding 4: <i>Data suggested that Lynn was proactively setting the foundation for districtwide replication of WAZ.</i>	Year 1 Finding 4: <i>Lynn had begun to gather data to help plan for and implement WAZ; however, there was a need for a more systematic approach to data collection and evaluation across schools.</i>

Further details regarding the Year 2 findings, and the evidence that supports them, follow.

**Finding 1: The district coordinator was essential in helping the district transition from WAZ planning to WAZ implementation at the district and school levels. District support beyond the support of the district coordinator also remained strong.**

The district coordinator played a significant role in moving Lynn’s WAZ agenda forward in its first year of implementation and was a main source of support for schools. Year 1 data revealed that the coordinator was hired at the end of the planning year. At that time, Lynn had made some progress in planning for WAZ implementation; however, progress toward developing a comprehensive implementation plan was occurring at a slower pace than originally intended. Having a district-level staff person who could devote 100 percent of her time to WAZ proved essential in helping Lynn develop a concrete plan of action. The impact of having the district coordinator on board was felt immediately because she was able to offer specific guidance and focus on finalizing the plan to the point that Lynn was able to begin implementing program initiatives during summer 2012.

The district coordinator’s responsibilities varied and ranged from consistent, ongoing activities (e.g., facilitating team meetings, serving as the district-school and district-community liaison) to more short-term tasks to fill an immediate need or request from the district or WAZ schools (e.g., researching possible options for a topic that a school or district leadership was interested in). The district coordinator also connected schools to community resources and kept schools informed about funding opportunities. Stakeholders spoke highly of the district coordinator’s work on the initiative. She was described as “organized,” “readily available,” and “approachable.” Regarding her facilitation of the teams, one respondent commented, “In terms of how she’s facilitated this, she’s made everyone feel comfortable. She’s fabulous, incredibly

*intelligent, very intentional and yet—she just brings the best out of everyone. And she’s moving things forward...I have incredibly high respect for her work ethic and what she’s doing for this community.”*

District support, beyond the support of the district coordinator, also remained strong. During Year 1, interview data revealed strong buy-in and support for WAZ at the district level. This support carried over into Year 2, during which the district maintained its commitment to WAZ, evidenced in part by the explicit mention in the Year 2 plan of district involvement in WAZ activities (e.g., developing school-community partnerships, supporting student support staff) and ongoing involvement in the WAZ Advisory Committee and alignment teams. When describing the level of district support one respondent stated, *“I think, by the comments and the involvement of people from the Superintendent’s office and the other administration, that they really are sincere in wanting to have positive outcomes and work closely through the alignment structure. So, I feel that everybody is really invested in the process.”*

The district-school connection was maintained in part through the monthly district executive committee meetings. This committee was established during Year 1 as one of the planning committees but during Year 2 met to monitor and discuss WAZ implementation. The meetings were facilitated by the district coordinator and included the principals from the four WAZ schools, the deputy superintendent, and other district leaders.

Lynn also demonstrated district support by providing schools and staff with targeted professional development opportunities. Data revealed that this professional development was needed and appreciated by the staff, particularly by student support staff (e.g., guidance counselors, social workers, adjustment counselors) who were offered new professional development opportunities that had not been available to them in the past. It was reported that the district coordinator surveyed these staff to determine what type of professional development they wanted and worked to find opportunities that fit their needs. Regarding this professional development, one respondent stated, *“Through the wraparound zone, there was a lot of professional development for the clinical staff. Opportunities were there for guidance, social workers, school adjustment counselors to get together and have wonderful and much needed professional development. This was new. We didn’t have this prior [to WAZ].”* Another stated:

*The district is basically giving us 100 percent of their—not just support, as far as helping our groups meet and helping collaborate in this way, but with anything, with professional development. Clinicians now have monthly seminars that we can go to to further our education around different approaches to looking at servicing kids. So, at the school level, 100 percent support. I mean, without a doubt. The fact that you’re helping stipend teachers to really get to know how to engage with parents, it’s very supportive.*

**Finding 2: WAZ efforts at the school level were coordinated by multiple teams of school-based staff. This approach reflected the district’s emphasis on school autonomy and was effective at moving school-level WAZ strategies forward, but it also created challenges for developing a model to help the district achieve their goal of districtwide expansion.**

Data from Year 1 revealed evidence of strong buy-in for the importance of addressing student nonacademic needs among school leaders and school staff. However, because of their level designations (two Level 4 schools and two Level 3 schools approaching Level 4 status), the

schools had already been engaged in school improvement activities and some school staff were concerned about how WAZ would fit into their existing efforts. To help alleviate these concerns, the district allowed schools the autonomy to decide how to integrate WAZ into their schools and existing staff’s responsibilities. The district also decided not to hire full-time WAZ coordinators for each school. Instead, schools were expected to set up leadership teams that focused on the WAZ priority areas. Beyond that requirement, expectations were flexible and schools were encouraged to set individual agendas for their teams with no expectation of developing a common agenda across schools.

Data revealed that for the most part, schools opted to use the initiative to focus on WAZ-related issues that were already identified as priority areas in their school. Thus the teams that were established differed across schools and addressed their unique needs (Table 7). For example, Cobbet established a School Leadership team, Connery established a team that focused on Partnerships and Harrington created a Family Engagement team. As one respondent stated, “*We weren’t always thinking about let’s bring something else in. Let’s just think about a piece that we have and how we make it even better with wraparound, with the funding and with that thought process.*”

**Table 11. Lynn School-Based WAZ Teams**

<b>Cobbet</b>	<b>Connery</b>	<b>Harrington</b>	<b>Marshall</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Recess Design</li> <li>▪ School Leadership</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Partnerships</li> <li>▪ Student Needs</li> <li>▪ Culture and Climate</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Family Engagement</li> <li>▪ Culture and Climate</li> <li>▪ Student Needs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Student Behavior</li> <li>▪ Advisory Program</li> </ul>

In addition, even though all the schools established a team to address climate and culture, each one took a different approach. For example, through WAZ, the Level 3 schools (Cobbet and Marshall) identified a specific area of need and used their WAZ team to lead the improvement efforts in this area. Cobbett targeted student behavior on the playground and used the Playworks model to implement a recess redesign initiative. Marshall focused on student discipline. Its team identified three major problem areas (hallway behavior, dress code, and use of technology) and focused on reducing disciplinary actions in these areas. At Marshall, the team was also working to develop more staff consistency in the implementation of behavior management practices through their use of the CHAMPS program.

During this first year of implementation, the Level 4 schools (Connery and Harrington) were entering their third year of the school redesign process. Because improving school culture and climate was a primary component of their Level 4 redesign plan, these schools had started implementing related strategies prior to their involvement in the WAZ initiative. Data suggested that WAZ helped these schools develop a more organized approach to their work and enhanced strategies that were already in place. For example, when describing the impact that WAZ had on their climate and culture improvement efforts, one respondent stated, “*WAZ has basically enhanced it. We’ve had a very good foundation of it, but WAZ has, without a doubt, enhanced the climate and culture that’s going on.*” Another respondent noted, “*I think that what the [Climate and Culture] team has done is kind of streamlined the different things that were going on.*”

One way in which WAZ appeared to have enhanced existing efforts was by improving staff communication. Specifically, establishing the WAZ teams and having regular team meetings seemed to have fostered better, ongoing communication and collaboration among staff. One respondent reported, *“There’s a lot of communication, a lot of interaction between teachers.”* Another stated, *“The communication is amazing. And just the fact that we have all those teams—I’m telling you, it’s amazing because we didn’t always have these teams. So third grade would know what third grade is doing. First grade would know what first grade is doing, and now, it’s just, you understand what’s going on in different grades.”* Similarly, at Harrington, one respondent described how WAZ had helped add more structure to their efforts stating, *“There were things going on for climate and culture that were here and there and so and so is doing this...different classrooms even just different people were doing things. But now everything’s kind of on the table for climate and culture so that we can say like ok these are the things we’re doing, what else can we be doing? And we’re talking about it.”*

Despite the positive reports from multiple interviewees about the effectiveness of the school-based teams, some respondents reported challenges. For example, the current approach was described by one respondent as *“fragmented,”* making it difficult for the district to track the work that was occurring at each school and to provide schools with the support needed to ensure that they remained on track with their implementation plans. This challenge was not unique to the WAZ initiative, with data revealing a lack of cohesiveness and communication in other districtwide initiatives as well. For example, one respondent commented on the lack of information about non-WAZ-funded district activities that were directly related to current WAZ efforts:

*It seems to me, that there may be some disconnect around what other people within the administration are doing. Relating to—let’s just say family engagement, for example. So in other words, professional development might be happening, and that’s sort of under one person, and then we find out later that other professional development is being done for family engagement. There needs to be a connect there.*

In addition, data suggested that Lynn intended to expand WAZ to other schools in the district (see Finding 4) and there was awareness (at the district level) that this unstructured approach would make it difficult to develop a clear model that could be disseminated districtwide. As one respondent commented, *“We will have a collection of individual school agendas, and that’s not going to be a very powerful message to bring [to schools across the district].”* Experiences during Year 2 had led the district to rethink its current strategy of high school-level autonomy for WAZ implementation. As a result, for the next school year the district was planning to identify common focus areas on which the schools could work together to develop shared protocols and practices.

**Finding 3: During its first WAZ implementation year, Lynn established a community coalition (the Lynn Community Advisory Committee). Through this district-led effort, Lynn had begun to create a more systematic mechanism for initiating and supporting school-community partnerships.**

Lynn’s Year 2 plan indicated strong district involvement in setting the direction for WAZ strategies. During Year 2, the district’s involvement in and support for WAZ were most evident in its work within the community. Under the leadership of the district coordinator, Lynn formed

a coalition of community agencies, referred to as the Community Advisory Committee, to help “conceptualize the work” in WAZ priority area 4—Community Coalition. According to Lynn’s implementation plan, the goals of the advisory committee were to (1) improve the collaborative environment for school-community partnerships in Lynn, (2) generate new school-community partnership initiatives, and (3) increase the overall support that schools receive from the community. Initial recruitment for the committee occurred during a breakfast meeting for community agencies held at the end of the planning year (Year 1). The meeting was to introduce them to WAZ and initiate a dialogue about how schools and community agencies could collaborate to best meet the needs of students. It was during this meeting that the agencies were introduced to the idea of the advisory committee, and several participants expressed an interest in being a part of this group. The committee held its first meeting in summer 2012.

Data gathered in Year 1 suggested that prior to this committee, there had been no formal way for community agencies to connect with the district or schools. Relationships were generally established informally at the school level, with no evidence of district involvement in these efforts. One respondent commented that community agencies in Lynn had always been open to opportunities to connect with schools, and some had done so on an individual basis. This was evident at the WAZ schools. Each school reported having existing relationships with several community agencies prior to WAZ. The advisory committee reportedly helped provide a more systematic way for community agencies to connect with the schools. For example, one community partner stated:

*In the past, those of us that have our type of program—we needed to go and reach out to the individual schools. The past administration would not interfere in that—but it wasn’t systemic, so all of us were sort of going on our own, introducing ourselves after we helped. Whereas now I believe the administration is actually behind the fact that everybody needs to contribute to the education of these children. We do need partners, we want the expertise that these CBOs [community-based organizations] can bring to the schools, and so now—the push is now coming from the top. So that’s what I mean by it’s starting to become systemic.*

To facilitate these efforts, the district identified “Alignment Nashville” as a model for its work. Alignment Nashville, an organization in Nashville, Tennessee, has developed a unique and scalable framework for developing community schools. This framework aims to “bring community organizations and resources into alignment so that their coordinated support of [the district’s] youth has a positive impact on public school success, children’s health, and the success of our community as a whole.”<sup>3</sup> The advisory committee identified two main target areas to focus on for this work—family engagement and behavioral health education—and created an alignment team for each. Through these two areas, the district would tap into the strengths in the community and develop initiatives that would provide new and explicit opportunities for community involvement. For example, some organizations would be able to contribute through short-term involvement (e.g., marketing the effort) and others could offer more long-term involvement (e.g., ongoing consultation, provision of services). The work of the alignment teams was expected to include schools across the district, not just WAZ schools. With these teams in

---

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.alignmentnashville.org/>

place, the Community Advisory Committee served as a communication mechanism through which agency heads were kept informed about the progress of each team in order to provide support as needed. District involvement was ongoing as team meetings were facilitated by the district coordinator and district leaders were involved in the alignment teams.

Recruitment for the committee was ongoing, with the district continuing to seek out participation from various community groups to maximize the representation of community stakeholders. As one respondent noted:

*We're always recruiting for the larger group. The advisory [committee] has a very very good representation but we want more representation...And the subcommittees [alignment teams], there could be people who are not in the advisory group and we're looking at this as a specific thing. Who else in this community is providing a type of service that we think should be on this subcommittee? So we do a lot of that. We are very intentional about who to bring to the table.*

At the time of the interviews, the behavioral health education alignment team was gathering data and examining existing research. The family engagement team developed and administered a parent survey that focused on school-family communication. Surveys were distributed districtwide, first by CBOs and then by schools.<sup>4</sup> According to one interviewee, the team received more than 3,000 responses. It was reported that next steps would involve developing two pilot initiatives in each target area (family engagement and behavioral health education) and then implementing those initiatives with selected schools during the second year of WAZ implementation. This would involve identifying schools and community agencies to participate in the initiatives. The teams would reach out to the community through an invitation to participate (ITP). The ITP was described as being similar to a proposal process in which organizations would have the opportunity to share how they could contribute to the initiative. Lynn had also developed a website,<sup>5</sup> Alignment LPS, that provides information and updates about the work of the alignment teams. At the time of data collection, the family engagement team's initiative was under development; however, it had already identified two (non-WAZ) schools that were willing to participate.

Community agencies had a favorable view of the district's efforts to engage them in working with schools, as evidenced by their reported levels of commitment and participation in the advisory committee and alignment teams. The teams included representation from a broad range of community organizations. One interviewee stated, *"Everybody agrees that it's a fairly big time commitment but the meetings are organized very well, you never feel that you're wasting your time. We have an agenda, we meet for an hour and a half and we really stay on task."* The advisory committee reportedly had the added benefit of increasing communication between community agencies. When describing the strengths of WAZ, one respondent reported, *"It's fostered even more communication between agencies over common issues...I mean it's really bringing all the agencies together around the agenda that we could share, which are the families and the kids. The school's kind of the center of that. I think it's great. I think it's really good for*

---

<sup>4</sup> School participation was voluntary. It was reported that all but two schools volunteered to distribute the surveys.

<sup>5</sup> <https://sites.google.com/site/alignmentlps/>

Lynn.” This respondent also noted that WAZ was helping change the perception of school staff, who were beginning to view their school as a community resource (e.g., allowing external service providers to work in the school, allowing the use of the school building during nonschool hours). This suggested the development of a reciprocal relationship in which both schools and community agencies were benefitting from the collaboration.

**Finding 4: Data suggested that Lynn was proactively setting the foundation for districtwide replication of WAZ.**

Unlike the other districts, Lynn has only two years to implement WAZ. With this in mind, district leaders have been intentional in their efforts, with current activities laying the ground work for future replication in other schools and overall sustainability of WAZ strategies. Evidence of the district’s plans for replication and sustainability could be found across the work that the district had done thus far. First, as mentioned before, Priority Areas 3 (Community Coalition) and 4 (District Systems of Support) of the district’s Year 2 plan both outlined strategies for integrating WAZ into the district’s overall planning processes.

Next, there was evidence of plans to implement WAZ strategies at other schools in the district. For example, the family engagement alignment team was developing an initiative to increase family involvement in the schools and was planning to work with two non-WAZ schools to pilot the initiative. Also, as part of its family engagement work, the district was planning to pilot a new model for restructuring the open house framework. The district had selected four new schools in addition to the four existing WAZ schools to participate in this program during the next school year.

In addition, schools across the district had reportedly begun to take notice of and express interest in these efforts. One respondent provided an example: *“Marshall Middle School in particular has already begun to influence the two other middle schools in our district to think about setting up teams like this. So, that idea that you create part of your leadership structure to focus on these non-structural support needs, that’s a powerful idea in and of itself.”* It was also reported that on the basis of the success at Cobbet, several non-WAZ schools planned to implement Playworks during the following school year.

The growing interest in WAZ is likely due, in part, to the district’s ongoing communication about the initiative. District leaders shared information about the initiative, including successes and challenges, during monthly principal meetings. This likely helped keep WAZ at the forefront within the district and increased buy-in for the focus on students’ nonacademic needs. As one respondent noted, *“More people are interested. More people are calling, what about this? Why can’t I have this? That sounds like it’s really working over there.”*

Finally, comments about sustainability were a common part of the dialogue about WAZ, more so than during the first year of implementation in the other WAZ districts. For example, when describing WAZ, one school staff member reported, *“Wraparound Zone really is about a district level initiative. It’s really about having a big district like this have systems in place that all schools will be doing things like this. When I’m at the executive board meetings we absolutely talk about what systems can we put in place.”* Another also spoke about sustainability of WAZ as a district initiative and not just at specific schools in the district:

*We have some very lively conversations. I think what we're trying to do is focus in, where does this work? We use the data piece, where does it go next for us? How do we sustain what's going on in these buildings as well as bringing more buildings on so we can help sustain? Not just for [individual] schools in the district but how does this work look [when implemented] throughout the district?*

The ongoing conversations about sustaining WAZ offered additional evidence of strong and widespread buy-in for supporting students' nonacademic needs.

## **Summary**

The 2012–13 school year was Lynn's first year of WAZ implementation, and the district made significant progress toward achieving the goals outlined in its implementation plan. The district coordinator was key in helping Lynn transition from WAZ planning to WAZ implementation. Under her leadership, Lynn finalized an implementation plan at the end of the planning year and used this to guide the WAZ efforts during Year 2. The plan outlined school-level strategies for the first two priority areas (Climate and Culture and Identify and Address Student Needs) and district-level strategies for the remaining two priority areas (Community Coalition and District Systems of Support).

In addition to the strong leadership of the district coordinator, the district itself demonstrated strong leadership around WAZ. Major district leaders were involved as critical members of WAZ-related committees and planning meetings, and were offering professional development on WAZ-related strategies to WAZ and non-WAZ schools. This commitment and dedication to WAZ among district leaders was felt within the schools, with many interviewees commenting on the sincerity of Lynn's leaders support. Staff at all levels in all WAZ schools also reported strong buy-in to the initiative.

The district adopted an approach that gave schools a high level of autonomy regarding WAZ implementation. The only expectation was that schools develop WAZ leadership teams. This strategy worked for the schools because it allowed them to focus on issues that had already been identified as problem areas. However, this autonomy made it difficult to develop shared practices across schools. The district was rethinking this approach for Year 3. Year 2 data also revealed that Lynn had established a community coalition and had begun to develop a more systematic approach for connecting schools and the community. WAZ schools have benefitted from these efforts, and a couple of schools reported developing new partnerships as a direct result of the district's coalition work. Finally, data suggested that with only two years of implementation, Lynn had been intentional in its efforts and was setting the stage for districtwide implementation and sustainability of WAZ strategies.



## **Profile E: Springfield**

This profile describes progress made in Springfield during Year 2 of the WAZ initiative and presents key findings related to early indicators of change with respect to WAZ implementation. The data sources used to inform this profile were (a) stakeholder interviews conducted during spring 2013 and (b) WAZ-related documents provided by the district and schools. The analysis of these data was informed by the findings that emerged in Report 2 on conditions and supports during Year 1 of WAZ implementation. For example, researchers paid particular attention to analyzing the extent to which progress did or did not occur on issues that were identified as challenges or potential indicators of success during Year 1.

### **WAZ Schools and Planned Strategies**

During Year 1, Springfield implemented WAZ in six elementary schools (Brightwood, Brookings, Gerena, Homer, White Street, and Zanetti). All six schools were Level 4 schools, and Springfield chose them to participate because of their specific needs and because elements of their turnaround plans aligned with WAZ priorities. During Year 2, one school dropped out (Homer), and three middle schools were added (Chestnut, Kennedy, and Kiley), for a total of eight WAZ schools.

Springfield formed a partnership with City Connects during the 2010–2011 school year, and used that year as a planning year prior to rolling out the City Connects model as part of WAZ in the six Level 4 elementary schools during Year 1 (2011-12). City Connects continued to be the organization implementing the major components of WAZ in Year 2. City Connects is a school-based model that identifies the strengths and needs of every student and links each child to a tailored set of intervention, prevention, and enrichment services in the school or community. The City Connects model is designed to address the in-school and out-of-school factors that impact students' academic, social–emotional, family, and physical well-being. At the core of the City Connects model is a full-time school site coordinator in each school, who works with the classroom teachers and other school staff members to assess each child's strengths and needs in four domains: academic, social–emotional, health, and family. The school site coordinator also facilitates and enhances partnerships with community agencies, and assists families to take the necessary steps to access the services and enrichment activities recommended for their children.

Overall, the Year 2 WAZ plan for Springfield included the same strategies as the Year 1 plan, with some additions (Table 12). For example, with regard to priority area 1, Climate and Culture, the Year 1 plan indicated that schools would implement PBIS or Responsive Classroom. The Year 2 plan indicated that PBIS schools would continue implementation and receive additional training and that PBIS training would occur for schools that had not yet received it. In addition, the Year 1 plan indicated that Springfield would administer the Organizational Health Inventory (OHI) and use it to create action plans. In Year 2, the plan stipulated that schools would continue to develop and review action plans based on the OHI, as well as Harris Poll data. For priority area Identify and Address Student Needs, the Year 2 plan focused on continuing to implement the key tenets of the City Connects model (whole-class reviews that systematically assess every student and develop tailored student support plans, and student and teacher assistance teams [STAT] for students who are most in need of intervention) and continuing to build on family connections and strengthen the lines of communication between the school and families.

For priority area 3, Community Coalition, the Year 1 plan included two main strategies: (1) identify community-based resources and gaps in existing services and (2) develop a community advisory board. The Year 2 plan also included these strategies and added two new strategies: (1) establish a standard vetting process when adding new providers to schools and (2) add an MOU process for new qualified partnerships. For priority area 4, District Systems of Support, the Year 1 plan had two strategies: (1) establish a committee for student support and (2) provide professional development and supervision for school site coordinators. The Year 2 plan included these two strategies plus four new strategies: (1) expand WAZ and the City Connects model to the three Level 4 middle schools, (2) blend wraparound processes into the existing STAT teams at other schools as a way to provide a multitiered system of support approach throughout the district, (3) use the data from the previous school year to review the school STAT process with principals in monthly zone meetings, and (4) review data and implementation of WAZ with district leaders. These additional strategies demonstrated a stronger emphasis in Year 2 on solidifying district support for WAZ and on expanding components of the City Connects model to other schools.

**Table 12. Comparison of Year 1 and Year 2 WAZ plans for Springfield, by priority improvement area**

Priority Improvement Area	Year 1 WAZ Plan	Year 2 WAZ Plan
Climate and Culture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Employ City Connects model and ensure that teachers are aware of practices.</li> <li>▪ Use PBIS and/or Responsive Classroom.</li> <li>▪ Administer OHI and use to create action plans.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Continue the implementation of City Connects in the five Level 4 elementary schools and three Level 4 middle schools.</li> <li>▪ Continue to implement PBIS in the three schools. These schools will have additional training on the next tiers of intervention. Also initial training will occur for the schools that did not have the training.</li> <li>▪ Continue to develop and review the action plans based on OHI and Harris Poll data.</li> </ul>
Identify and Address Student Needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Hold whole-class reviews.</li> <li>▪ Have STAT teams create individual student review plans (for students with intensive needs).</li> <li>▪ Have SSCs gather data on family needs and assist them with the referral process.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Continue whole-class reviews (WCRs) at all schools. These reviews allow the school site coordinator and the teacher to systematically assess every student and develop a tailored student support plan.</li> <li>▪ Continue individual student reviews or STAT meetings. These meetings occur for the students who have been assessed or placed in Tier 3.</li> <li>▪ Continue to build on the existing family connections and start to initiate new relationships. The goal is to</li> </ul>

Priority Improvement Area	Year 1 WAZ Plan	Year 2 WAZ Plan
		strengthen the lines of communication between school and families.
Community Coalition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Identify community-based resources (asset mapping) and gaps in services.</li> <li>▪ Develop a Community Advisory Board.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Establish a standard vetting process when adding new providers to schools.</li> <li>▪ Continue to identify community-based resources and add them to the community directory</li> <li>▪ Continue to identify school- and community-based gaps in service.</li> <li>▪ Form a Community Advisory Board.</li> <li>▪ Apply the MOU process for new qualified partnerships.</li> </ul>
District Systems of Support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Establish Committee for Student Support.</li> <li>▪ Employ professional development and supervision for SSCs.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Expand WAZ and City Connects model into the three Level 4 middle schools.</li> <li>▪ Plan to eventually blend wraparound processes into the existing STAT teams at other schools as a way to provide a multitiered system of support approach throughout the district.</li> <li>▪ Use the data from the previous school year to review the school STAT process with principals in monthly zone meetings.</li> <li>▪ Review data and implementation of WAZ with district leaders.</li> <li>▪ Form a Committee of Student Support.</li> <li>▪ Supervise School Site Coordinators.</li> </ul>

## Year 2 Key Findings

AIR’s data collection during Year 2 revealed the following four overall findings related to the implementation of WAZ in Springfield during the second year:

1. During Year 2, progress in implementing and obtaining school staff and school administrator buy-in for the City Connects model continued to vary across schools.
2. All three middle schools struggled in their effort to implement elements of WAZ and the City Connects model. Specific challenges included scheduling and conducting whole class reviews, accessing appropriate services, and gaining buy-in for Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS).
3. In Year 2, school staff expressed concerns about the district’s level of commitment and involvement in implementation, beyond the involvement of the district coordinator. However, district leadership was somewhat more visible in its support of the wraparound zone efforts than in Year 1.

4. School coordinators continued to be responsible for building relationships with community partners, with limited support provided by the district.

Table 13 presents the Springfield Year 2 findings together with related Springfield findings from Year 1. Data gathered in Year 2 revealed that during the second year of WAZ implementation, Springfield had made some progress with respect to these Year 1 findings but also experienced new challenges. For example, although implementation progress varied across schools, some schools saw an increase in staff or principal buy-in during Year 2 (Year 2 Finding #1). This finding indicates progress on a challenge identified in Year 1, where data found that a lack of staff or principal buy-in was impeding implementation in several schools (Year 1 Finding #2). However, while the data revealed some gains in staff and administrator buy-in at the elementary level, a new challenge emerged with the middle schools. These schools, which were new to WAZ and City Connects in Year 2, struggled with buy-in and implementation (Year 2 Finding #2).

The Year 1 data revealed a strong reliance on the City Connects school and district coordinators to implement WAZ-related strategies (Year 1 Finding #1). Additionally, staff reported concerns about the level of support and knowledge about WAZ and City Connects among district leadership. In Year 2, this dynamic continued. District leadership was more visible in its support of wraparound zone efforts in Year 2 than in Year 1, but respondents continued to express some concerns around district leadership level of involvement in the initiative and the implications for sustainability (Year 2 Finding #3). In particular, concerns remained about a lack of district support for building and sustaining community partnerships, and the heavy reliance on City Connects coordinators to do this work (Year 2 Finding #4).

**Table 13. Crosswalk of Year 1 and Year 2 Springfield Findings**

Year 2 Findings	Related Year 1 Findings
<p>Year 2 Finding 1: <i>During Year 2, progress in implementing and obtaining school staff and school administrator buy-in for the City Connects model continued to vary across schools.</i></p>	<p>Year 1 Finding 2: <i>Although coordinators were all knowledgeable about the City Connects model, implementation varied across schools owing to a lack of staff or principal buy-in and challenging “adult cultures” at some schools.</i></p>
<p>Year 2 Finding 2: <i>All three middle schools struggled in their effort to implement elements of WAZ and the City Connects model. Specific challenges included scheduling and conducting whole class reviews, accessing appropriate services, and gaining buy-in for Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS).</i></p>	
<p>Year 2 Finding 3: <i>In Year 2, school staff expressed concerns</i></p>	<p>Year 1 Finding 1: <i>Springfield chose to use WAZ funding to</i></p>

Year 2 Findings	Related Year 1 Findings
<p><i>about the district’s level of commitment and involvement in implementation, beyond the involvement of the district coordinator. However, district leadership was somewhat more visible in its support of the wraparound zone efforts than in Year 1.</i></p>	<p><i>implement the City Connects model, which provides supports to the “whole child.”</i></p>
<p>Year 2 Finding 4: <i>School coordinators continued to be responsible for building relationships with community partners, with limited support provided by the district.</i></p>	

Further details regarding the Year 2 findings, and the evidence that supports them, follow.

**Finding 1: During Year 2, progress in implementing and obtaining school staff and school administrator buy-in for the City Connects model continued to vary across schools.**

In Year 2, as in Year 1, implementation of the key components of the City Connects model varied across schools, largely owing to a lack of staff or principal buy-in at some schools. For two schools, buy-in among staff and administrators improved from Year 1, and implementation progressed more smoothly. For two other schools, principal buy-in was good and stable in both implementation years, but buy-in among teachers had started out weak and improved in the second year. For one elementary school, however, buy-in from both the administration and teachers continued to be a problem that affected implementation. In the three new middle schools, buy-in and implementation were especially challenging (see Finding 2 for more detail).

For the schools where buy-in among staff and administrators remained strong or improved from the first year, interviewees reported that implementation of WAZ strategies progressed smoothly. They attributed the improved buy-in to supportive and involved school leadership, relationship-building, and having the experience of seeing the City Connects model and staff in action. One coordinator, when asked about the quality and strength of school leadership for City Connects and the WAZ strategies, responded, *“I think it’s [school leadership] very strong. I think they’re all on board with it...I think this year there’s even more buy-in than there was last year perhaps.”* Another coordinator, when asked what contributed to the change, said, *“I think just relationship building, and seeing that I’m a hard worker, and seeing that I follow through on things that I start.”*

A coordinator at one of these school noted that buy-in particularly for the whole-class reviews among teachers was much better in Year 2, because they had had the chance to experience the process and see its benefits. She said, *“When we sit down for whole class reviews, those that did it last year know what we’re going to do, they get it...I think there’s more buy-in in that as well just because they know it and they’ve seen it work, and they see me as a resource person in the school.”*

In contrast, for one elementary school, buy-in continued to be a problem that affected implementation. The coordinator expressed frustration with the principal's lack of support, focus on academics, and lack of interest in any activities that would support students' social-emotional well-being. This coordinator said, *when I started really working with the kids, that was when [the principal] was like, 'No. We're only doing academics.'*" This coordinator noted that scheduling time for STAT was particularly difficult and that the principal would allow her to meet with teachers for STAT only during teachers' lunch time, which was not ideal. For example, this coordinator said, *"We have STAT on Monday during the teachers' lunch, so how many teachers are going to put in STAT referrals? They get a half hour a piece a day to eat their lunch."* Staff buy-in was also a continuing challenge at this school. The coordinator described her school staffs' attitudes about the City Connects model by saying, *"Eighty percent were welcoming of it. A couple of teachers told me my job was pointless."* In addition, this coordinator noted that, in particular, she had trouble getting teachers to participate in STAT meetings. At this school the principal expressed similar sentiments about teacher buy-in, saying, *"I think it's moderate [teacher buy-in] only in that it's just one more thing that the teacher's got to do work on. There are a lot of teachers whose attitude is that, 'it's my job to teach, not my job to deal with the social-emotional piece.'"*

In all three middle schools, buy-in and implementation were challenging. For example, the coordinator at one of these schools said:

*the principal...just needs to be more on board. Obviously, [the principal] wants it in the school, but ... has to show leadership with it and say, 'look this is what you need to do [to the teachers]. City Connects is going to be good for you and so forth.'*

The coordinator at this school also noted that she did receive support from the assistant principal but that it was difficult to get the assistant principal's buy-in at the beginning as well. The coordinator at another one of these schools reported that the principal *"doesn't really do the City Connects thing."* This coordinator explained that the principal had *"handed that [City Connects] off to the assistant principal"* and that *"a challenge is that [the principal] is not involved."* She also noted that the principal *"is great in the school. It's just that we don't communicate ever."* The district coordinator also reported that at one of these schools, *"They have dedicated staff members, who wanted to see this happen, but it needs to come from an administrator, it needs to come from the top. If you're having reluctance with staff, then that's when the administrator needs to come in."*

Staff buy-in was also a concern in all the middle schools. Coordinators in these schools reported that buy-in was low, challenging, or moderate with some teachers buying in but *"pockets of negativity"* that affected or impeded implementation progress. One coordinator noted, *"It was hard in the beginning to get the teachers buy-in...because for them it was just, 'oh here we go, we have another person coming in, another program that's not going to work.'"* She also said, *"It depends on the teacher. The teachers that have been here for a while, some of them are kind of 'you're just another person that it's not going to work type of thing.' But some of them who I've built really good relationships with will come to me and say, can you do this, or thank you so much for everything you do."* The assistant principal for this school, like the coordinator, indicated that the teachers with whom the coordinator has worked more closely and built relationships were buying in but that others did not yet see the benefits of the whole-class review

or of what someone in the coordinator’s position could do for them. The district coordinator also noted about one school, “*There’s just some really reluctant teachers that are, like, ‘Why do I have to do this?’ They question everything.*”

**Finding 2: All three middle schools struggled in their effort to implement elements of WAZ and the City Connects model. Specific challenges included scheduling and conducting whole class reviews, accessing appropriate services, and gaining buy-in for Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS).**

In Year 2, Springfield began implementing WAZ and the City Connects model in three Level 4 middle schools. Although the City Connects model was designed for use in elementary schools, the organization was currently working with Springfield to test and expand the model for middle schools. Multiple respondents, including the district coordinator, a district leader, all three middle school coordinators, and a principal, acknowledged that implementing City Connects in the middle schools was challenging, with some noting that it was more challenging than Year 1 implementation in the elementary schools. According to the district coordinator, “*The middle schools had a really difficult start.*” For example, one district leader said:

*We kind of did that a little bit midstream [including the middle schools]. It was not quite as—I think there wasn’t as much prep work that we did at the elementary level. The middle school was little bit harder. First of all, it was a model that didn’t exist before. Boston College didn’t have a middle school model...we had to build the model together.”*

One coordinator noted that the Springfield middle school coordinators had an opportunity to meet with City Connects coordinators in Boston, who also had been implementing the model in middle schools. However, when she was asked if the Boston City Connects coordinators had offered guidance or strategies for doing the whole-class reviews in middle schools, she responded:

*Not really... We met with the Boston City Connects workers...It was good to hear that they actually were in the same boat we were in. It was really hard for them to meet with teachers and get these whole class reviews done because there’s not that much free time in the day and there are so many kids.*

Overall, respondents reported four main challenges related to middle school implementation: (1) scheduling and conducting whole-class reviews, (2) having services available and getting students to access them, (3) ensuring buy-in and consistent implementation of PBIS, and (4) having City Connects coordinators in each school who worked only with the Grade 6 students.

### ***Scheduling and conducting whole class reviews***

All three middle school coordinators reported that scheduling and conducting whole-class reviews was challenging. The whole-class review process required the coordinator to have a brief discussion with the teacher on the strengths and needs of every student in a class and document any services each student might currently be receiving. Coordinators at the middle schools reported that the whole-class review process was challenging because students in middle school see multiple teachers each day. The middle school coordinators struggled with finding an

agreeable time to meet with teachers during the school day, finding the time to talk with more than one teacher per student, and securing teacher buy-in for the process.

According to one coordinator, *“In the beginning, I was trying to meet with more than one teacher. I was trying to meet with them during their PLCs [professional learning community]...It just wasn’t working because one teacher didn’t really like to miss the meetings.”* According to this coordinator, her principal offered another strategy of having her attend the PLC meetings and meet with the teachers at a different table in the same room. This strategy did not work because *“then they [the teachers] would get distracted or teachers just wouldn’t show up.”* This coordinator ended up deciding to meet with just one teacher and to go through as many students as she could with one teacher. She noted, *“It wasn’t the most ideal situation, but it was the only way I could get it done.”* Another coordinator noted that although she did have time allocated for conducting the whole-class reviews with the teachers, the time period was not enough, so she *“got creative and started meeting with teachers individually.”* One coordinator reported, *“I know in different middle schools here teachers have put aside time or they’ve had to rearrange certain times. I know I’ve sat in the hallway with teachers—that was another strategy—while they’re doing hall duty. I’d pull up a chair next to them and I would just get the information.”* Finally, trying to get teachers to buy-in and see the importance of the whole class reviews was challenging: *“It was just trying to get buy-in, too, from them because they didn’t really see the value of it, so they weren’t going to give up their time to meet with me.”*

### ***Availability of and access to services***

All three middle school coordinators also reported challenges in finding service providers for middle school students, as well as getting students to take advantage of these services if they were able to find them. One coordinator noted that it was challenging finding appropriate service providers for middle school students because in Springfield *“there’s not a lot.”* She explained that tutoring, mentoring, and enrichment programs in particular were difficult to find for middle school students:

*So I feel like we’re setting people up in a way, like here we are to help set up services, but there are no services. It makes it really difficult because if I get called to a meeting regarding a student—I mean, if he already has therapy in place and I can set up a teacher meeting, but if the kids really needs tutoring or needs a mentor or needs some type of program enrichment, I think we don’t really have many of those. So it’s like so how can you be helpful? I think in Boston they have all those services. They have tutors coming into their schools all the time. Free tutors...*

Another coordinator reported that when she was able to refer a student to a service, often the student would not access those services. For example, this coordinator said:

*I put a lot of referrals out there...anime club at the library because I know I have students who love anime. But then I speak to the grandmother and the grandmother is like, ‘No, she is not going to participate.’ It’s oftentimes I find this awesome resource for a handful of students, and then the next step doesn’t happen for a variety of reasons.*

Similarly, another coordinator noted that because of the age and developmental stage of middle school students, they often do not want to engage in structured after-school activities:



*A lot of these kids they don't really want to get involved with a lot of the services as far as enrichment stuff. It's like they're at that age where they're finding themselves, they are trying to impress their peers. They don't want to go do whatever, an afterschool program. They just want to hang out with their friends. It's getting them interested is hard too.*

### ***Buy-in for and implementation of Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS)***

The 2012–13 school year was the second year of PBIS implementation for these three middle schools, and the district was using the WAZ grant as an opportunity to push forward with PBIS implementation in these schools. PBIS is a decision making framework that guides selection, integration, and implementation of the evidence-based behavioral practices for improving behavior outcomes for all students. The middle schools struggled with PBIS. One coordinator said about her school's PBIS implementation, *“That needs to improve big time, because it's just inconsistent... We need buy-in from all the staff because the kids can't go to one class and get all these [PBIS rewards or points] and then in the next class they never get any.”* In addition, a principal at one of these middle schools noted that while the school's PBIS team was *“working hard to improve the climate and culture,”* there were *“pockets of negativity and pockets of I guess sort of anti-PBIS, and that makes it very, very difficult. Even if it's only a handful of teachers that are saying I don't believe in PBIS, they believe that at every little offense a kid should be suspended. That sort of sucked us down a little bit.”* Another coordinator noted that *“there's still a lot of work that needs to be done with PBIS; a lot of teachers don't go along with it.”* One coordinator said that her school in particular could benefit from PBIS, which made the teacher resistance to PBIS even more concerning:

*I don't know what other middle schools look like. But here, it's pretty chaotic most of the time...I'm here and in the hallways I can hear kids yelling and swearing and screaming at the staff...but a lot of it again has to do with behavior management. There are certain teachers that have—you can walk by and you can see the class working and they've got them under control. But then you've got the other teachers where kids are just in and out of the classrooms, yelling and screaming and jumping on tables.*

All three WAZ middle schools served students in Grades 6–8. However, the City Connects model was being implemented only in Grade 6. District leaders noted that funding allowed only one coordinator per middle school. They had determined that asking a coordinator to be responsible for more than 200 to 300 students (the amount typically in each grade level at the middle schools) was unreasonable. These district leaders had therefore decided to focus on Grade 6. As one said, it *“was a critical transition year.”*

Staff in all three schools reported that the fact that the middle school coordinators in Springfield were responsible only for Grade 6 students posed a challenge for implementation. These interviewees did not seem to know why the coordinators were working only in Grade 6 and were concerned about what would happen to the students once they were no longer in Grade 6. For example, one principal expressed frustration at the fact that his coordinator was restricted to working with Grade 6 students, and wouldn't be able to provide support once the students became 8<sup>th</sup> graders:

...[T]hey [the students] have somebody they can turn to now [the coordinator] ...Then you say, okay... You're in seventh grade, sorry. You're on your own or back to—so what happens when the kids goes through puberty or the go through hormonal change... The problem that we're having is—and I've tried to explain this to [the district coordinator and school coordinator]—we've got something good going here. What's going to happen to these kids when they get to seventh grade? Do we just drop the ball on them, because this was always meant to be for a sixth grade program.

A coordinator reported that sometimes parents of children in grades other than Grade 6 would hear about her and would contact her to see whether they also could get assistance. She noted that while she helped the parents that came to her to “*build good will*,” she was in a difficult position because she was supposed to work only with Grade 6 students and their families.

**Finding 3: In Year 2, School staff expressed concerns about the district’s level of commitment and involvement in implementation, beyond the involvement of the district coordinator. However, district leadership was somewhat more visible in its support of the wraparound zone efforts than in Year 1.**

In Year 1, coordinators and principals expressed concerns related to district staff knowledge and support for the wraparound efforts, and specifically about City Connects. For example, three coordinators expressed concerns about the lack of support and level of knowledge about City Connects at the district level. One of these coordinators reported that she was not sure that the district “*knows the details of City Connects*.” One principal expressed a similar concern when she noted that there was not clear articulation of what wraparound services are “*from the top*” (i.e., the district). In addition, in Year 1, all coordinators and one principal agreed that there was a lack of support from the district during the district coordinator’s maternity leave. Two coordinators specifically noted that no one at the district level supported the coordinators in the district coordinator’s absence and one said, “*I would like a supervisor that’s more involved. I get that she left for maternity leave but no one replaced her.*”

In contrast, in Year 2, respondents reported that district leadership for WAZ was stronger, with leaders endorsing and raising public awareness for the City Connects model in particular. Staff at seven of eight schools expressed a positive view of district buy-in, reporting that district leadership believed in the efficacy and importance of City Connects. One principal stated, “*The superintendent, I know, is a big fan of City Connects...he really likes what we are doing here in Springfield and does see the benefit...I know he feels really strongly about the program.*” A school coordinator echoed this sentiment: “*[The superintendent] is just a huge fan from what I know and what I’ve seen...I think he [has] believed in that program for a while and sees the benefit.*” Staff at four schools referred to district leadership publically speaking about and promoting the City Connects model. One school coordinator explained that the superintendent taking time out of a brief public address to mention City Connects made the coordinators feel valued and supported. Another school coordinator said that the superintendent had “*mentioned us several times, and it’s always in a positive light.*” While the data gathered during Year 2 indicated that district leadership was vocal in its support of City Connects as a whole, the data did not indicate concrete support from the district’s leaders for specific components of City Connects (e.g., whole class reviews) or for other components of WAZ, such as PBIS.

Although district leadership supported the WAZ initiative by publicizing and acknowledging the importance of the school coordinators' work, most school coordinators relied on the district coordinator for direct support. Five of eight school coordinators stated that the district coordinator was their main point of contact and provider of support. When asked to speak to the quality and strength of district leadership, excluding the district coordinator, one school coordinator replied, *"I can't take [the district coordinator] out of it. I think [she is] our greatest support."* Four school coordinators noted that they had minimal personal contact with district administrators because they primarily worked with the district coordinator. School coordinators at five schools praised the district coordinator's performance. School coordinators characterized the district coordinator as *"phenomenal,"* a great supervisor, and highly supportive of their work. In addition, one school administrator also credited the district coordinator with providing most of the district-level support when he said, *"The district support has been City Connects for us, and it's been quality here because we've got a quality person."* On the whole, school coordinators reported that the district coordinator was the provider of district-level support.

A majority of school coordinators (five of eight) shared positive perceptions of district buy-in, describing district leadership as *"invested," "supportive,"* and *"a proponent of [our work]."* However, school coordinators at two schools declined to comment on district leadership support because they were familiar only with the district coordinator. Another coordinator was unsure how to describe district leadership but made inferences on the basis of what the coordinator had heard from others. When asked whether district leaders were involved with the WAZ initiative, one coordinator replied, *"That's hard for me to answer because I don't deal with anybody from the district except for [the district coordinator]. Everything goes through [the district coordinator] ...it's kind of like everything goes to [her] and we deal with [her]."* When asked whether the support provided by the district had changed, another school coordinator did not know because the coordinator was unaware of any involvement at the district level beyond the district coordinator.

Overall, staff reported that the district had been openly supportive of the wraparound zone work, but staff at four schools reported concerns that the district was not committing enough funding to sustain the work. One school coordinator downplayed the value of mere buy-in, saying, *"I think [the district is] is supportive of [WAZ], but they're not involved in it. I think they like the idea of it."* A teacher at one school stated, *"I would like to see more funding or more staff be allocated to a program such as City Connects. I think that's the empowering link that's missing. And right now they're...stretched very, very thin."* Staff at two schools stated that school coordinators were not compensated fairly in terms of pay and benefits and that this would lead to turnover. One school coordinator said, *"If there were more equal benefits...I think it would be easier to get and keep good coordinators."* One school leader was wary that superficial support by the district would not help their work: *"I don't think we need another bureaucratic level of a supervisor that has all the answers and comes and leaves the problem behind. We need some more hands-on solutions."*

#### **Finding 4: School coordinators continued to be responsible for building relationships with community partners, with limited support provided by the district.**

In Year 2, as in Year 1, district leadership entrusted much of the responsibility for building relationships with community partners to school coordinators. Specifically, all coordinators

reported that they were responsible for recruiting and working with community partners for their individual schools. The district coordinator supported these efforts by identifying potential partners for the school coordinators. Overall, school coordinators described the role of the district coordinator as focusing on raising awareness of certain services and partners, while their role was to initiate and sustain the connections. For example, one school coordinator described how the district coordinator provided a list of community agencies, which the school coordinators used to reach out to providers and establish partnerships. Another recalled how the district coordinator arranged for a math mentoring program to talk to the group of coordinators to inform coordinators about its services. The district coordinator distinguished the roles that the district and the school coordinators played with regard to engaging community partners: *“Whenever I see or hear about new things, then that’s when I bring them to the coordinators so that they’re more well aware of that...the coordinators, on a daily basis, are finding out new resources...they’re really good at...making those connections.”*

Although the coordinators reported widespread success in building community relationships (six site coordinators mentioned new or expanded partnerships in Year 2), overall, coordinators described the district’s support of these activities as limited in scope. When asked what types of support they had received around developing collaborative partnerships, one school coordinator replied: *“I would have to say it, just again has been the other school site coordinators...what we learned about a certain organization we just share it with one another.”* The limited role of the district in supporting community-school relationship building was also described by stakeholders other than coordinators. One teacher said, *“There are a lot of people working on our behalf to foster community relationships, but the district is not necessarily helping...the groundwork, the legwork goes to individuals.”* Three site coordinators mentioned a Community Coalition Kickoff event that the district (along with the coordinators and the School and Main Institute) organized in spring 2012. This event convened community organizations, school coordinators, and the district coordinator to foster mutual understanding about available community services and the City Connects model. However, all coordinators who referred to the event reported that it did not have a lasting or transformative effect on their daily work. A site coordinator said, *“We worked very closely with WAZ, and we had our big kickoff at Springfield College...The reality is this year, it’s still back to us, and it’s day-to-day and we do what we need.”* Two coordinators cited a lack of follow-through after the kickoff event. For example, one coordinator said, *“At the end of the year last year...we had this big meeting with all of these agencies that were coming to learn about City Connects. Then there was no follow-through...it’s like we, as coordinators, don’t have the time, the capacity, and it’s not our job to create district supports like that.”*

School coordinators reported that because the district (including the district coordinator) had delegated much of the relationship-building work to school coordinators, they had formed an ad hoc network to support one another. Six of seven school coordinators mentioned corresponding with their fellow coordinators to share information about services. One school coordinator said, *“All of us, all the coordinators, we email like non-stop. If we hear about a new service, we automatically forward it to everybody...that’s really helpful as far as resource-building.”* This was consistent with the Year 1 data, which also showed that school coordinators routinely relied on one another to coordinate services from community providers. Six coordinators reported that networking built their capacity to meet students’ needs by allowing them to share material goods and donations, exchange inside information on providers, and seek help with difficult placements. As one coordinator said, *“I could email [the other coordinators] and [say] hey, does*

*anyone know about an agency with a bilingual counselor opening? I'll get six emails back in a second."* Coordinators explained that working as a team allowed them to expand their search for scarce services, such as mentoring and mental health. On the whole, during Year 2, school coordinators continued to be proactive in building relationships with the community but depended on one another for support.

## **Summary**

In Year 2, Springfield continued implementing WAZ in five elementary schools and began implementing WAZ in three middle schools. Progress and success with implementation of WAZ continued to vary, with some schools experiencing increasing buy-in and progress in implementation and other schools continuing to struggle. The middle schools faced more challenges during their first year of implementation than their elementary school counterparts had during Year 1 of WAZ.

Additionally, school staff expressed concerns about the district's level of commitment and involvement in implementation. Although district leadership was somewhat more visible in their support of the overall City Connects model than they had been in Year 1, the data did not indicate support from the district's leaders for specific components of City Connects (e.g., whole class reviews) or for other components of WAZ, such as PBIS. Furthermore, in Year 2, as in Year 1, school coordinators continued to be responsible for building relationships with community partners, with limited support provided by the district.

## **Profile F: Worcester**

This profile describes progress made in Worcester during Year 2 of the WAZ initiative and presents key findings related to early indicators of change with respect to WAZ implementation. The data sources used to inform this profile are (a) stakeholder interviews conducted during spring 2013 and (b) WAZ-related documents provided by the district and schools. The analysis of these data was informed by the findings that emerged in Report 2 on conditions and supports during Year 1 of WAZ implementation. For example, researchers paid particular attention to analyzing the extent to which progress did or did not occur on issues that were identified as challenges or potential early indicators of success during Year 1.

### **WAZ Schools and Planned Strategies in Year 2**

Worcester implemented WAZ in seven schools in Year 1 and added an eighth school in Year 2. The seven Year 1 schools were the district's two Level 4 schools (Chandler Elementary and Union Hill) and five innovation schools: Chandler Magnet, Goddard School of Science and Technology, Goddard Scholars Academy (an Innovation School located inside Sullivan Middle School), University Park Campus School (UPCS), and Woodland Academy. Three of the schools (Goddard Elementary, UPCS, and Woodland Academy) had been included in a proposal for a United Way Promise Neighborhood grant, which was in the planning stages when the district applied for the WAZ grant. According to the Worcester WAZ application, the grant would support the schools as hubs for community improvement and development. The eighth school selected in Year 2 (Burncoat Prep) was included because it became a Level 4 school in 2012–13.

Overall, the Year 2 WAZ plan for Worcester was similar to its Year 1 plan (see Table 14). It focused on building on the strategies in the Year 1 plan but also included new details about how to implement those strategies. For example, for the first priority area, Climate and Culture, the Year 1 plan focused on distributing surveys to students, parents, and staff and then addressing issues raised by the survey, such as through staff professional development. The Year 2 plan focused on reviewing and analyzing the data from the surveys that were done in spring 2012 and on identifying strategies to address problems identified through the results. In addition, the Year 2 plan included a stronger focus on family engagement strategies as part of the Climate and Culture improvement area.

For the second priority area, Identify and Address Student Needs, the Year 2 plan included more detail than the Year 1 plan. For example, both plans mentioned the implementation of a common case management system as a goal. However, according to the Year 2 plan, this system would be collaborative and shared through a Community of Practice, in which coordinators would gather regularly to share tips and strategies. While the Year 1 plan had a goal of developing a process to identify student needs and create targeted intervention plans, the Year 2 plan was more specific. Year 2 laid out multiple, specific action steps for the student support plans, including reviewing data; developing a common model for managing student needs, interventions, and referrals; and revising the student support plans throughout the year. Another area in which the Year 2 plan differed was the inclusion of the Insight/HMH Data Management System as a detailed multistep strategy under Identify and Address Student Needs, rather than as a general strategy under District Systems of Support.

For the third priority area, Community Coalition, the Year 2 plan indicated continued focus from Year 1 on community resource mapping and the creation of a standard MOU for school-community partnerships. The Year 2 plan expanded on this, however, by setting more specific goals, including the creation of “a district-sanctioned model for organizing and managing community engagement through a single ‘district point of entry,’ ” a standardized referral process, and regular assessment of quality through data analysis.

For the fourth priority area, District Systems of Support, the Year 2 plan focused heavily on collaboration and communication between district and school-level WAZ staff and school leadership, a theme that was absent from the Year 1 plan. This focus was demonstrated through such strategies as regular meetings of principals and wraparound outreach coordinators (WACs) with administrators and the district coordinator, respectively, as well as creating a plan for “clear, consistent, and timely communication between and across internal stakeholders.” In addition, the Year 2 plan included creating a professional development plan providing training to implement all WAZ strategies, whereas the Year 1 plan called for a more narrowly focused professional development plan to support the implementation of the HMH System.

**Table 14. Comparison of Year 1 and Year 2 WAZ plans for Worcester, by priority improvement area**

Priority Improvement Area	Year 1 WAZ Plan	Year 2 WAZ Plan
Climate and Culture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Survey students, parents, and staff about school climate issues and needs.</li> <li>▪ Develop systems within each school to aid the family support teams and strengthen support strategies.</li> <li>▪ Provide professional development to staff to address needs identified during the survey analysis.</li> <li>▪ Have each school bring in additional service providers as needed to meet needs.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Review and analyze climate survey data from spring 2012.</li> <li>▪ Create a set of strategies in each school to address results from 2012 data, including opportunities for engaging more student and teacher “voice.”</li> <li>▪ Identify necessary supports to implement strategies and promote positive climate and culture expectations and values.</li> <li>▪ Create formal feedback opportunities for each school to gauge progress and assess data.</li> <li>▪ Explore effective practices and successful models for enhancing parent and family engagement.</li> <li>▪ Map existing family engagement approaches and family supports and identify gaps and redundancies.</li> <li>▪ Create a common table for parent and family engagement planning and outreach within Worcester Public Schools (WPS).</li> </ul>

<b>Priority Improvement Area</b>	<b>Year 1 WAZ Plan</b>	<b>Year 2 WAZ Plan</b>
Identify and Address Student Needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Hire wraparound outreach coordinators at each school.</li> <li>▪ Develop common system of case management in alignment with the school’s student and family support team.</li> <li>▪ Develop a process of establishing the health-wellness needs of students and developing targeted intervention plans.</li> <li>▪ Identify community partners to meet the needs of the students, families, and schools.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Insight/HMH Data Management System:</li> <li>▪ Assess soft rollout of Insight and calendar school-by-school launch for the year.</li> <li>▪ Have WAZ team analyze Insight implementation.</li> <li>▪ Develop a training plan for school personnel as schools come on board.</li> <li>▪ Monitor use and ensure there is a mechanism for feedback.</li> <li>▪ Flow chart:</li> <li>▪ Have each WAZ school craft a picture of its current system.</li> <li>▪ Share ideas, recommendations, and opportunities for a “collaborative case management system” via the Community of Practice.</li> <li>▪ Student support plans:</li> <li>▪ Assess design and review contents and data collected at each school.</li> <li>▪ Explore development of a common model for managing student needs, interventions, referrals, etc.</li> <li>▪ Establish regular points of plan review and refinement throughout the year with appropriate administration, faculty, professionals, students, and family.</li> </ul>
Community Coalition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Identify existing community resources and map geographically.</li> <li>▪ Formalize key partnerships through MOUs.</li> <li>▪ Develop an ongoing plan to identify new community partners.</li> <li>▪ Use the HMH Pinpoint System to facilitate a two-way system of communication between the schools and their partners.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Building on the framework and results of the Burncoat Asset Mapping initiative, assess each WAZ school for current partner services and resources.</li> <li>▪ Align school-based maps with district map of community partners engaged in other WPS initiatives.</li> <li>▪ Establish regular opportunities to sift through data to assess service quality and ease of access, address gaps, and follow up on services delivered.</li> <li>▪ Educate and train staff on the referral process.</li> <li>▪ Standardize the referral process for common intervention</li> </ul>



Priority Improvement Area	Year 1 WAZ Plan	Year 2 WAZ Plan
		<p>services/supports.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Initiate standardized MOU that includes universal referral criteria, and uniform data and establishes agreed-on communication protocol.</li> <li>▪ Create a district-sanctioned model for organizing and managing community engagement through a single “district point of entry.”</li> <li>▪ Convene internal WPS leadership to present/promote WAZ efforts throughout the district.</li> </ul>
District Systems of Support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Use district leadership to monitor the delivery and effectiveness of WAZ.</li> <li>▪ Implement the HMH Pinpoint System.</li> <li>▪ Plan professional development to support the implementation of the Pinpoint System.</li> <li>▪ Use district leadership to develop a plan that identifies community-based resources within the WAZ catchment area.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Establish a plan for regular, clear, consistent, and timely communication between and across internal stakeholders.</li> <li>▪ Craft a message (“elevator pitch”) from the district to support and promote WAZ.</li> <li>▪ Establish a culture of joint meetings with principals and administrators on quarterly basis to assess opportunities to identify, share, and replicate best practices and report on progress.</li> <li>▪ Establish bimonthly meetings between WAZ district coordinator and the WACs to review trends, assess needs, and provide support and direction for addressing resources to promote and sustain WAZ.</li> <li>▪ Create a professional development plan that provides the appropriate training and technical assistance to implement WAZ plans.</li> <li>▪ Ensure that professional development opportunities are provided to all affiliated personnel on the access and use of data.</li> <li>▪ Create a process to help guide, model, and educate WPS faculty and staff on effective student support plans to successfully assess student needs, access appropriate services, make timely referrals, manage placements, and provide follow-up.</li> </ul>



## Year 2 Key Findings

AIR's data collection during Year 2 revealed the following five overall findings related to the implementation of WAZ in Worcester during the second year:

1. The role of the Wraparound Outreach Coordinator (WAC) became clear to staff during the second year of WAZ and was essential for schools in implementing all aspects of WAZ, including creating systems to identify and address student needs, implementing strategies to increase family engagement, and facilitating community partnerships.
2. At the time of data collection, the district had not yet implemented the Insight/HMH Pinpoint System, as described in its WAZ plan. This contributed to delays and frustration among school staff related to tracking student progress and follow-up.
3. The lack of a district-led system for facilitating community partnerships contributed to inconsistent communication or misunderstandings about how to formalize partnerships, the process following student referrals, or how to assess the quality of partnerships.
4. The district coordinator was essential to the implementation of WAZ and was the main source of district-level support to school-level staff.
5. Efforts were under way at all schools to increase parent and family engagement, with some schools expanding strategies and seeing evidence of success as they continued addressing this high-priority area.

Table 15 presents the Worcester Year 2 findings together with related Worcester findings from Year 1. Data gathered in Year 2 revealed that during the second year of WAZ implementation, Worcester had made some progress with respect to these Year 1 findings. For example, most of the confusion surrounding the role of the WACs from Year 1 (Year 1 Findings #2 and 3) had disappeared, and their responsibilities were not only better understood, but highly appreciated. Their presence continued to be considered key to implementing WAZ strategies, and many school staff reported not knowing how all the work they did would continue without someone in the WAC position (Year 2 Finding #1).

In Year 1, significant time was spent on planning (Year 1 Finding #1). While data gathered in Year 2 indicate a shift from planning to implementation, they also show that in some areas, the district continued to struggle in carrying out key components of its plan, such as rolling out a data system (Year 2 Finding #2) and creating a district infrastructure to support school-community partnerships (Year 2 Finding #3). Finally, in Year 2, the role of the district coordinator provided to be essential for supporting school staff in their implementation of WAZ strategies (Year 2 Finding #4).

**Table 15. Crosswalk of Year 1 and Year 2 Worcester Findings**

Year 2 Findings	Year 1 Related Findings
<p>Year 2 Finding 1:  <i>The role of the WAC became clear to staff during the second year of WAZ and was essential for schools in implementing all aspects of WAZ, including creating systems to identify and address student needs, implementing strategies to increase family engagement, and facilitating community partnerships.</i></p>	<p>Year 1 Finding 2:  <i>Upon launching the WAZ grant, the district did not have a clear and consistent definition of the roles and responsibilities for the Wraparound Outreach Coordinator (WAC), which created some confusion and delayed progress in some cases.</i></p> <p>Year 1 Finding 3:  <i>Despite initial confusion around roles, hiring the WAC for each WAZ school was key to advancing the WAZ priority areas in Worcester.</i></p>
<p>Year 2 Finding 2:  <i>At the time of data collection, the district had not yet implemented the Insight/HMH Pinpoint System, as described in its WAZ plan. This contributed to delays and frustration among school staff related to tracking student progress and follow-up.</i></p>	<p>Year 1 Finding 1:  <i>A significant amount of time and resources during Year 1 were devoted to planning, data gathering, and refinement and clarification of WAZ strategies.</i></p>
<p>Year 2 Finding 3:  <i>The lack of a district-led system for facilitating community partnerships contributed to inconsistent communication or misunderstandings about how to formalize partnerships, the process following student referrals, or how to assess the quality of partnerships.</i></p>	<p>Year 1 Finding 1:  <i>A significant amount of time and resources during Year 1 were devoted to planning, data gathering, and refinement and clarification of WAZ strategies.</i></p>
<p>Year 2 Finding 4:  <i>The district coordinator was essential to implementation of WAZ and the main source of district level support to school-level staff.</i></p>	
<p>Year 2 Finding 5:  <i>Efforts were under way at all schools to increase parent and family engagement, with some schools expanding strategies and seeing evidence of success as they continued addressing this high-priority area.</i></p>	

Further details regarding the Year 2 findings, and the evidence that supports them, follow.

**Finding 1: The role of the WAC became clear to staff during the second year of WAZ and was essential for schools in implementing all aspects of WAZ, including creating systems to identify and address student needs, implementing strategies to increase family engagement, and facilitating community partnerships.**

A major finding in Worcester during Year 1 was the lack of clarity about the role of the WAC. Data from Year 2, however, revealed much improvement in this area, with interviewees in all different roles across the district and schools sharing very similar definitions of the role of the WAC. According to staff, the primary responsibility of the WAC was to help students and families find resources in a timely manner, which would then influence students' performance in school. As one district leader said, *"The Wraparound coordinators are truly focusing on, 'How can I support a family to be stable enough so the student comes to school every day with a learning frame of mind?'"* A very similar sentiment was expressed by one school leader, who said that the focus of the WAC's work was on *"supporting children and families and reaching out to community to engage them in the school and to help us find the resources to meet the needs of the individual children beyond the academic piece, those other things that impact learning. [Our WAC] serves as kind of a coordinator to bring all those pieces together."* Similar sentiments were expressed across all other interviewees.

### **WAC Role Clarity**

At all schools, understanding of WAZ and the role of the WAC was reported as improved over the previous year. As one WAC put it, *"I think teachers have started to see the difference that can take place when you start to address some of the nonacademic barriers and how that affects their classroom. I get more and more teachers seeking my assistance out, which is great."* Another WAC explained, *"[The teachers] love me, and it's not me personally; it's the work. Ultimately, the goal of the teacher is to teach. If they don't have to take care of the nonacademic like food, shelter, and clothes, ...they can have the time to teach."* Principals also found it helpful to have a WAC in their schools. One principal was grateful for the school's WAC because *"it took an awful lot of time away from the evaluation of teachers, the monitoring of the school programming, the instructional piece that I feel is a priority for me. Having her take on these cases has been a great opportunity, I think, for the families and really helps free me up to do my job in a different way."* At Burncoat Prep, which was in its first year of WAZ, the WAC came from another school and was already familiar with the role. According to multiple district staff, when introducing WAZ to a new school, it was important to bring in an experienced WAC. One staff member noted, *"You had a school who said, so what's your role, [and] she could actually articulate her role."*

Staff consistently described WACs as extremely helpful, especially with respect to creating systems for identifying student needs, implementing strategies to increase family engagement, and facilitating community partnerships. For example, at one school, the WAC was instrumental in helping staff move beyond identification to addressing student needs. One school staff member said, *"Up until last year, there has been no trouble identifying the students that are at-risk, but now what do we do with it? That's what we really worked on this year [and our WAC] had a key role in that...So we're starting to implement different programs to benefit them. [The WAC] has definitely helped."* One principal also discussed the work the school's WAC did with family engagement saying, *"[Our WAC has] been doing more parent outreach...is involved with*

*our parent council, helps me set up all those meetings, set those agendas, and get people in the door, send out the minutes and follow-up on initiatives that I want.”* In addition to events, the WAC was described as *“helpful in convincing parents sometimes that counseling is valuable and valid, and in some cases necessary for their kids.”* Individuals from community organizations also mentioned that the WACs were essential to sustaining their partnerships with schools. As one said, *“Having a single person to go to makes a big difference...[To] keep it in one place then helps me be more consistent with what’s happening.”*

### ***Distinction between WAC and School Adjustment Counselor***

One area of confusion in Year 1 came in distinguishing the responsibilities of the WACs from those of the school adjustment counselors (SACs), who were in each school as a part of the districtwide Student Support Process (SSP). Although there was initial confusion in some schools about the difference in the roles of the SACs and the WACs, district officials believed that schools had settled into the idea that these were two people supporting the same goal who had found a good balance between them, working together to “triage” student crises. One district staff member noted, *“I think the [school] adjustment counselors and the Wraparound coordinators are working very well together. I think they have learned that there’s no territory, that the focus is the same. They’re just two different things but to support the same kind of a goal.”* This perspective, that there was a collaborative working relationship between the school adjustment counselors and WACs, was shared by most school and district staff.”

Nearly all WACs said that they spent time at the beginning of the year communicating to teachers at meetings and through e-mails what the difference was between the WAC and the SAC and when to refer students to each. The district coordinator was also mentioned as assisting in this clarification. In addition, all interviewed SACs discussed frequent collaboration between themselves and the WAC in their school. As one SAC said:

*I work very closely with the Wraparound coordinator...I deal pretty much with the whole population in the school and [the WAC]...coordinates services outside of the school with a community agency. As a school adjustment counselor, I would like to say that our collaboration is on a daily basis and has been pretty much constant with some of the students that we have...The collaboration with [the WAC] has been absolutely very positive.*

They also said that having the WAC had been helpful to them not only by taking on some of the responsibilities that had previously been on their plate, but also by serving as a resource they could draw on to increase their connection with community organizations.

### ***Sustainability concerns***

Concerns about the sustainability both of the WAC position and the work they were doing for the schools were voiced by many. Some staff reported feeling that budget constraints led them to see a grim prospect for sustainability of the WACs, despite the fact that district and school staff universally agreed on their value. One principal said, *“I don’t know if it would be as comprehensive or as successful as it is [without] the help of the Wraparound coordinator,”* while a teacher at another school worried that *“without that extra body whose purpose is to keep this thing working...it would, maybe not fall apart, but definitely fade away.”* At another school,

emphasis had been placed on both developing systems and structures and building the capacity of other school staff to be able to continue the work in the absence of the WAC. This WAC said:

*My role is to build capacity amongst our staff, our teacher leaders who are doing some of our family involvement work, our community involvement work, our student involvement work. Then, provide the supports to our counselors – adjustment counselors, guidance counselors – in gaining the resources they need out of the community so that they are doing the role of getting the boots on the ground, really on the frontlines. My support is to make sure they have what they need to be effective.*

One SAC advocated for the expansion of the WACs to all schools in the district, stating, “*I just think that it would be such an excellent thing to be spread out for more schools to be able to have the position, and for us to be able to keep them. I can’t imagine what life is going to be like without them.*” Finally, a principal saw backslide as inevitable without the WAC. “*If they eliminated the position, we go back to where we were three years ago with supporting part of the child and not having them as ready and stable as they could be...Prior to [the WAC] coming aboard, we did the best we could, but it wasn’t what [the WAC] is able to do.*”

**Finding 2: At the time of data collection, the district had not yet implemented the Insight/HMH Pinpoint System, as described in its WAZ plan. This contributed to delays and frustration among school staff related to tracking student progress and follow-up.**

Despite the fact that implementation of the HMH Pinpoint System was included in both the Year 1 and Year 2 plans in Worcester, at the time of data collection (April 2013), it had not yet been implemented. This delay was noted by several interviewees across the district. One WAC reported, “*We’re supposed to have the Insights program up and running. Unfortunately, that has not yet happened,*” and another said, “*We do not have a data system for our program. It’s not a positive subject for us.*”

The lack of this system affected the efficiency of time use both in school team meetings and by WACs in general. The lack of a computerized system that everyone could access to check on the status of referred students led multiple WACs to use school team meeting time to provide updates on student progress and to follow up with teachers in person about their student referrals. This made the WACs even more irreplaceable in many schools because they were being called on to do everything that the HMH system was expected to do. Said one WAC, “*We have a contract with Houghton Mifflin [Harcourt] to create a computer-based program, but not everything has gone smoothly with that...So I have to Excel this unless I create some sort of program myself or pay for a program...It’s not my ideal method.*” Another WAC said that the student data are “*in handwriting. We want that obviously [electronically] inputted. The hope was that Houghton Mifflin Harcourt was going to create the analytics piece that allowed for more case management. We’re still waiting for that to come out. In the meanwhile, this is what we have and it’s not feasible.*” Many WACs mentioned that teachers would still stop them in the hallways to mention students they wanted to refer for services instead of filling out the referral forms.

Because the WACs were called on to play so many roles at each school related to identifying and addressing student needs, engaging families, and facilitating community partnerships, the added

responsibility of creating an interim system to track student progress was a burden for some. Further, it limited the time available for them to work on other initiatives. One WAC discussed the “*replication of effort*” that occurred as a result of not having the HMH Pinpoint system:

*The biggest thing for me that we still haven't really resolved is the time issue, time management...[and] the communication between the different folks' organizations that are working with a particular student. I'm doing something on behalf of a family, there might be two or three other people in this building doing something on behalf of that family, and then there are outside organizations doing stuff. There's very rarely that opportunity to communicate...It's something that I think Pinpoint was trying to address with a system that they've developed, this Insights system and analytics, but we're not there. We were hopeful. That was something that from day one it was clear we needed to have it.*

School staff other than that WACs also reported frustrations related to the delay in rolling out the HMH system. One principal reported:

*We created our own [data tracking system] because there's nothing coming from the district. Although, they've talked about it, it's now the second year talking about it. I could see that as a need that should be something systematically created so that everyone knows there are some nonnegotiables that have to be present in this datasheet.*

The waning timeline of the WAZ initiative enhanced frustrations even more. As one WAC stated, “*We have an initiative that has an expiration date, and how much do you really want to invest in creating a new system if you don't know if that system is going to outlast the three-year window?*” A similarly frustrated perspective questioning whether a universal data-tracking system was ever going to be produced through WAZ was expressed across many schools.

**Finding 3: The lack of a district-led system for facilitating community partnerships contributed to inconsistent communication or misunderstandings about how to formalize partnerships, the process following student referrals, or how to assess the quality of partnerships.**

According to Worcester's Year 1 plan, the HMH Pinpoint System was expected to “facilitate a two-way system of communication between the schools and their partners.” In addition, the Year 2 plan discussed the creation of “a district sanctioned model for organizing and managing community engagement through a single ‘district point of entry.’” At the time of data collection in Year 2, the HMH system had not yet been implemented and no system was in place to formalize partnerships across the district. A few WACs reported attending district-hosted professional development sessions focused on building partnerships and noted that limited community resource mapping was done at the Burncoat Elementary School. However, no progress or action on creating a formal, district-led infrastructure for support school-community partnerships was mentioned during interviews or focus groups.

The lack of a clear and uniform system or structure to facilitate partnerships contributed to inconsistent communication between schools and external organizations and a lack of understanding on the side of both the organizations and the schools about how each worked. A staff member at one community organization recounted:



*There were problems around how people were communicating. [The school staff] were talking to three different people and getting three different answers...So we were getting messages from three or four different people about their experiences with our three or four different people and that was kind of hard to navigate.*

The WACs were serving as the primary contact at the schools for the organizations and arranged regular meetings between the school leadership and the organization staff to clear up any misunderstandings and keep lines of communication open. According to many school staff, the WAC was important in making community partnerships effective.

One staff member at a community organization described how existing school policies were creating barriers to the formation of partnerships:

*There are some pretty big systematic roadblocks...Things like if an agency wants to run a program that might be good, we still have issues of the space won't be available, you have to pay the janitor fee, it has to end by this time because the bus leaves at that time...There's just no flexibility in the system, so things never quite turn out."*

A similar sentiment was echoed by a principal who said that outside organizations that wanted to come in and hold an event did not seem to realize the cascading chain of events this would cause by having to shift the whole day's schedule. "*I guess people don't understand the way schools work,*" she noted. Logistics such as transportation were difficult for schools and community organizations to sort out without the assistance of the district. One WAC discussed forming a partnership with the Boys and Girls Club:

*It's a little too far to walk...Why don't we just have a bus that picks up the students here anyways and drops them off and just put my Boys and Girls Club kids on there? So I went to the district. It took a little legwork, but I was able to get them to have a bus stop right at the Boys and Girls Club. We formed a partnership with them.*

Buses and obtaining other transportation necessary to facilitate successful partnerships were mentioned as an issue at many schools as well as by community organizations.

Without a system, it was also difficult to demonstrate what work had already been done. For example, in several of the WAZ schools, there were existing community partnerships, but no record existed at the district level about these partnerships. This hindered the WAC's ability to efficiently and effectively leverage existing partnerships, as well as their ability to build positive relationships with staff in their schools who were already engaged in this work. One WAC said:

*There is some backlash around some of the perceived work that we're doing because other people have done this work before. For instance, as a district, Worcester has formalized partnerships with certain—for instance—mental health agencies. We know that exists, but when the state came in and looked school to school to school, they didn't see that any of that stuff was captured... There are a couple of staff members here, for instance, that have been in the school for a long time that were totally indebted to this work. For me to come in and say, okay, now I'm the person that is in charge of that was a complete disservice to the amount of work that they had done.*

Further, school staff described wanting more guidance from the district on which agencies they should partner with. One staff member said, *“I see great potential, but the document [from the district] is just giving me a list of agencies. Which one do I trust?”* Experiences at the school level supported this skepticism. One principal said that interactions with outside agencies varied: *“Some it’s just a referral that got thrown out there in the stack and we never hear back so we exclude them from our choice menu.”* District staff also commented on challenges related to providing guidance to schools. One district staff member said, *“So the document is sitting there kind of being used cautiously until we have, in my mind, resources to go and have someone look at the quality of those agencies and exactly what are their fortes. What exactly do they stand for?”* A comprehensive assessment of which organizations schools could count on for effective services could help eliminate inefficiencies such as waiting for an agency that does not return calls.

**Finding 4: The district coordinator was essential to implementation of WAZ and the main source of district-level support to school-level staff.**

At every school, the district coordinator was mentioned as the driving force behind WAZ in Worcester, the main source of district-level support, and the go-between for communicating with others at the district level. This indicated a continuation of the dynamic reported in Year 1, which was strong support from the district coordinator. Worcester’s district coordinator was said to be incredibly accessible and told all staff across the district to call anytime they needed his assistance. One principal described the district coordinator as

*the person at the district level who coordinates the Wraparound efforts. He’s extremely involved and communicates consistently with principals and more so with the Wraparound coordinators; holds regular meetings with them; calls on a regular basis; meets with them; comes to the schools; makes it a point to stop and see me, asking if things are going well, if I need any assistance from him, how’s [our WAC] doing; those kinds of things.*

One WAC said, *“If we need some district support, [the district coordinator] is our voice to be able to say we’ve noticed this particular issue or we’ve noticed that this could be more beneficial.”* As another principal said, the district coordinator was not only *“the leader in name but he’s clearly the driving force”* for WAZ.

The responsibilities of the district coordinator were broad and deep and included creating data systems, engaging community partners, helping address transportation issues, clarifying the role of WACs, communicating with and among district staff, and more. Said one WAC of the work the district coordinator did for them, *“He provides us with constant information, answering questions, troubleshooting, getting data, professional development, and just for any additional support that I may need.”* The district coordinator also facilitated collaboration among all WACs through biweekly meetings created for them to share ideas and protocols and brainstorm potential ways to address student needs and better connect with community organizations. In addition, the district coordinator convened quarterly principal meetings for school leaders of Wraparound schools across the district. One concern expressed by some school staff was that the

district coordinator had been pulled in too many directions and had been given non-WAZ responsibilities for the 2012–13 school year.

Perceptions of district-level support beyond that of the district coordinator were mixed, which again continued the dynamic reported in Year 1. Some felt that WAZ was a definite priority for the district, whereas others said that they felt other staff at the district had a different set of priorities and did not put WAZ at the top. For example, when discussing district support for Wraparound, one WAC said, *“Other than the district coordinator? I would describe it as a little bit ambiguous because I feel like some people really like what we’re doing. Some people don’t like what we’re doing...Some people look at us and think we’re totally invaluable and important. Other people look at us and they’re like it’s a fluff position.”* These uncertainties raised concerns for staff about continued support for WAZ if the district coordinator position did not continue in Worcester.

**Finding 5: Efforts were under way at all schools to increase parent and family engagement, with some schools expanding strategies and seeing evidence of success as they continued addressing this high priority area.**

Worcester’s Year 2 plan included a stronger focus on family engagement than did its Year 1 plan. Indeed, data collected in Year 2 revealed that parent and family engagement was a high priority at all schools, with nearly every school noting improvement in parent engagement during the 2012–13 school year through increased event attendance, more frequent school visits by parents, and additional committees or other opportunities for families to get involved. Some of this could be attributed to different strategies employed by the schools as they attempted to become more welcoming to parents; half of the schools reported being more hospitable and open as a specific goal. One teacher noted this shift saying, *“The parents are just very impressed, and they feel very open and willing to come into the school. Before, I feel like it [could] be intimidating to come to talk to teachers, and I feel like there [was] not really that relationship.”* Multiple principals attributed the presence of the WAC as contributing to parents’ newfound willingness to visit the school, with their bilingual abilities one of the main reasons.

In addition, fun events outside the typical academic meetings were mentioned at six of the eight schools. These included ice cream socials, student theater productions, family movie nights, spaghetti dinners, bingo, and cookouts. Attendance for these types of events was markedly higher than for academic events such as parent-teacher conferences or PTO meetings. As one principal remarked, *“Our academic nights were so poorly attended, but our family fun nights were like crazy. Everybody wanted to come.”* Schools had also moved toward becoming spaces for the larger community through classes or workshops. Offerings such as ESL classes, literacy trainings, or workshops on how to obtain a GED were offered at nearly every school. Some schools also used these evening classes as an opportunity to inform parents of events happening at the school during other times, looking to boost the attendance for those as well.

Every WAC discussed working with families as an integral part of his or her role. One WAC runs the PTO and is responsible for both a monthly parent newsletter and a parent bulletin board, all to increase communication between the school and home. Another said, *“I’m grateful that I’ve been able to do a lot around family engagement.”* WACs at half the schools created family engagement committees, while others adopted a role with existing PTOs or parent councils.

Beyond the visible work of the WACs in connecting with parents through these formal settings and channels, principals, teachers, and SACs at many schools mentioned the ability of the WACs to connect with families in a way that many other staff could not: all WACs were bilingual. This was seen as an important quality as was their willingness to be available and initiate contact with both students and parents to open the lines of communication and establish relationships.

Most schools also had parent engagement committees or PTOs, with a few instituting these groups for the first time in Year 2 and others working on increasing the attendance and participation of parents in already existing groups. The WACs were involved in or heading up the parent committees at a majority of the schools. A few barriers to participation in these groups mentioned at various schools were transportation to the meetings, the time challenges facing single parents or those working multiple jobs, and language barriers. Many parents were uncomfortable communicating in English, but the meetings were conducted in English. As one parent reported, *“English is not the primary language for a large, large group of these people. The children might speak it, but the parents don’t. So getting the information out there, telling the parents, trying to communicate with them is just so difficult.”* The ability of the WACs to speak with parents in Spanish was cited as important in encouraging more parents to visit and become involved in school functions. In addition to event participation, schools focused on increasing communication to parents through diverse platforms including Know Your School Nights, class showcases, flyers, phone calls, and monthly newsletters.

Parent involvement in the referral process became a regular practice at most schools. One principal noted that this had been a hard process for some parents: *The most difficult barrier is trying to get the parents to buy into what you’re telling them because like any parent, it’s hard to hear that your child isn’t doing well emotionally. A lot of my families, they felt like counseling or seeing a therapist stigmatized them. Trying to work through that can be challenging.*

Multiple schools also informed parents about behavior expectations in the school in an attempt to have these same behaviors reinforced at home. As one principal stated, *“We’ve moved this year to try and engage the families more with the core values so that they can reinforce it at home with the kids.”* Another principal linked increasing parent involvement in committees and workshops at the school with bringing school expectations back to their homes, saying, *“It’s not only about learning skills to help your child. It’s also about helping parents learn a little bit about the culture in our school so that they can follow through or be enforced at home.”*

## **Summary**

During the 2012–13 school year, Worcester continued to implement the WAZ initiative, guided by a Year 2 plan that expanded on the Year 1 plan. The district maintained implementation efforts that began in 2011–12 in seven schools (five innovation schools and two Level 4 schools) and added an eighth school (Burncoat Prep) that became a Level 4 school in 2012–13. Because this was the second year of implementation for seven of the eight schools, they entered 2012–13 with most planning completed and implementation taking center stage. This year, the role of the WAC, which had caused some confusion during Year 1, was understood and appreciated by school staff. These school Wraparound coordinators continued to be key to the implementation of WAZ initiatives in all priority improvement areas, and school principals were especially concerned about the sustainability of the initiatives if the WAC position was not maintained after

the RTTT grant period. The Insight/HMH Pinpoint System that was described in both the Year 1 and Year 2 district plans had not yet been implemented at the time of data collection in April 2013. This continued delay led to frustration and additional work for many WACs and contributed to inefficient and sometimes ineffective tracking of student interventions. A single “district point of entry” for organizing and managing community partnerships, also described in the Year 2 plan, had likewise not yet been created. Not having this districtwide community partnership support system contributed to a lack of knowledge about the process of creating and sustaining partnerships between community organizations and schools.

The main source of district support for the WAZ initiative came from the district coordinator, who all school staff deemed essential. He was called the voice for the schools’ needs at the district level and “*the driving force*” behind WAZ. Finally, all schools continued and expanded their efforts from Year 1 to increase parent and family engagement, and many reported success in this area as shown by increased attendance at school events. Many schools offered workshops and social events to families in addition to academically focused activities and continued to concentrate on making the school culture welcoming to parents. Staff at all levels expressed support for the WAZ initiative, were encouraged by seeing students receive additional supports through WAZ attached activities, and had hope that these initiatives would continue in the future.

## IV. Conclusion

This report’s findings can help ESE, school districts, individual schools, and other stakeholders understand the ways the WAZ implementation progressed and contributed to early indicators of change during Year 2. The findings also begin to shed light on factors that may support the long-term sustainability of WAZ and its associated outcomes. As WAZ enters its third and final year of implementation, it is important to consider these factors when planning for the continued implementation of WAZ strategies beyond the life of the grant.

The data gathered in Year 2 showed progress in all districts in the area of school climate and family engagement. Specifically, staff reported improvements in the ways teachers managed student behavior, decreases in office discipline referrals and referrals to the nurse’s office, increased attendance at family events, particularly social events, and a more welcoming environment in the schools for parents. Staff also reported improvements in the quality and quantity of school-community partnerships.

By contrast, the Year 2 data showed less progress in the area of district support. For example, only one district (Lynn) had established and reported success with a district-led community coalition. Additionally, although the extent to which district leadership demonstrated commitment to WAZ varied, staff in four districts generally perceived their district leadership to be “*not involved*” in the implementation of the initiative. Without visible support from district leaders and their concrete participation in meaningful activities related to the initiative, the WAZ schools sometimes struggled in achieving buy-in among all teachers and staff, which then in turn negatively affected implementation progress.

Finally, data gathered in Year 2 continued to show a reliance on WAZ-funded school coordinator positions to oversee and coordinate the implementation of WAZ strategies in the schools. The only exception was Lynn, which intentionally chose not to hire WAZ coordinators but instead to have existing school staff serve on WAZ-related teams. In other districts, many staff described how important the school coordinator position was and expressed concerns over a perceived lack of plans to sustain the work of these staff members once WAZ funding ends.

Lynn stood out as unique among the six WAZ districts because of its decision to not hire WAZ school coordinators and because it was the only district with a functioning community coalition in place. In addition, data showed that Lynn had very strong buy-in and support from district leadership and was focused on replicating WAZ strategies in non-WAZ schools. Fall River was very similar to Lynn; it too had very strong and supportive leaders and was replicating WAZ strategies in non-WAZ schools. Fall River was also experimenting with integrating WAZ responsibilities into existing staff positions and beginning to take steps toward a more formal system of district support for developing community partnerships. Overall, these two districts emerged from the data analysis as relatively well positioned to sustain core aspects of the WAZ initiative. Other districts struggled with establishing effective districts systems of support, the lack of which could make sustainability more challenging.

It is too early in the evaluation to make any definitive statements about the extent to which these districts will or will not be successful in achieving long-term success as a result of WAZ. However, the data collected in Year 2 revealed some important differences among districts that

may be associated with differences in short- and long-term outcomes. Data gathered during the final year of implementation will shed further light on this question.

In the meantime, AIR recommends that ESE and the WAZ districts focus on key aspects of sustainability. One resource developed for a similar initiative, identified four major strategies as important for achieving sustainability (National Center for Mental Health Promotion and Youth Violence; <http://sshs.promoteprevent.org/project-directors/tools/legacy-wheel>). They are presented below. Our analysis of the data gathered through this evaluation showed that many of these strategies are already being used by the WAZ grantees. To support sustainability, we recommend continued and increased focus on these strategies during the final year of the grant.

1. **Leadership.** Sustaining an initiative's positive outcomes is possible when its leaders (a) provide a vision of how the program's functions have a place within other community initiatives; (b) identify infrastructure changes that institutionalize practices (such as a common screening tool or data management system); and (c) connect their work to larger systems and to groups and individuals within the community who have similar priorities. For example, Fall River leaders embedded WAZ within larger district improvement goals by creating a district-level WAZ oversight committee and discussing WAZ at district-wide principal meetings.
2. **Financing.** Although money may be required to sustain a program's positive outcomes, it is often possible to sustain outcomes with less funding than the original grant provided, and it is sometimes possible to sustain outcomes with no additional funding. Lynn's model of using teams of school-based staff to oversee WAZ, instead of full-time staff positions, is one example of achieving sustainability with less funds. Seeking the integration of program elements into other key programs within a district or community is one of the best uses of existing funding.
3. **Partnerships and Collaboration.** Partnerships or collaborations among agencies or programs are most effective when connections are established early in a project and cultivated throughout its life cycle. Strong partnerships involve others who are interested in the same goals, are affected by the same problems, and can provide essential support and resources. For example, in Holyoke, community partners are members of school work groups focused around areas of need, and are therefore involved in planning and have an active voice in the decision-making process around how to support those needs.
4. **Communication and Marketing.** Using communication and marketing skills to inform others about a program's goals and successes is a key way to create and maintain a base of support that can contribute to sustaining a program and its function. In Springfield, for example, district leaders often mentioned City Connects (which was implementing components of WAZ) in public addresses, gaining visibility and building broader support for the program. Developing an adaptable presentation about the problems the program addresses and how the program is reducing or eliminating those problems can help publicize the program and gain support and partnerships.

Drawing from these strategies, we recommend that the WAZ districts develop a sustainability plan in collaboration with all major partners, and that ESE provide support and training to the

districts on this. The first step in developing this plan is determining which components of WAZ are already successful and will be sustained; the second is determining which successful components of WAZ need a strategy for sustainability; and then the third is determining which components of WAZ the district does not want to sustain. Next, the sustainability plan itself should focus on strengthening existing program characteristics and infrastructure and on routinizing key WAZ practices. We recommend that these plans be districtwide and focus on replicating WAZ strategies in non-WAZ schools. In Appendix E, we include a sample sustainability assessment worksheet, which WAZ districts can adapt when developing sustainability plans.

AIR's evaluation efforts are ongoing. Future reports will provide additional analyses of the interview, survey, and document data for each WAZ district. Special emphasis will be placed on an analysis of outcomes and how districts plan for sustainability during the final year of implementation. AIR looks forward to producing meaningful results and recommendations that can effectively support district and school WAZ-related planning, implementation, sustainability, and replication.



## Appendix A: Research Questions, by Data Source

Research Questions	Data Sources						
	Document Reviews	Stakeholder Interviews	Teacher Focus Groups	Observations of Technical Assistance	Extant Data Analysis	Student Survey	School Staff Survey
<i>Research Question Set A: Conditions and Supports.</i> What are the district, school, and other conditions (e.g., school climate and culture) and supports that are in place at the beginning of the WAZ grants, and how are they facilitating or impeding planning and implementation?							
A1. What <i>practices</i> do the WAZ plans include?	✓						
A2. What <i>initial assessment</i> occurred at the district and school levels to inform planning and implementation? Were assets, capacities, and other resources assessed? What are students' needs in the implementing schools, and to what extent are the WAZ plans a good fit for these needs?	✓	✓					
A3. What <i>policies/protocols</i> are currently in place at the state, district, and school levels that support the WAZ initiative?	✓	✓					
A4. What is the <i>current awareness and understanding of WAZ and its theory of action</i> among district and school staff, as well as community partners? For example, do stakeholders understand the connection between mental health and learning?		✓	✓				✓
A5. How does the <i>ESE</i> support districts and schools in WAZ planning and implementation (e.g., planning grants, support, guidance, monitoring functions)?		✓		✓			
A6. What types of <i>external technical assistance</i> do <i>WAZ grantees</i> request or need to support WAZ planning/implementation? What types of technical assistance needs have ESE and the WAZ technical assistance provider, School and Main Institute (SMI), identified for the districts and schools?		✓		✓			
A7. What types of support does the <i>WAZ technical assistance provider</i> (SMI) provide to districts and schools in planning for and implementing the WAZ? What other WAZ-related technical assistance support do districts/schools receive? Does the technical assistance align with identified technical assistance needs of districts/schools? How does it facilitate planning and implementation?	✓	✓		✓			

Research Questions	Data Sources						
	Document Reviews	Stakeholder Interviews	Teacher Focus Groups	Observations of Technical Assistance	Extant Data Analysis	Student Survey	School Staff Survey
A8. What is the role of the <i>District Wraparound Coordinator</i> in each district and to what extent are there similarities and differences in their roles across districts? What are their initial skills and experiences relative to WAZ and working in districts and schools? How are these coordinators securing resources, engaging stakeholders and the interagency coalition, communicating and collaborating within the district office as well as schools and service providers, and coordinating activities to ensure successful WAZ implementation?	✓	✓	✓	✓			
A9. What is the role of the <i>School Wraparound Coordinator</i> in each school and to what extent are there similarities and differences in their roles across schools? What are their initial skills and experiences relative to WAZ and working in districts and schools? How are these coordinators ensuring that the appropriate resources and community services are deployed at the school level to promote positive school climate and the implementation of universal and targeted student supports? How are these coordinators interacting with the interagency coalitions and families?	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓
A10. What roles do <i>interagency coalitions and community partners</i> have in WAZ planning and implementation? How are the <i>interagency coalitions</i> bringing together and facilitating coordination of the appropriate community partners to provide services in WAZ schools? What, if any, challenges do the interagency coalitions and community partners experience in supporting WAZ planning and implementation?	✓	✓		✓			
A11. How have <i>families</i> been involved in planning and early implementation of WAZ supports? What has supported or impeded their engagement?	✓	✓	✓				✓
A12. <i>At the district level</i> , what other factors contribute to WAZ planning and implementation? What is district leadership’s role (i.e., superintendent and other key leaders) and how is it best characterized (including its quality)? Others? Which resources are most necessary to support planning and implementation? What is the <i>initial quality and strength of leadership and advocacy</i> for the WAZ in districts?	✓	✓	✓				
A13. <i>At the school level</i> , what other factors contribute to WAZ planning and implementation? What is school leadership’s role and how is it best characterized (including its quality)? Staff’s role? Others? Which resources are most necessary to support planning and implementation? What is the <i>initial quality and strength of leadership and advocacy</i> for the WAZ in schools?	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓

Research Questions	Data Sources						
	Document Reviews	Stakeholder Interviews	Teacher Focus Groups	Observations of Technical Assistance	Extant Data Analysis	Student Survey	School Staff Survey
A14. Which <i>conditions/supports</i> are most important to facilitating planning and implementation? Why and how so?		✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
A15. What are <i>barriers</i> to WAZ planning and implementation (in particular for the District and School Wraparound Coordinators)?		✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
A16. What are key <i>lessons learned</i> as the WAZ in each district were/are planned and plans are revisited?		✓	✓				
<b>Research Question Set B: Early Evidence of Change.</b> How are districts and schools progressing on early indicators of WAZ planning and implementation?							
B1. How have <i>policies/procedures</i> changed to support WAZ implementation?	✓	✓					
B2. How much <i>professional development</i> and <i>external technical assistance</i> are <i>WAZ grantees receiving</i> , and in what areas (topics) are they receiving technical assistance?		✓		✓			✓
B3. What types of <i>systems for student support</i> are WAZ schools implementing, or planning to implement as a result of the WAZ initiative and their plans?	✓	✓	✓				✓
B4. How are WAZ grantees <i>using (or planning to use) data to screen and monitor student progress</i> as a result of the WAZ initiative and their plans?	✓	✓	✓				✓
B5. How are the roles of <i>community providers</i> changing over the course of planning and implementation? Are they used more strategically and do they act more strategically? What types of services are they providing differently? How often are they meeting?	✓	✓					
B6. How is the <i>intersection of district and school factors</i> contributing to or hindering WAZ planning and implementation? How are the roles of district and school leadership changing over the course of planning and implementation? In what ways are the roles or quality of leadership at the district and school levels seemingly contributing to or hindering WAZ planning and implementation? How so?	✓	✓	✓				
B7. Are there any state-level or ESE-related factors (e.g., state practices, policies, procedures) that are contributing to or impeding district and school progress toward WAZ implementation?	✓	✓	✓				
B8. Are districts and schools <i>implementing WAZ with fidelity</i> , based on their plans? If not, what are the changes and why have the changes occurred?	✓	✓	✓				✓
B9. What are key <i>lessons learned</i> as the WAZ in each district are implemented?		✓	✓				

Research Questions	Data Sources						
	Document Reviews	Stakeholder Interviews	Teacher Focus Groups	Observations of Technical Assistance	Extant Data Analysis	Student Survey	School Staff Survey
<b>Research Question Set C: Outcomes.</b> What are the <b>outcomes</b> associated with WAZ implementation?							
After receiving a WAZ implementation grant, is there evidence of:							
C1. Greater <i>knowledge of WAZ and its theory of action</i> among district and school staff as well as community partners?		✓	✓				✓
C2. Increased <i>interagency collaboration</i> ?	✓	✓	✓				
C3. Improved <i>practices, policies, and procedures</i> for the delivery of student supports?	✓	✓	✓				✓
C4. Greater <i>coordination of service delivery</i> for students and their families?	✓	✓	✓				✓
C5. Improved <i>systems for assessment and monitoring of student progress and well-being</i> ?	✓	✓	✓				✓
C6. Increased <i>use of programmatic evaluation data for continuous quality improvement</i> ?	✓	✓	✓				
C7. Greater <i>financial efficiency</i> (e.g., alignment of resources)? Likelihood of financial sustainability?	✓	✓					
C8. Increased <i>family involvement</i> in the delivery of supports to students? How are they involved?		✓	✓				✓
C9. Greater <i>leadership and advocacy</i> for the WAZ in districts and schools?		✓	✓				
C10. <i>Enhanced capacity for delivering student support systems</i> to:							
Increase <i>school and district staff knowledge</i> of the functions and resources necessary to maintain WAZ supports?		✓	✓				✓
Promote positive school climate, implement proactive systems for identifying student needs, and provide universal and targeted supports, over the long term at the school level?	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓
Increase key community partner involvement in long-term relationships with WAZ schools? How are they involved?		✓	✓				✓
C11. Barriers/challenges that inhibit the development of any of the above, C1-C10?		✓	✓				
C12. Do stakeholders in WAZ schools experience improved perceptions of school climate after WAZ implementation?		✓	✓			✓	✓
C13. What student outcomes are associated with WAZ implementation? Specifically, compared to non-WAZ schools and controlling for selected background characteristics, do WAZ schools experience:							

Research Questions	Data Sources						
	Document Reviews	Stakeholder Interviews	Teacher Focus Groups	Observations of Technical Assistance	Extant Data Analysis	Student Survey	School Staff Survey
Improved academic outcomes?					✓		
Improved attendance rates?					✓		
Improved promotion rates?					✓		
Improved graduation rates?					✓		
Lower dropout rates?					✓		
Lower suspension rates?					✓		
Fewer incidents of violence?					✓		
C14. In what ways is early evidence of change (Research Question Set B) associated with these outcomes?		✓	✓			✓	✓
C15. What are key lessons learned from our analysis of outcomes associated with the WAZ in each district?		✓	✓				
<b>Research Question Set D: Sustainability/Replication.</b> Are WAZ sustainable at the district and school levels, and what supports or hinders (or will support/hinder) <b>sustainability and replication</b> in other districts and schools?							
D1. Do districts and schools have <b>WAZ sustainability plans</b> ? At what point in WAZ planning/ implementation does sustainability planning begin? Do sustainability plans address the <b>major challenges</b> that individual schools/districts have experienced?	✓	✓					
D2. What do key stakeholders identify as the <b>biggest challenges to sustaining</b> the WAZ supports after the <i>Race to the Top</i> funding has ended? In what ways have schools/districts prepared for these challenges?		✓	✓				
D3. What <b>resources from ESE</b> support, or are needed to support, districts and schools in the implementation of integrated, comprehensive systems for student support, after WAZ funding ends? What should ESE do to <b>support expansion</b> of WAZ to other districts after <i>Race to the Top</i> funding ends?		✓	✓				
D4. What aspects of WAZ do key <b>stakeholders believe are sustainable</b> ? Is there evidence that <b>non-WAZ schools in WAZ districts are implementing</b> wraparound services during the program funding period? For example, in what ways are non-WAZ schools, in WAZ grantee districts, beginning to implement stronger student support delivery systems, focused on non-academic needs?		✓	✓				
D5. What plans, funding, and infrastructure are present to continue <b>interagency collaborations</b> after WAZ funding ends?		✓					

Research Questions	Data Sources						
	Document Reviews	Stakeholder Interviews	Teacher Focus Groups	Observations of Technical Assistance	Extant Data Analysis	Student Survey	School Staff Survey
D6. In what ways are <i>families</i> participating in development of district and school WAZ sustainability plans?	✓	✓	✓				
D7. What plans, funding, and infrastructure are present to ensure that the <i>responsibilities and functions performed by the District and School Wraparound Coordinators</i> continue after WAZ funding ends?	✓	✓					
D8. What plans, funding, and infrastructure are present to ensure that <i>professional development and technical assistance</i> related to the delivery of integrated comprehensive student supports continue after WAZ funding ends? To ensure <i>knowledge of WAZ</i> is sustained?	✓	✓		✓			
D9. How will the <i>quality and strength of leadership and advocacy</i> for WAZ be sustained?	✓	✓					
D10. What <i>continuous quality improvement strategies</i> are districts and schools implementing and planning to continue to sustain WAZ?		✓	✓				
D11. How have <i>barriers to WAZ planning, implementation, and sustainability/replication</i> changed over time? How have districts and schools <i>responded to these changing barriers</i> ?		✓	✓				
D12. What are key <i>lessons learned</i> relative to WAZ replication and sustainability planning?		✓	✓				

## Appendix B: 2012–13 Wraparound Zones Initiative Districts and Schools

District	School	Grade Level
Fall River	BMC Durfee High School <sup>1</sup>	9-12
Fall River	Carlton M. Viveiros Elementary School <sup>2</sup>	K-5
Fall River	Edmond P. Talbot Middle School <sup>1</sup>	6-8
Fall River	John J. Doran Elementary School	PK-6
Fall River	Mary Fonseca Elementary School <sup>1</sup>	K-5
Fall River	Matthew J. Kuss Middle School <sup>2</sup>	6-8
Holyoke	Kelly Elementary School (2011–12 planning grant) <sup>1,2</sup>	K-8
Holyoke	Morgan Elementary School	K-8
Holyoke	William R. Peck School <sup>2</sup>	K-8
Lawrence	Arlington Elementary School <sup>3</sup>	K-4
Lawrence	Arlington Middle School	5-8
Lawrence	Humanities & Leadership Development High School <sup>2</sup>	9-12
Lynn	Cobbet Elementary (2011–12 planning grant) <sup>1,2</sup>	K-5
Lynn	E.J. Harrington School (2011–12 planning grant) <sup>1</sup>	PK-5
Lynn	Thurgood Marshall Middle School (2011–12 planning grant) <sup>1,2</sup>	6-8
Lynn	William P. Connery (2011–12 planning grant) <sup>1</sup>	K-5
Springfield	Alfred G. Zanetti School <sup>2</sup>	PK-8
Springfield	Brightwood School	K-5
Springfield	Chestnut Accelerated Middle School <sup>1</sup>	6-8
Springfield	Elias Brookings School	PK-5
Springfield	Gerena School <sup>2</sup>	PK-5
Springfield	John F. Kennedy Middle School <sup>1</sup>	6-8
Springfield	M. Marcus Kiley Middle School <sup>1</sup>	6-8
Springfield	White Street	K-5
Worcester	Burncoat Street Preparatory School <sup>1</sup>	K-6
Worcester	Chandler Elementary Community School	K-6
Worcester	Chandler Magnet	PK-6
Worcester	Goddard Elementary	PK-6
Worcester	Goddard Scholars Academy (@ Sullivan Middle School) <sup>2,5</sup>	6-8
Worcester	University Park Campus School <sup>2</sup>	7-12
Worcester	Union Hill School <sup>2</sup>	PK-6
Worcester	Woodland Academy	PK-6

<sup>1</sup> Added as WAZ implementation schools in 2012–13

<sup>2</sup> Selected for targeted school visits in Years 2 and 3

<sup>3</sup> In 2011–12, Arlington Elementary was a K–4 school; in 2012–13, Community Day, a turnaround school operator, began taking over management of the school through a roll-out process beginning with grades K–1.

# Appendix C: Sample Interview Protocol

## Personal Information/Background

*I'd like to start by asking a couple of questions about your role and background.*

1. [If not a new coordinator] Have your coordinator responsibilities changed since last year? If yes, please describe how your role has changed.

[If a new coordinator] First, I'd like to ask about your background.

- a. How long have you been working in this school? In this school district? Can you briefly describe your work—whether with the school or not—prior to becoming a School Wraparound Coordinator<sup>6</sup>?
  - b. What previous skills and experiences do you have that makes the work of a Wraparound Coordinator a good fit for you? When and how did you first become involved with implementation of the WAZ strategies?
  - c. What are your key current coordinator<sup>7</sup> responsibilities?
2. In your experience/opinion, is your role as school coordinator well distinguished from other positions (e.g., adjustment counselor) in your school? How so and why or why not?
    - a. Do you believe your role is clear to school administrators? Clear to other school staff? Why or why not?
    - b. What actions do you think could be taken at this time to better clarify your role for school administrators and other school staff?

## School Context

3. I realize that every school is unique in terms of its context, staff, students and community. What do you think are your school's key strengths? Critical areas of need? Probe about:
  - a. School climate and culture
  - b. Delivery of non-academic supports related to students' physical, mental, and social-emotional health
  - c. School staff
  - d. Students
  - e. The larger community (SES, community issues that may negatively impact students' physical, social and emotional development)

---

<sup>7</sup> For Lynn, will ask about their roles as leads of the school-based teams.



## **Wraparound Zone Strategies**

*As you know, I'm interested in how your school and district are implementing Wraparound Zone strategies. I will ask questions about each of the four WAZ priority improvement areas beginning with climate and culture and then identification of student needs, community coalitions, and district systems of support.*

### **Climate and Culture (WAZ Priority Improvement Area 1)**

4. First please think about your school's climate and culture. This would include, for example, safety, effective management of student behavior, and cultivating a climate of positive regard between leadership, staff, and students. Have there been any important changes in your school's climate and culture since last school year?
  - a. If yes, what has changed?
  - b. What data are you using to assess school climate and culture—how are you using it?
5. What strategies have been put in place to improve climate and culture as part of your school's Wraparound Zone?
  - a. What has supported (e.g., professional development on behavior management or curriculum) implementation of the climate and culture strategies? Have there been any challenges or barriers?
  - b. To what extent have these strategies been successful? What would you attribute those successes to?
  - c. Are any strategies related to school climate and culture still being planned for future implementation?
  - d. At this moment, what are your school's greatest priorities related to the climate and culture strategies?
  - e. To what extent do you think these strategies are sustainable? Please describe. What might be needed to sustain them?

### **Identifying and Addressing Student Needs (WAZ Priority Improvement Area 2)**

6. I'd now like to discuss your school's system for identifying and addressing student needs. To start, I'd like you to walk us through this process from beginning to end. Specifically, what are the steps, who is involved, and what are their roles? It might help to think for a moment about a particular student as an example. Please begin by describing the first steps in the process for identifying a student who has nonacademic needs. Probes:
  - a. What is assessed and how? Who is involved in assessing student needs? How so? What are their roles? (PROBE about the role of teachers if they are not mentioned)
  - b. What happens next – who else gets involved? Are teachers and other support staff involved in this process? If yes, how? (Probe about communication with administrators and school-based providers)

- Does your school have a team or workgroup with clear responsibilities to develop a system of identifying needs and providing supports? If so, can you describe who is on this team and the team's purpose? Are either members of the team (e.g., the roles they hold in the school) or the team's purpose new compared to the last school year?
- c. How do you decide what school-based interventions and (or) other services the students should receive? [If needed, probe about interventions as part of an IEP that would include the school psychologist or other nonacademic services, other in-school interventions and services, and out-of-school services]
  - d. What is the process for connecting students with the appropriate service providers? Does your school have protocols for connecting students with services, such as referral forms? If so, can you briefly describe?
  - e. What steps are in place to follow up with students who have been referred for services?
  - f. Has the process for connecting students with supports changed at all over the past year? If so, in what ways?
7. Do you generally communicate with parents about students' nonacademic needs?
    - a. If yes, please describe your involvement with parents (e.g., how often do you communicate with parents and in what manner? (e.g., phone, email, in-person meetings)
    - b. If no, who specifically has that responsibility [Probe for what position this individual has in the school] and does this individual then communicate with you about his/her interactions with and information gathered from parents?
    - c. To what extent do teachers communicate with parents about students' nonacademic needs?
  8. Is there a system in place to help you organize the data you gather when assessing student needs and connecting students to services if necessary? If yes, please describe.
    - a. What about procedures for tracking students' progress in relation to nonacademic outcomes (e.g., attendance, behavior)? If not, what type of data management system would be most helpful to you?
  9. What has supported implementation of your process for identifying and addressing student needs? Have there been any challenges or barriers?
  10. To what extent do you think this system and strategies are sustainable? Please describe. What might be needed to sustain them?
  11. How would you characterize the current level of staff knowledge about students' nonacademic needs?
    - a. Do staff currently make appropriate referrals?

- b. Has staff knowledge of students' nonacademic needs improved during the course of WAZ implementation? If yes, in what ways?
- c. Are there related areas in which staff could use more training or support?

### **Family Engagement**

- 12. Is your school implementing any strategies to try to increase family engagement? If yes, can you please describe these strategies?
  - a. What has supported implementation of your family engagement strategies? Have there been any challenges or barriers?
  - b. To what extent do you think these strategies are sustainable? Please describe. What might be needed to sustain them?
  - c. Are any additional strategies for engaging families currently being planned? If so, please describe.
- 13. In what ways, if at all, has family engagement changed or remained the same since last school year? Can you share some specific examples?
  - a. [If it has changed] Would you say it has increased/decreased a little, somewhat, or quite a bit?
  - b. [If it has changed] To what do you attribute this change?
  - c. What do you recommend, if anything, to increase parent/family engagement in your school's efforts to identify and address students' nonacademic needs?

### **Community Partners and Coalitions (WAZ Priority Improvement Area 3)**

- 14. Has any review of resources, such as an inventory of existing programs and supports, occurred this year—or is any future resource review planned? This would include reviewing resources within schools, between your schools and partner organizations, and between schools and other organizations within the broader community (e.g., Boys or Girls Club, family support organization).
- 15. Can you describe your school's relationship with community organizations that it is actively collaborating with to address students' nonacademic needs?
  - a. How has this relationship evolved during the past year, if at all?
  - b. In what ways, if any, are these partners supporting your school's efforts related to climate and culture or identifying and addressing student needs?
  - c. What has supported your school's approach to collaborating with community partners? Have there been any challenges or barriers?
  - d. To what extent is your school's approach to collaborating with community partners sustainable? Please describe. What might be needed to sustain these relationships?

Are any additional strategies for collaborating with community partners currently being planned? If so, please describe.

16. Have you established partnerships with any new community agencies this school year?
  - a. What services do these partners provide?
  - b. How has this relationship changed?
17. What types of support have you received—from any source—around developing collaborative partnerships?
  - a. Any support around defining or formalizing partner relationships?
  - b. What type of support do you most need to best develop and make use of collaborative partnerships moving forward?

#### **District Systems of Support (WAZ Priority Improvement Area 4)**

18. How would you describe the quality and strength of *district* leadership (other than the district coordinator) for the WAZ strategies?
  - a. Who has been most supportive?
  - b. Are there district leaders who aren't involved but should be? Please describe.
  - c. In what ways, if any, do you think that the buy-in from district leadership has changed in the past year (e.g., is the message about WAZ strategies clearer, more consistent)? How so?
    - [If it has changed] Would you say it has increased/decreased a little, somewhat, or quite a bit?
    - [If it has changed] To what do you attribute this change?
  - d. In what ways, if any, do you feel supported by district leadership in your role as coordinator? Why or why not?
  - e. Are there any other ways in which district leadership has changed with regard to your school's implementation of WAZ strategies?
19. How is the district supporting your school's implementation of the WAZ strategies?

Probe about:

  - a. Systems and processes put in place to facilitate WAZ implementation (e.g., district-level meetings, district guidance on data systems or universal protocols/procedures for referrals)
  - b. Communication and collaboration (about the WAZ strategies, about WAZ vision, how WAZ integrates with existing systems)
  - c. Evaluation and continuous improvement

- d. Have there been any district-level challenges or barriers affecting your school-level WAZ efforts?
  - e. Are any additional strategies related to district systems of support currently being planned? If so, please describe.
  - f. To what extent do you think these strategies are sustainable? Please describe. What might be needed to sustain them?
20. What are the key supports the District Wraparound Coordinator is providing to you this school year?
- a. [If not a new coordinator] Has the role of the District Wraparound Coordinator changed during the past year if at all?
  - b. In what ways, if at all, do you feel supported by the District Wraparound Coordinator in your role as school coordinator? Why or why not?
21. To your knowledge, does the district have a sustainability plan for the WAZ strategies, or is it developing one?

### **Other Wraparound Zone Supports**

22. How would you describe the current quality and strength of your *school's* leadership for the WAZ strategies?
- a. In what ways, if any, do you feel that the buy-in from your school's leadership has changed in the last year? How so?
  - b. [If it has changed] Would you say it has increased/decreased a little, somewhat, or quite a bit?
  - c. [If it has changed] To what do you attribute this change?
  - d. In what ways, if any, do you feel supported by your school leadership in your role as coordinator? If not, what type of support will be most helpful?
23. How would you characterize the current the level of staff knowledge about your school's WAZ strategies?
- a. Would you say their level of knowledge changed during the past year?
  - b. In what ways has the staff's level of knowledge about your school's WAZ strategies impacted your interactions with staff? Your implementation of WAZ activities?
24. In what ways, if any, do you think that your school staff's buy-in for the WAZ strategies has changed in the past year? How so?
- a. [If it has changed] Would you say it has increased/decreased a little, somewhat, or quite a bit?
  - b. [If it has changed] To what do you attribute this change?

25. [For Lynn only and Kelly Elementary in Holyoke] Was the planning grant helpful for your WAZ efforts? If so, in what ways?
26. Please describe the professional development/external technical assistance you have received during the past year related to implementation of the WAZ strategies. Support from:
- School and Main
  - ESE
  - Outside consultants
  - What has been the most helpful? Less helpful?

### **Sustainability**

27. What do you hope or think is realistic for the school to continue doing to support students' nonacademic needs once Wraparound Zone funding ends?
- a. Are there any additional supports or resources other than funding that your school needs to promote sustainability of the WAZ strategies we have discussed?
  - b. What kinds of supports, if any, can ESE provide or continue to offer?

### **Closing**

28. Finally, are there any lessons learned from your WAZ efforts during the current school year that you would want to share with new school coordinators?
- a. What advice would you offer about the time needed to plan and implement key WAZ components?
  - b. What advice would you offer about what they should learn about their school, students, and their communities to help facilitate this work?

## Appendix D: Coding Guide

Code	Description	Exclude	Research Questions
<b>1. PERSONAL INFORMATION/ BACKGROUND</b>			
1.1. Background	General background information that does not fit under the child nodes		
1.1.1. Time working in school and school district	Comments that describe the amount of time participant has worked in the WAZ school and/or in the school district		
1.1.2. Skills and experience	Comments about participant’s background, including their educational background, work history, previous wraparound experiences; Comments about how previous experiences helped prepare them for their current position (e.g., for school and district wraparound coordinators)		A8, A9
1.2. Roles and Responsibilities			
1.2.1. Description of role	Comments about participant’s WAZ-related roles and responsibilities and the roles and responsibilities of the WAZ teams that functioned as the “school coordinator” (i.e., schools in Lynn – these schools used teams and did not have one person designated as the school coordinator); comments made by staff about the role of the school coordinator	Comments about roles and responsibilities in other non-WAZ positions	A8, A9
1.2.2. WAZ role clarity	Comments about whether the participant’s or team’s role is well defined or well distinguished from other positions/teams (e.g., adjustment counselor); whether or not school staff are aware of the role and utilize this person/team appropriately; suggestions for clarifying role; challenges or successes related to role clarity; ways	General comments about the school coordinator’s role that do not specifically address role clarification or role definition	

<b>Code</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Exclude</b>	<b>Research Questions</b>
	in which they have worked to differentiate this role from other roles in the school		
1.2.3.Teams	Comments about the roles and responsibilities of a team (e.g., climate and culture team) – this should only include teams in schools that also had one or two people who served in the role of a wraparound coordinator	An individual’s WAZ-related roles and responsibilities outside of the work that they do on the team- this should be coded under description of role; comments about teams in Lynn (where there was no one person designated as a wraparound coordinator)	
<b>2. SCHOOL CONTEXT</b>			
<b>2.1 Strengths</b>	Comments about school strengths (e.g., climate and culture, school staff, students); may include comments in response to question about the school’s “key strengths”	Comments about district context; comments about non-WAZ schools	Background
<b>2.2. Challenges/Areas of need</b>	Comments about school challenges (e.g., student demographics, neighborhood/community conditions (safety, poverty), family mobility); may include comments in response to question about the school’s “critical areas of need”	Comments about district context; comments about non-WAZ schools	Background
<b>2.3 Accountability Status</b>	Comments about accountability status (level 3 or level 4); include how level status has affected WAZ implementation; challenges and successes associated with level status; includes any comment about being a turnaround school or an innovation school	Exclude from 2.1. and 2.2	
<b>3. WAZ STRATEGIES</b>			
<b>3.1 Pre-WAZ Activities</b>	Only code to this node if participant is clear that an activity occurred or was started prior to receiving WAZ funds	Year 1 or Year 2 activities	



Code	Description	Exclude	Research Questions
<b>3.2. Year 1 WAZ Activities</b>	Only code to this node if the participant is clear that an activity occurred during year 1 of WAZ implementation	Pre-WAZ or Year 2 activities	
<b>3.3. Climate and Culture</b>	General comments about culture and climate that do not fit in the nodes below		
3.3.1. Perceived changes from previous school year	Comments about how a school’s culture and climate is different from the previous school year ( <i>NOTE: it should be clear from participant’s statement that this was a change from the previous year, do not code to this node if you are not sure whether this is a change</i> )	General comments about climate and culture that do not describe a change from one year to the next	
3.3.2. Strategies implemented to improve climate and culture	Comments about strategies that the school has implemented to improve climate and culture; strategies may focus on students (e.g., PBIS or other behavior management programs), teachers/staff (e.g., professional development) or parents (e.g., parent engagement activities)		
3.3.2.1. Behavior management/discipline plans	Comments about the behavior management or other discipline strategies (e.g., PBIS, in-school-suspensions [ISS], a specific behavior management curriculum); include successes and challenges	General comments about student discipline issues (these comments should be coded in the section on school context)	
3.3.2.2. Use of data to assess climate and culture	Comments about data collection to assess climate and culture (e.g., parent, teacher or student surveys, focus groups); how data is being used to assess climate and culture	Use of data for other components of the program (e.g. identifying student needs)	
3.3.3. Strategies being planned	Comments about strategies that are being planned (have not been implemented) to address climate and culture; this could include a new component to a strategy that is already being implemented or plans to administer a survey	Strategies that are already being implemented	
3.3.4 Successes	Successes related to climate and culture;		
3.3.5. Challenges	Challenges related to climate and culture		
3.3.6. Data	Comments about the system for organizing data on		

Code	Description	Exclude	Research Questions
management	climate and culture; comments about the lack of a data management system; challenges or successes with the existing data management system; comments about needs related to the management of climate and culture data		
<b>3.4. Identifying and addressing student needs</b>			
3.4.1. Identifying student needs	Comments about strategies implemented to <u>identify</u> student needs (e.g., needs assessment, surveys, guidelines for placing student in tiers)	Comments about steps taken to <u>address</u> student needs	
3.4.2. Addressing student needs	Comments about steps taken to address student needs (specific interventions, referrals); include comments about how staff follow-up with students who are receiving services		
3.4.3. Changes in process	Comments about how the process for identifying and addressing student needs has changed or evolved from the previous school year ( <i>NOTE: it should be clear from participant’s statement that this was a change from the previous year, do not code to this node if you are not sure whether this is a change</i> )	General comments about the process for identifying or addressing student needs during year 2	
3.4.4. Protocols and procedures	Comments about more formal processes or procedures (e.g. a form that is filled out [e.g. referral form] or specific procedures for documenting WAZ activities; include any general statements about whether the school/district has or does not have any protocols or procedures;		
3.4.5. Data management	Comments about the system for organizing data gathered during the assessment phase, the types of data collected, the system for tracking students (referrals, interventions delivered, progress, etc.); comments about		

Code	Description	Exclude	Research Questions
	the lack of a data management system; challenges or successes with the existing data management system; comments about needs related to data management		
3.4.6. Successes	Successes related to efforts to identify and address student needs		
3.4.7. Challenges	Challenges around identifying and addressing student needs		
3.4.8. Strategies being planned	Comments about strategies that are being planned (have not been implemented) that are related to identifying and addressing student needs (e.g., plans to add a new component to a strategy that is already being implemented; plans to develop a new referral form)		
<b>3.5 Family Engagement</b>			
3.5.1. Family involvement in WAZ planning	Comments about the ways in which families were involved in WAZ planning (i.e., planning for the initiative) or ways in which the participant would have liked to see families involved		
3.5.2 Family involvement in WAZ services	Comments about the ways in which parents/families are involved in the delivery of services to students , (e.g., involvement in the planning or decision-making about the types of services students receive, comments about obtaining consent or for the delivery of services, comments about following up with parents about services received)	Family involvement in other school activities- this should be coded under strategies to increase family engagement if it is a strategy or under Family engagement (3.5) if it just a general comment about family engagement that does not fit under any of the child nodes	
3.5.3. Communication with parents/family	Comments about how participant or staff communicates with parents about students’ nonacademic needs, including who is responsible for communicating with parents, how often communication occurs, in what		

Code	Description	Exclude	Research Questions
	manner (e.g., phone, email, in-person); comments about the type of information that is communicated to parents/families		
3.5.4. Changes in family engagement	Comments about whether family engagement has changed (increased or decreased) or remained the same since the previous year; comments about the perceived causes of the change or lack of change		
3.5.5. Strategies to increase family engagement	Comments about strategies used to increase parent/family engagement		
3.5.6. Successes	Successes related to family engagement		
3.5.7. Challenges	Challenges or barriers to family engagement		
3.5.8. Data management	Comments about the system for gathering and/or organizing data on family engagement and the types of data collected; comments about the lack of a data management system; challenges or successes with the existing data management system; comments about needs related to the management of family engagement data		
3.5.9 Strategies being planned	Comments about strategies that are being planned (have not been implemented) that are related to family engagement (e.g., plans to administer a new parent survey, plans to implement a new parent workshop)		
<b>3.6 Community Partners and Coalitions</b>			
3.6.1. Resource review/resource mapping	Comments about resource mapping or a review of community resources; include a review of resources within the school, between schools and in the community/partner organizations; comments about		

Code	Description	Exclude	Research Questions
	plans to conduct this activity		
3.6.2. Relationships with community organizations	Comments about the schools relationship with community organizations/partners, including how the organizations work with the school(s) (i.e. services provided); strengths and challenges of the relationship		
3.6.3. Evolution of partner relationships	Comments about how the relationship with a partner organization(s) had evolved since the previous school year ( <i>NOTE: comment should explicitly describe changes from the previous year</i> )		
3.6.4. New partners	Comments about new partnerships that have been established during the past school year (year 2); include comments about the services provided by the new partners	Comments about partnerships that were in place prior to year 2	
3.6.5. Support for developing partnerships	Comments about professional development or technical assistance received on developing, defining and/or formalizing partnerships; include comments about support needed		
3.6.6. Formalizing partnerships	Comments about formalizing relationships, include comments about MOUs; comments about whether or not a partnership has been formalized or plans to formalize a partnership		
3.6.7. Successes	Successes that have occurred as a result of partnerships		
3.6.8. Challenges	Challenges related to partnerships (e.g., challenges establishing or maintaining partnerships, waitlists)		
3.6.9. Data Management	Comments about the system for gathering and/or organizing data on community partners and the types of data collected; comments about the lack of a data management system; challenges or successes with the		

Code	Description	Exclude	Research Questions
	existing data management system; comments about needs related to the management of community partner data		
3.6.10. Strategies being planned	Comments about strategies that are being planned (have not been implemented) that are related to community partners or community coalitions (e.g., plans to bring community organizations together, plans to develop an MOU or more formalized agreement)		
<b>3.7 District Systems of Support</b>	<b>General comments about district systems of support that do not fit into any of the categories below</b>		
3.7.1 District conditions	Comments about district context- including districtwide strengths, challenges and needs	Comments about WAZ schools (this should be coded under school context)	
3.7.2 District leadership	Comments about district leadership (e.g., district superintendent)	Comments about district coordinators	
3.7.2.1. Quality and strength of leadership for WAZ	Comments about district support including: who has been supportive, whose support is needed; comments that suggest a lack of support for WAZ in general or for specific aspects of WAZ	Comments about district coordinators; comments about school leadership	
3.7.2.2. Buy-in	Comments about buy-in at the district level, including whether and how buy-in has changed during the past year and perceived causes of the change	Comments about district coordinators	
3.7.2.3. Changes related to WAZ implementation	Ways in which district support for WAZ has changed	Exclude comments about how buy-in has changed; Comments about district coordinators	
3.7.2.4. Specific support of WAZ implementation	Systems or processes put in place to facilitate WAZ implementation (e.g., district-level meetings, district guidance on data systems, universal protocols/procedures, evaluation)		

<b>Code</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Exclude</b>	<b>Research Questions</b>
3.7.2.5. Support needed	Comments about additional support that the participant would like the district to provide; comments about the lack of support around a specific issue		
3.7.2.6. WAZ alignment w/district policies or initiatives	Comments about ways in which WAZ is aligned with district policies or initiatives		
3.7.2.7. Monitoring and Evaluation	Comments about ways in which the district monitors or evaluates the WAZ initiative		
3.7.3 District Coordinator	Comments about the district coordinator		
3.7.3.1. Support	Comments about support provided by the district coordinator	Comments about other district leaders	
3.7.4. Successes	Comments about successes related to the district's role in WAZ		
3.7.5. Challenges	Comments about challenges related to the district's role in WAZ		
<b>3.8 Data Collection and Use</b>	<b>General comments about WAZ-related data collection and ways in which the data is used</b>		
<b>4. OTHER WAZ SUPPORTS</b>			
<b>4.1. School Leadership</b>	<b>General comments about school leadership that do not fit into the categories below</b>		
4.1.1. Quality and strength of leadership for WAZ	Comments about school leadership support	Comments about district leaders	
4.1.2. Buy-in	Comments about buy-in, including how buy-in has changed in the last year and perceived cause of this		

Code	Description	Exclude	Research Questions
	change		
4.1.3. Support needed	Comments about ways school leaders could be more supportive		
<b>4.2 School Staff</b>	<b>General comments about school staff that do not fit into the categories below</b>	<b>Comments about school administrators (e.g. principal, assistant principal)</b>	
4.2.1. Staff knowledge	Comments about the staff knowledge of WAZ including whether their knowledge has changed during the past year and perceived causes of this change		
4.2.2. Staff buy-in	Comments about staff buy-in, including how buy-in has changed during the past year and perceived causes of this change		
4.2.3. Involvement in WAZ activities	Comments about staff participation on teams, staff referrals;		
<b>4.3 Planning</b>	<b>General comments about planning that do not fit into the categories below</b>		
4.3.1. Planning grant	Comments about planning during the year that the district had the planning grant (this will only apply to Lynn and Kelly ES in Holyoke)	Comments about planning from schools or districts that did not receive a planning grant	
4.3.2. Planning (general)	Comments about planning influenced by or related to WAZ but not part of planning grant	Comments about planning in Lynn or Kelly (Holyoke)	
<b>4.4. Professional Development, Technical Assistance and Training</b>	<b>General comments about professional development, TA and training that do not fit into the categories below</b>		
4.4.1 PD Received	Description of the PD received		
4.4.2. Helpfulness	Comments about aspects of the training that were		



Code	Description	Exclude	Research Questions
	helpful or aspects of the training that were not helpful		
<b>4.5. Successes</b>	<b>Comments that describe successes related to Other WAZ Supports (e.g., comments about school leadership, school staff, planning and professional development and training)</b>		
<b>4.6. Challenges</b>	<b>Comments that describe challenges related to Other WAZ Supports (e.g., comments about school leadership, school staff, planning and professional development and training)</b>		
<b>4.7. School Coordinator</b>	General comments about the school coordinator		
<b>4.7.1 Support</b>	Comments about the support provided by the school coordinator		
<b>5. SUSTAINABILITY</b>	Comments about sustainability, including additional supports needed to promote sustainability and aspects of WAZ that are sustainability once WAZ funding ends		
5.1. General comments about sustainability			
5.2 Barriers to sustainability			
<b>6. REPLICATION</b>	<b>Comments about plans to replicate WAZ strategies districtwide or in other schools in the district</b>		
<b>7. LESSONS LEARNED</b>	<b>Lessons learned from the past year; include advice (e.g., advice about time needed to plan and implement WAZ, what they should learn to help facilitate work)</b>		
<b>8. QUOTABLE QUOTES</b>	<b>Quotes that could potentially be used in the report to</b>		

Code	Description	Exclude	Research Questions
	clearly illustrate a point or a theme		
<b>9. Miscellaneous</b>	<b>Code comments that may be important to the overall understanding of how WAZ is implemented in the district but does not fit into any of the categories above</b>		

## Appendix E: Sustainability Assessment Worksheet

Sustainability Action Items	Status (complete, partial, not complete)	What will it take to accomplish this action item (tasks, resources, partners, etc.)	Person(s) responsible	Timeline
<b>Goal 1: Strengthen program characteristics</b>				
Ensure that program aligns with participant needs.  <i>Ask:</i> How well does the program meet the need of intended participants?				
Ensure that program is compatible with implementing organizations.  <i>Ask:</i> Do partner organizations perceive that the program benefits them?				
Evaluate stated goals and outcomes that have been achieved.  <i>Ask:</i> Are we achieving intended success that is worth sustaining?				
Build and maintain relationships among key stakeholders.  <i>Ask:</i> Do we have strong,				

Sustainability Action Items	Status (complete, partial, not complete)	What will it take to accomplish this action item (tasks, resources, partners, etc.)	Person(s) responsible	Timeline
positive, trusting relationships among stakeholders?				
Ensure stakeholder ownership.  <i>Ask:</i> Do stakeholders feel committed to the initiative?				
<b>Goal 2: Strengthen infrastructure</b>				
Administrative structures and formal linkages, such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Sound administrative and fiscal management practices</li> <li>▪ Structures that enable the initiative to better manage itself</li> <li>▪ Linkages that facilitate cooperation, including inter-organizational networks</li> <li>▪ Collaboration among organizations and partners</li> </ul>				
Champions and leadership roles supporting the work of the initiative, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Administrators at all levels</li> <li>▪ Opinion leaders with organizations</li> <li>▪ Influential advocates</li> <li>▪ Decisions makers</li> </ul>				

Sustainability Action Items	Status (complete, partial, not complete)	What will it take to accomplish this action item (tasks, resources, partners, etc.)	Person(s) responsible	Timeline
Resource development to support the work of the initiative, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Diverse funding streams</li> <li>▪ Human, physical, technological, and informational resources</li> <li>▪ Adequate staffing levels</li> <li>▪ Volunteers</li> <li>▪ Adequate training resources</li> <li>▪ Technical and data resources</li> <li>▪ Needs assessment data for planning purposes</li> <li>▪ Evaluation data</li> <li>▪ Marketing and communications resources</li> </ul>				
Administrative policies and procedures that support the work of the initiative in areas such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Conducting needs assessments</li> <li>▪ Implementing evidence-based programs/activities</li> <li>▪ Monitoring and evaluating program performance</li> <li>▪ Maintaining values important to the initiative, such as engaging all stakeholders</li> </ul>				
Community and practitioner expertise to support:				

Sustainability Action Items	Status (complete, partial, not complete)	What will it take to accomplish this action item (tasks, resources, partners, etc.)	Person(s) responsible	Timeline
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Planning, implementation, and evaluation</li> <li>▪ Selection and use of evidence-based programs/activities</li> <li>▪ Training as needed</li> </ul>				
<b>Goal 3: Routinize key initiative practices</b>				
Integrate key activities associated with implementing and evaluating your initiative into job descriptions, responsibilities, and staff assessments.				
Retain key staff and leaders responsible for key tasks of the initiative.				
Incorporate staff training, technical assistance, and continuing education needs into ongoing operations. This includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Developing co-training events for leadership pairs / teams.</li> </ul>				
Make the skills needed to implement and evaluate the initiative part of the school				

Sustainability Action Items	Status (complete, partial, not complete)	What will it take to accomplish this action item (tasks, resources, partners, etc.)	Person(s) responsible	Timeline
district's standards.				
Integrate the initiative into manuals, procedures, and regulations of the school district.				
Integrate an implementation monitoring process into the initiative's ongoing process evaluation activities.				
Establish and maintain ongoing outcome evaluation activities.				
Routinely communicate evaluation data to a variety of audiences (school staff, community leaders, parents, students, etc.) to garner community support.				
Ensure the support of the initiative through continuous soft or hard money, or put a plan into place to provide funding support.				
Ensure the initiative survives annual budget and grant cycles.				
Adapted from Johnson et al. (2009). <i>Sustainability for prevention using getting to outcomes toolkit</i> . Nashville, TN: Tennessee Department of Mental Health and Developmental Disabilities.				





## ABOUT AMERICAN INSTITUTES FOR RESEARCH

Established in 1946, with headquarters in Washington, D.C., American Institutes for Research (AIR) is an independent, nonpartisan, not-for-profit organization that conducts behavioral and social science research and delivers technical assistance both domestically and internationally. As one of the largest behavioral and social science research organizations in the world, AIR is committed to empowering communities and institutions with innovative solutions to the most critical challenges in education, health, workforce, and international development.

## LOCATIONS

### Domestic

Washington, D.C.  
Atlanta, GA  
Baltimore, MD  
Chapel Hill, NC  
Chicago, IL  
Columbus, OH  
Frederick, MD  
Honolulu, HI  
Indianapolis, IN  
Naperville, IL  
New York, NY  
Portland, OR  
Sacramento, CA  
San Mateo, CA  
Silver Spring, MD  
Waltham, MA

### International

Egypt  
Honduras  
Ivory Coast  
Kenya  
Liberia  
Malawi  
Pakistan  
South Africa  
Zambia



**AIR**<sup>®</sup>

AMERICAN INSTITUTES FOR RESEARCH<sup>®</sup>

1000 Thomas Jefferson Street NW  
Washington, DC 20007-3835  
202.403.5000 | TTY 877.334.3499

**[www.air.org](http://www.air.org)**

*Making Research Relevant*