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# **Tobin School Improvement Plan for Literacy**

**SAC · March 8, 2024**

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# Goals for Today

By the end of our meeting, we will be able to:

- Understand the Literacy goals of the School Improvement Plan (SIP)
- Gain a deeper understanding of the key literacy initiatives that comprise our Action Plan:
  - Montessori Reading Pathways
  - Writing Revolution

# School Improvement Plan Goals



# Tobin Montessori School Improvement Plan

2023  
to  
2025

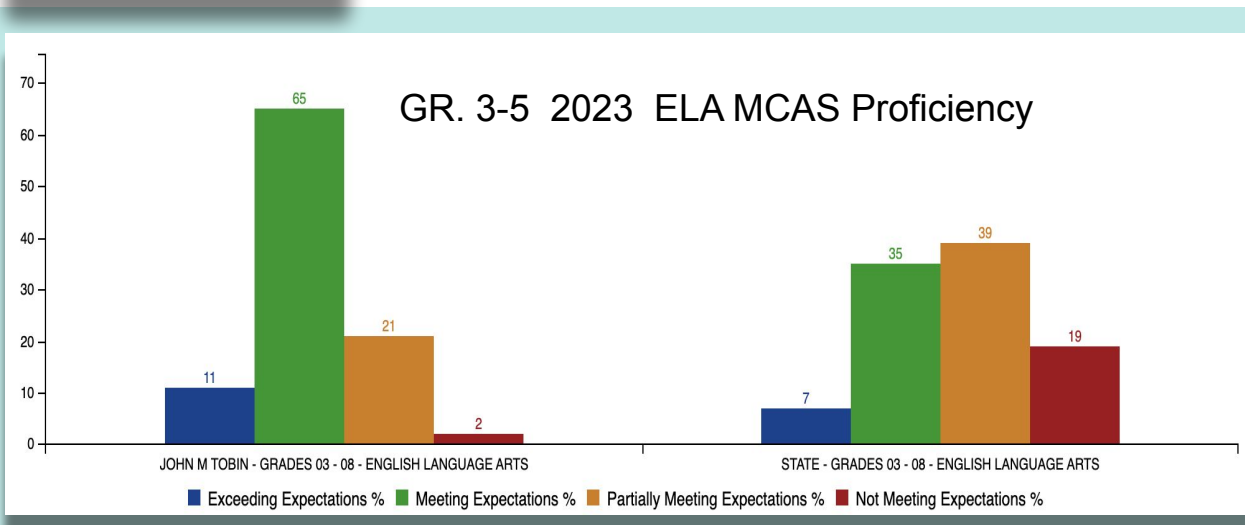
## Literacy Goal

*By Spring 2025 all student demographic groups will meet or exceed the Massachusetts Accountability Targets on the ELA MCAS.*

| Students                   | Percentage Point Growth by 2025 |
|----------------------------|---------------------------------|
| All Students               | 5.4                             |
| Lowest Performing          | 10.2                            |
| High Needs                 | 6.8                             |
| Low Income                 | 7.4                             |
| Students With Disabilities | 8.6                             |

# Data Overview

## Literacy



### Tobin

11%

65%

21%

2%

### State

7%

35%

39%

19%



**CAMBRIDGE**  
PUBLIC SCHOOLS

# Key Successes

## Literacy

| English language arts achievement - MCAS average composite scaled score - Non-high school |                  |                  |        |             |    |        | <a href="#">About the Data</a> |
|---|------------------|------------------|--------|-------------|----|--------|--------------------------------|
| Group   | 2022 Achievement | 2023 Achievement | Change | 2023 Target | N  | Points | Reason                         |
| All Students  | 509.1            | 509.9            | 0.8    | 511.8       | 98 | 4      | Recovery Path: Exceeded Target |
| Lowest Performing   | 493.8            | 502.7            | 8.9    | 498.8       | 20 | 4      | Path Forward: Exceeded Target  |
| High needs  | 497.9            | 502.6            | 4.7    | 501.3       | 46 | 4      | Recovery Path: Exceeded Target |
| Low income  | 492.6            | 500.1            | 7.5    | 496.3       | 26 | 4      | Recovery Path: Exceeded Target |
| EL and Former EL  | -                | -                | -      | -           | 7  | -      | -                              |
| Students w/ disabilities  | 498.0            | 500.4            | 2.4    | 502.3       | 30 | 3      | Recovery Path: Met Target      |
| Amer. Ind. or Alaska Nat.   | -                | -                | -      | -           | -  | -      | -                              |
| Asian   | -                | -                | -      | -           | 12 | -      | -                              |
| Afr. Amer./Black  | -                | -                | -      | -           | 21 | -      | -                              |
| Hispanic/Latino   | -                | -                | -      | -           | 9  | -      | -                              |
| Multi-race, Non-Hisp./Lat.  | -                | -                | -      | -           | 11 | -      | -                              |
| Nat. Haw. or Pacif. Isl.  | -                | -                | -      | -           | -  | -      | -                              |
| White   | 516.8            | 515.8            | -1.0   | 519.9       | 45 | 4      | Recovery Path: Exceeded Target |

# Key Areas of Need

## Reading & Writing Discrepancy

### Literacy

- **Grade 3:**
  - **Reading:** School 73% (Dist 70, State 60, School/State Diff 13)
  - **Writing:** School 36% (Dist 35, State 27, School/State Diff 8)
- **Grade 4:**
  - **Reading:** School 80% (Dist 71, State 63, School/State Diff 17)
  - **Writing:** School 40% (Dist 36, State 30, School/State Diff 11)
- **Grade 5:**
  - **Reading:** School 78% (Dist 77, State 68, School/State Diff 10)
  - **Writing:** School 48% (Dist 42, State 34, School/State Diff 14)





# Our Action Plan

# Literacy

# Tobin Action Plan

| District Objective  | Strategic, Research Based Solution  | Strategies for Equitable Outcomes   | Data Wise Process & Progress Monitor   | Who will lead this work?  |
|---|---|---|--|---|
| <b>Deliver Ambitious Instruction &amp; Effective Supports</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Individualized Targeted Reading Instruction through the <b>Montessori Reading Pathways Curriculum</b></li><li>Explicit instruction in targeting reading comprehension, note taking and writing through the <b>Writing Revolution Curriculum</b></li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>All Children’s House &amp; Lower Elementary students will be screened using the <b>Montessori Reading Remediation Pathway</b> Screener and progress will be monitored in regular intervals. Students will receive the individualized direct instruction in phonemic awareness, phonological awareness and phonic decoding.</li><li>All Upper Elementary students will receive explicit instruction in note taking and writing. Aligned progress monitoring will ensure students are meeting their individual goals.</li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Children’s House and Lower Elementary teachers will engage in an <b>ongoing data cycle process, meeting every 6 weeks to review progress monitoring data and instructional plans.</b> Teachers collaboratively use, tracking sheets to track individual student progress and the number of lessons received per week.</li><li>Upper Elementary teachers will <b>meet weekly</b> to plan instruction review student work and develop methods for tracking student data. They will also engage in periodic data review meetings notice trends in student</li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Literacy Coach</li><li>Cluster level team leads</li><li>Reading interventionist</li><li>Principal</li><li>Montessori Resource Teacher</li></ul> |

# Literacy

## Tobin Action Plan Cont.

| District Objective   | Strategic, Research Based Solution   | Strategies for Equitable Outcomes  | Data Wise Process & Progress Monitor   | Who will lead this work?  |
|--|--|--|--|---|
| <b>Effective Staff Learning &amp; Support</b>                  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Educators will engage in <b>ongoing, embedded professional development</b> in the form of data review, planning meetings and personalized instructional coaching.</li> <li>● All Upper Elementary staff and special educators, as well as some Lower Elementary teachers will be <b>trained in the Writing Revolution</b> curriculum and receive instructional coaching.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Multi-tiered ongoing support</b> in the form of both team meetings and individualized instructional coaching will ensure that we develop and maintain consistency for students across classrooms and grade levels and also that adult learning styles are considered and supported.</li> </ul>                       | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Educators will engage in <b>Regularly scheduled data meetings, weekly common planning and collaborative reflection on instruction</b> (ex: Lesson Study and Looking At Student Work Protocols) during team cluster meetings.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Literacy Coach</li> <li>● Cluster level team leads</li> <li>● Cluster level literacy planning teams</li> <li>● Reading interventionist</li> <li>● Montessori Resource Teacher</li> </ul> |
| <b>Build Welcoming &amp; Supportive Schools &amp; District</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Educators will share ELA <b>student progress/data</b> with families during conferences.</li> <li>● Tobin will continue to <b>partner with the After School</b> to provide instructional support time for students in the after school program.</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Regular and consistent communication</b> with caregivers will support student success.</li> <li>● Providing students time to <b>practice their literacy skills in the after school program</b> will support the achievement of students from working families who do not get home until later in the day.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Tobin will utilize <b>School Council</b> as a vehicle to progress monitor our communication with families regarding student progress.</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Teachers</li> <li>● Principal</li> <li>● Assistant Principal</li> <li>● Family Liaison</li> </ul>  |

# The Action Plan in Action

# Reading Pathways



## Montessori For All

### *What is it?*

A structured, systematic approach to early literacy instruction that is based on scientific research on reading and the brain **and** is rooted in our Montessori method and materials.

### *What does it look like in practice?*

- A **diagnostic pre-assessment** that helps us understand exactly what students know and still need to learn in phonics and phonological awareness.
- **Students receiving instruction at their level**, with lessons that include phonological awareness, encoding and decoding, sight words, reading comprehension and discussion.
- Careful **observation, record keeping and progress monitoring** within 6 week data cycles.
- **Professional development and coaching** for teachers.
- ***Accelerated growth for students***

# Snapshots of Pathway Lessons in Action



Phonological awareness, an essential foundational literacy skill, is embedded in every lesson.



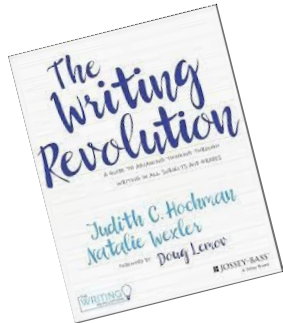
Montessori Sandpaper Letters teach letter sounds and formation with multisensory input. Letters and phonograms are taught systematically in groups.

Students use the Montessori Moveable Alphas to build, manipulate and read words, transitioning at later levels to writing on whiteboards and paper.

# Writing Revolution



Advancing Thinking  
Through Writing



## *What is it?*

A structured, systematic approach to teaching writing that can be used across subjects and grades.

## *What does it look like in practice?*

Writing instruction that focuses on:

- Sentences as the basic building blocks of writing
- Sentence expansion and note-taking skills that improve processing and reading comprehension
- The importance of planning and organization before writing
- Writing and revising

**sentence**



**paragraph**



**full length  
composition**



# Sentence Activities Help Students with...

- Understanding the concept of a complete sentence and sentence boundaries.
- Understanding correct word order.
- Correctly using conventions like spelling, punctuation, capitalization.
- Understanding grammar in real writing - for example, the role of subjects, predicates and prepositional phrases.
- Careful reading and checking comprehension.

# Fragment or Sentence?

the planet with the most moons     F    

Scientists discovered that Saturn is the planet with the most moons.

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saturn's new moons are not round     S    

Saturn's new moons are not round.

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# Unscrambling Scrambled Sentences

democratic had iroquois government the a

The Iroquois had a democratic government.

# Sentence Types

| Declarative<br>(statement)                     | Imperative<br>(command)           | Interrogative<br>(question)      | Exclamatory<br>(exclamation) |
|--|-----------------------------------|----------------------------------|------------------------------|
| Tobin Montessori is a school in Cambridge, MA. | Stand up for what you believe in. | Can you get me a glass of water? | My school is the best!       |
| Massachusetts is part of the United States.    | Go open the door.                 | What grade are you in?           | My teacher is awesome!       |
| We live in the Northern Hemisphere.            | Do your iReady homework.          | How many stars are in the sky?   | We won the soccer game!      |

|  |   |
|--|---|
|  | <b>Community Day at Danehy park was canceled because of the rain.</b> |
| What type of sentence is it?           |   |
| Change it to an <b>interrogative</b> . |   |

Directions: Write a sentence for each type about the image.



Statement: \_\_\_\_\_

Question: \_\_\_\_\_

Command: \_\_\_\_\_

Exclamation: \_\_\_\_\_

# Sentence Expansion with Question Words

## 1. King George was a ruler.

When?..... In the 1700's

Where?..... Britain + British colonies in North America

Expanded Sentence:

In the 1700's, King George was the ruler of Britain and the  
British colonies in North America.

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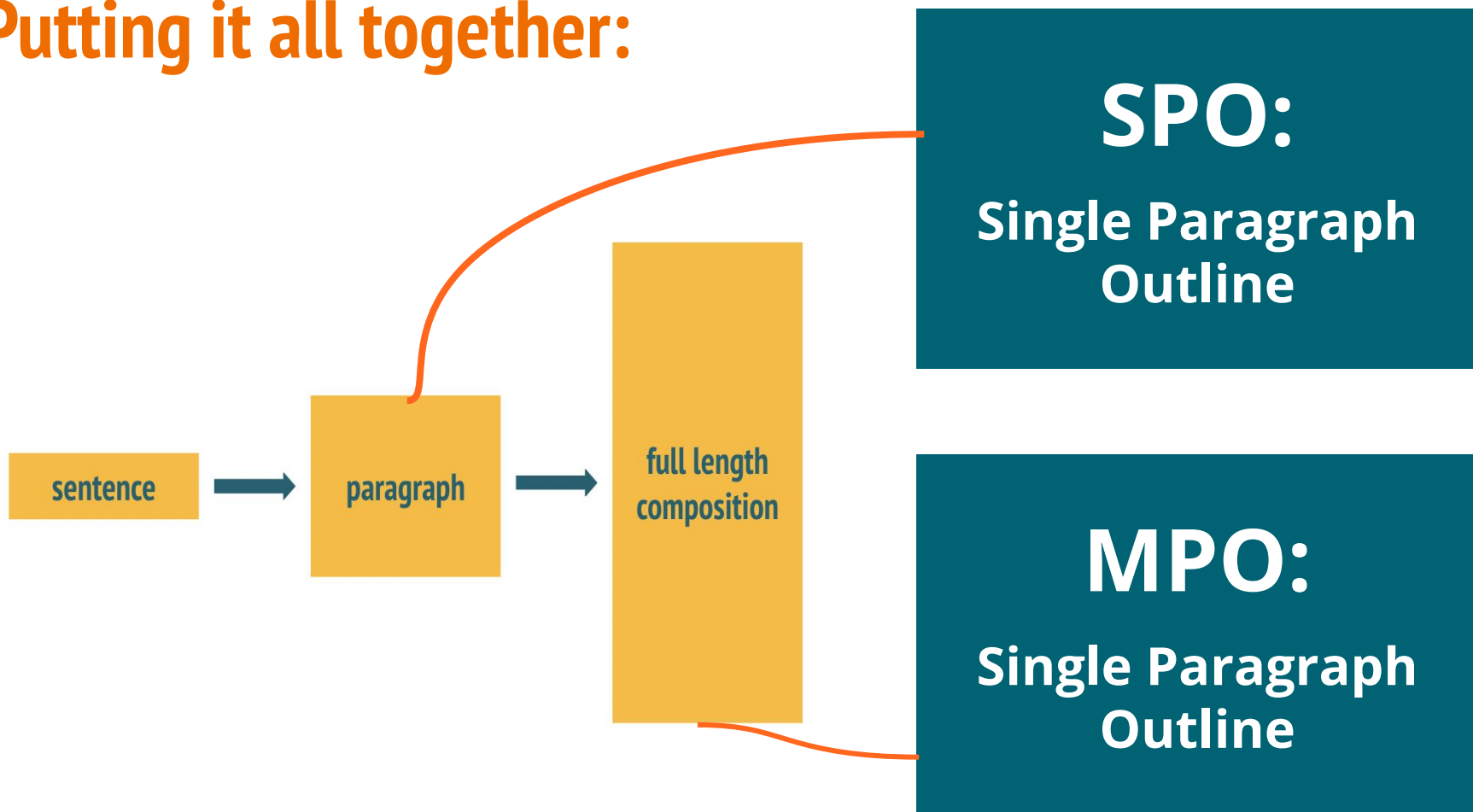
# Sentence Expansion with Conjunctions

The colonists were angry because..... they had no say in the taxes and laws.

The colonists were angry but..... many wanted to remain loyal to the king.

The colonists were angry so..... they protested by throwing crates of tea  
into Boston Harbor.

# Putting it all together:



Caitlin O'Connell is a scientist who studies elephants and their behavior. In this passage, she shares what she has learned about elephants. Read the passage and answer the questions that follow.

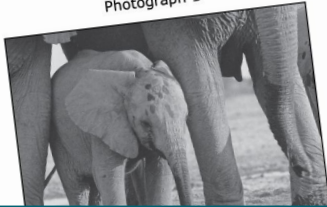
from *The Elephant Scientist*

by Caitlin O'Connell and Donna M. Jackson

**LIVING LARGE**

- 1 African elephants reign as the largest living land mammals in the world. Adult males, called bulls, typically weigh up to 14,000 pounds, and adult females, called cows, average about 7,000 pounds. The largest African elephant on record weighed an estimated 24,000 pounds—twelve tons—and stood thirteen feet high at his shoulders. That's about twice as tall as the average professional basketball player in America. Newborn elephants, called calves, tip the scales at anywhere from 110 to 260 pounds and stand at about three feet tall at the shoulders. Despite their enormous size, however, some elephants have been clocked running as fast as fifteen miles an hour, which is about the average top speed of physically fit men.

Photograph 1



# 5th Grade Reading and Writing Task

Based on the passage, write an essay that explains how the special features of elephants help them to survive. Be sure to use information from the passage to develop your essay.



# SPO: Single Paragraph Outline

T.S. Elephants have many special features  
that help them survive.

1. versatile + strong trunk

2. tusks

3. wrinkly skin

4. long term memory

C.S. These special features help elephants  
survive, even in harsh environments  
and difficult times.

Topic: Elephant Scientist

Thesis Statement: Elephants have many special features that help them to survive in harsh environments.

| Main Idea               | Details  |
|-------------------------|--|
| Introduction<br>¶ 1     | -trunks<br>- tusks<br>-long term memory  |
| Versatile trunks<br>¶ 2 | - help them breathe, smell, drink + explore<br>- strong enough to uproot tree<br>- delicate enough to pick up nut or berry<br>- can use as a snorkel |
| tusks<br>¶ 3            | - dig for food and water<br>- rip bark from trees<br>- defend against rivals/predators   |
| long term memory<br>¶ 4 | - able to remember sounds/distinguish friend + foe<br>- can remember where to find food/H2O in drought   |
| Conclusion<br>¶ 5       |  |

# MPO: Multi Paragraph Outline

# **Where We Are Now in Relation to Our School Improvement Plan Goals**

## Literacy Goal:

2023  
to  
2025

## Milestones

### 90-day Milestone September '23-January '24

Gr 4 & 5 students will be assessed with the 2023 released MCAS Writing Tasks to determine their ability to respond to text in writing. Our Gr. 4 & 5 average score will increase by .5:

3.78 avg. pts → 4.28 avg. pts

(7 possible writing points)

### 90-day Milestone January '24-June '24

Grade 3 - 5 MCAS all demographic groups will meet or exceed their targets for 2024

ALL STUDENTS +2.7  
LOWEST PERF. +5.1  
HIGH NEEDS +3.4  
LOW INCOME +3.7  
S W DISABIL. +4.3

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LOW INCOME +3.7  
S W DISABIL. +4.3

5.28 avg. pts → 5.78 avg. pts

(7 possible writing points)

**Average score of the majority of Grade 4 and 5 students = 4.87  
(surpassing our goal by .59!!!)**

# Initial Impressions

## Celebrations

- Length of essay
- Structure
- Clear central ideas
- Citation of textual evidence

## Room to Grow

- Amount of evidence
- Answering the question ***completely***

Questions?

**Please feel free to contact me with any further questions.**

**Heather Kolbe, Literacy Instructional Coach**

**[hkolbe@cpsd.us](mailto:hkolbe@cpsd.us)**