

# Closing the Achievement Gap

## Wachusett Regional High School

### Overview

Wachusett Regional High School is located in a K-12 regional school district that is distinguished by its commitment to ongoing improvement. It is a relatively affluent district; less than 8% of its students are on free or reduced lunch and there are few students for whom English is a second language.

The emerging gap in the performance of special education and regular students was an increasing concern of stakeholders, however. On the 2008 tenth grade MCAS in math, for example, 60% of district students scored proficient or advanced, while only 20% of students with disabilities did so. On the 2008 ELA MCAS, 82% of the district's tenth graders scored proficient or advanced whereas 29% of students with disabilities did so. A gap of 60 points existed in math performance; a gap of 53 points existed in ELA performance.

Wachusett School District	
District Profile	% of Dist.
First Language not English	3.2
Special Education	9.5
Free & Reduced Lunch	7.9
African American	1.3
Asian	1.5
Hispanic	1.5
White	94.4

### Services Provided

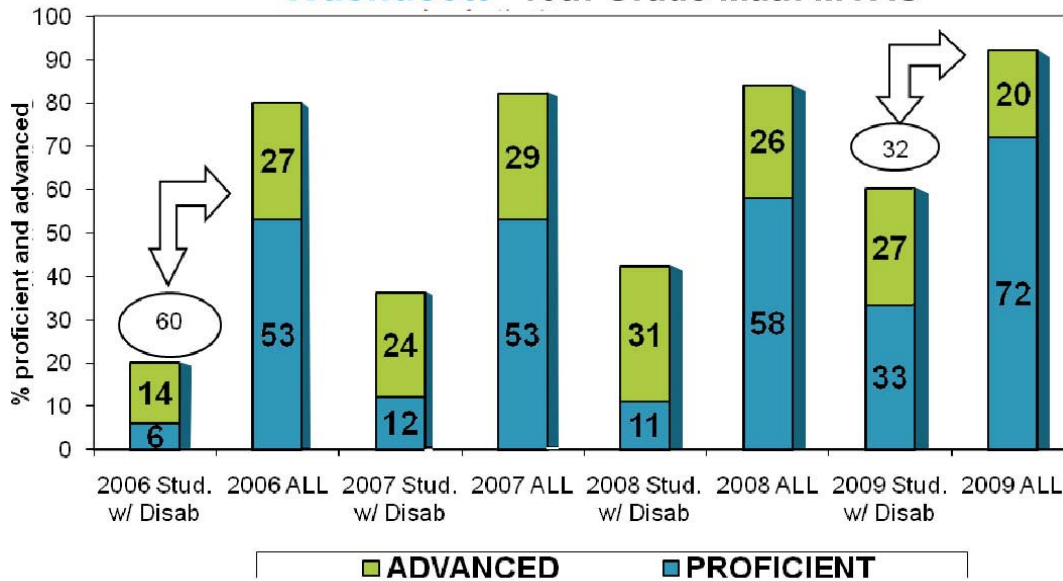
Teachers<sup>21</sup> consultants worked with the high school staff to establish a sustained focus on student achievement through their district frameworks: Professional Development and Coaching, Instructional Leadership Development, and Strategic Planning.

Teachers<sup>21</sup> offered an improvement process that addressed issues in the school culture, trained teachers to use data to target more effective instruction, and implemented the differentiation of instruction. Course work in differentiated instruction and classroom coaching started in the fall of 2006 and continued through the 2008-2009 school year.

### Results -- Achievement Gap Cut in Half

From 2006 to 2009, the scores of all students increased. The percentage of regular students who scored proficient or advanced on the tenth grade mathematics MCAS increased to 92% and the percentage of students with disabilities scoring proficient and advanced on the tenth grade mathematics MCAS rose to 60%. The gap has been cut in half--from 60 points to 32 points--in just four years.

### Wachusett 10th Grade Math MCAS



In the same time frame (2006-2009), the percentage of tenth graders scoring proficient and advanced on the ELA MCAS continued to increase. In 2009, the percentage of regular students scoring proficient and advanced had risen to 96% and the percentage of students with disabilities scoring proficient and advanced had increased to 69% ---a 138% increase from the baseline year. The achievement gap at Wachusett Regional High School was nearly cut in half from 53 points to 27 points.

### Wachusett 10th Grade ELA MCAS

