

Harvard Public Schools School Committee Self-Assessment 2018-2019

Presented April 22, 2019

School Committee Members

Maureen Babcock
Sharlene Cronin
Jon Green
Shannon Molloy
SusanMary Redinger
John Ruark

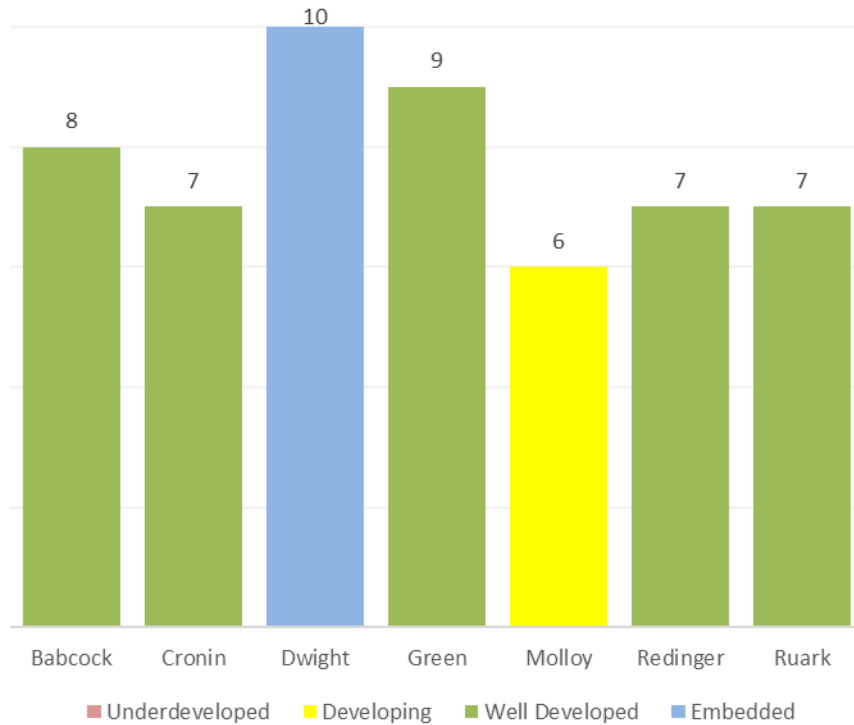
Superintendent

Linda Dwight

Notes:

- Score is the average of all numbers for a given question. The value in parenthesis is the average of all numbers except the superintendent's score.
- Bars are colored to match the corresponding rubric category for each number given.

A-1. Knowledge of Roles and Responsibilities: Public Administrative Functions



Score

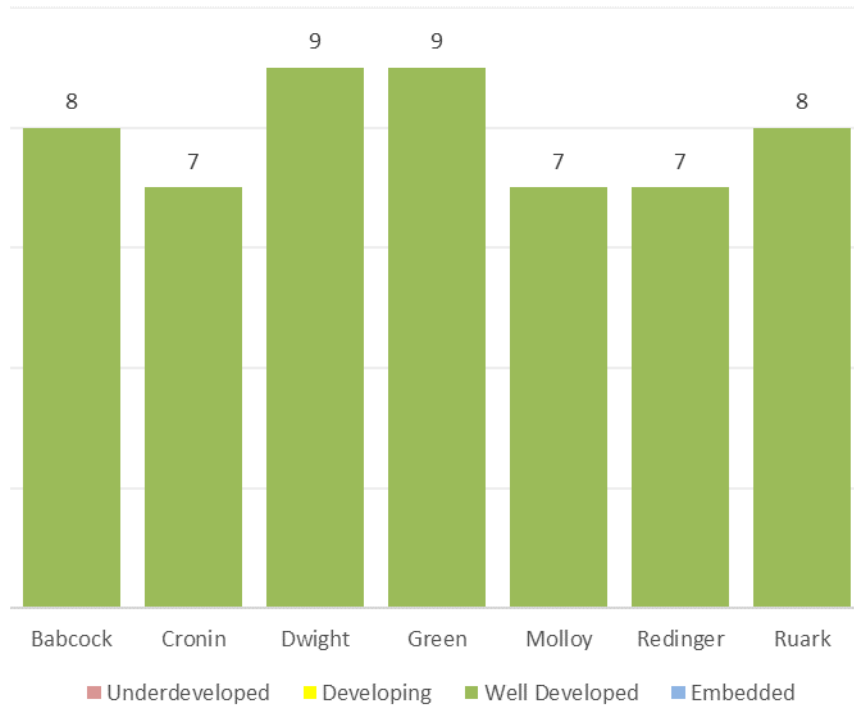
7.71 (7.33)

Comments

Cronin	While most members have been trained, only one member has been on the committee beyond a first term, which means that most members are not deeply versed and fully knowledgeable of all the roles and responsibilities listed.
Molloy	At one point this year an emergency meeting was called and an additional item was placed on the agenda in violation of policy. The item was removed prior to the meeting, but it might be useful to provide all members with periodic policy refresher training or summaries.
Ruark	Aside from Charting the Course and sessions we choose to attend at the MASC conference, there is little organized orientation or PD that we undertake. We could allocate some time during the year to educate each other on various topics as well as invite MASC field reps to consult with us.

Underdeveloped (1-3)	School Committees have not engaged in orientation on the Roles and Responsibilities of School Committees including Ethics, Conflict of Interest, Open Meetings, Public Records, Policy, Special Education, Budget and Finance, and Board Operations. It is clear from this absence that the board fails to comply, may violate provisions of law, attract unwarranted criticism, and engage in inappropriate practices that damage the credibility of the board, extend meetings unnecessarily, create undesired conflict, and divert attention from more important concerns.
Developing (4-6)	Some, but not all members have engaged in such training. Members and the board may act outside its appropriate roles and responsibilities, and may act upon misinformation from lack of parliamentary knowledge or understanding of the law.
Well Developed (7-9)	Most members have engaged in professional development in these areas and demonstrate, through action, an understanding of appropriate roles and responsibilities as well as obligations under various official standards. Members appreciate and work to fulfill both the meaning and spirit of the standards in this area.
Embedded (10)	Members continuously and dependably demonstrate a keen understanding of the role of the School Committee and work appropriately within the law and standards of best practice to focus on their key roles, use policy as a governance tool, and exercise due diligence in budget and finance in order to streamline district functions and ensure governance that will garner public approval.

A-2. Knowledge of Roles and Responsibilities: Leadership and Accountability



Score

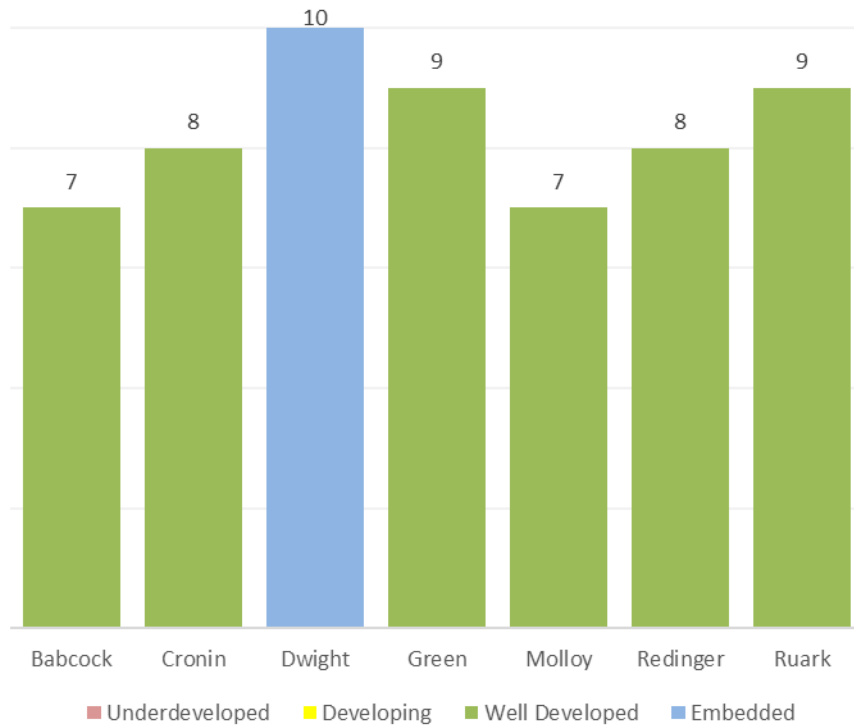
7.86 (7.67)

Comments

Cronin	As the newest member of the committee, I don't know what professional development each member has undergone, but I do believe we should strive for continuous improvement, especially in this area. It would be exciting for the committee to create a strategy for our committee's PD and seek training/coursework/etc. aligned with our strategic priorities.
Dwight	I had trouble with the rating between 7 - 9 as there is no reason to select one number over another. Also, with one very new member it was hard to say "all" but I am sure she will as soon as possible. She has already spent hours of training with board members.
Redinger	A better understanding of the delineation of SC roles vs. Superintendent roles could be beneficial, especially with two new members as of ATM.
Ruark	I think members intuitively and consciously work towards the embedded and sustainable characterization, but we do so without having had much formal PD in this area beyond Charting the Course.

Underdeveloped (1-3)	School Committees have not engaged in orientation and professional development to learn and implement standards of leadership and district accountability including strategies for leadership and accountability for districts, personnel and students that promote student achievement. The board may regularly intrude into the areas reserved for the district administration. There may be frequent disagreements about where the lines between administration and policy making and legal responsibilities are drawn. The School Committee is unlikely to have a process for resolving these differences with the superintendent.
Developing (4-6)	Some, but not all members have engaged in such professional development.
Well Developed (7-9)	Most members have engaged in professional development in these areas, completed necessary orientations and demonstrate, through action, the meaning and spirit of fulfilling the standards in this area.
Embedded (10)	Members continuously and dependably demonstrate a keen understanding of the role of the School Committee and work appropriately within the law and standards of best practice to focus on their key roles, use policy as a governance tool, and exercise due diligence in budget and finance in order to streamline district functions and ensure governance that will garner public approval.

A-3. Roles and Responsibilities - Personnel Related



Score

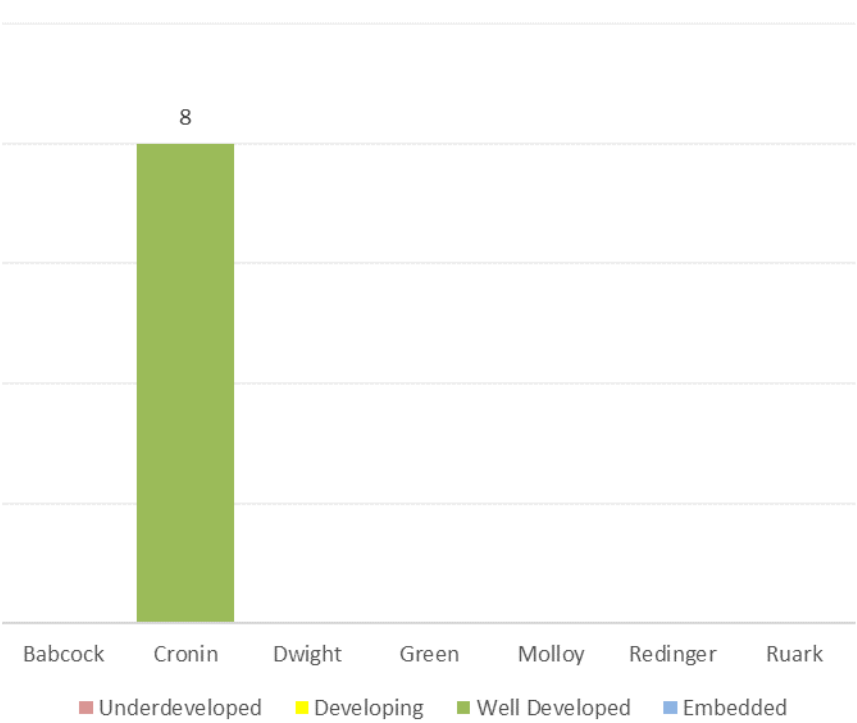
8.29 (8.00)

Comments

Redinger	The SC has respected Dr. Dwight's recommendations for hiring both the School Business Officer and the Special Education Director and refrains from engaging in conversations about other district personnel. Legal counsel was selected prior to this board's constitution.
Ruark	We haven't reviewed our choice of legal counsel thoroughly recently.

Underdeveloped (1-3)	The School Committee does not limit itself to the appointment of the Superintendent, Assistant or Associate Superintendent, School Business Manager, Special Education Director, and Legal Counsel, but attempts to intrude in the personnel administration functions of the superintendent, principals and other administrators. The School Committee may attempt to become involved inappropriately in the supervision and tracking of these staff once they are hired.
Developing (4-6)	The School Committee addresses the recommendations of the Superintendent and considers them. The board, from time to time, allows discussion of personnel to extend into the administrative sphere. The board addresses the compensation parameters of the administrative staff as required.
Well Developed (7-9)	The School Committee entertains respectfully the recommendations of the superintendent for the appointment of Assistant or Associate Superintendent, School Business Officer, and Special Education Director, asking appropriate questions and not withholding its approval unreasonably. In selecting the Business Officer, the board focuses on its fiscal and fiduciary responsibilities as standards of financial management require. The School Committee conducts a thorough vetting of candidates for its legal counsel and selects able and skillful legal advocacy for the district. In doing so, the School Committee sets an example for the district that it expects excellence in its faculty. In all cases, the School Committee, in consultation with the superintendent, establish fair and equitable compensation policies and parameters.
Embedded (10)	The School Committee understands its role to secure a professional staff committed to excellence and overall student achievement. It communicates this goal to other hiring authorities through the superintendent and its policies.

A-4. Knowledge of Special Circumstances, Rules and Policies for Districts Labeled as Chronically Underperforming



Score

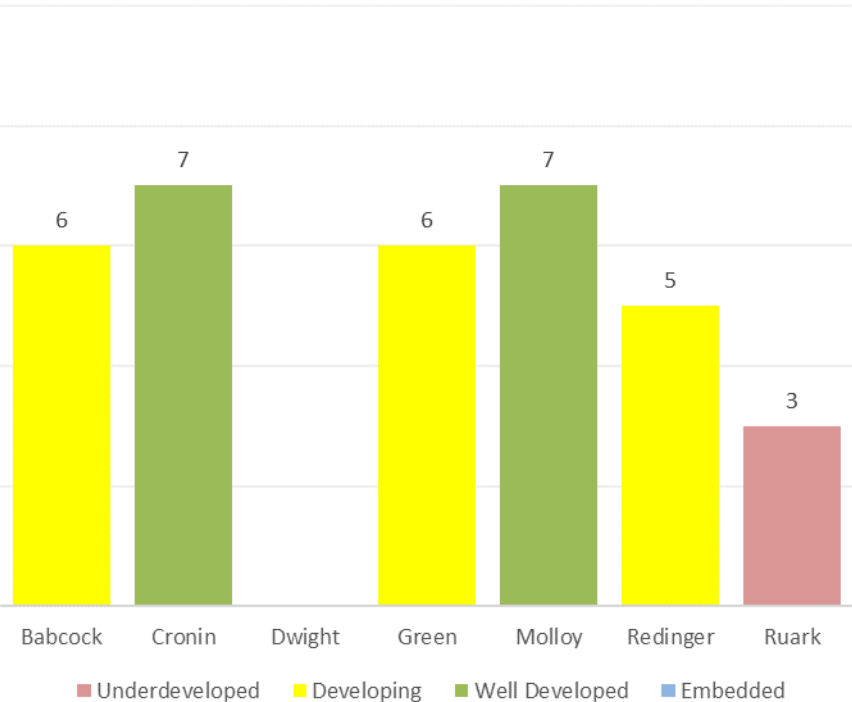
8.00 (8.00)

Comments

Redinger | We are not an underperforming district.

Underdeveloped (1-3)	The School Committees has not engaged in briefings, nor do they understand the special laws and procedures that apply to districts in chronic underperformance and potentially chronic underperformance status. The board may take actions that impede the turnaround status by failing to limit its role to appropriate areas of policy making. The School Committee and superintendent have not resolved fiscal issues to ensure that schools in turnaround status are fairly funded, or, conversely, there has not been a full and frank dialogue to ensure the letter and spirit of the turnaround process is honored.
Developing (4-6)	Members are slowly attaining a base of knowledge relative to changes in policy, finance, collective bargaining and other governance practices that apply to schools and districts in sanction status. There is an effort to reconcile the enhanced authority of the administration, but issues may remain unresolved because of the complexity and ambiguity at hand.
Well Developed (7-9)	Members accept and work collaboratively with administrators and other appropriate persons to transition districts from sanction status.
Embedded (10)	The School Committee is well briefed on their special roles and responsibilities to deal with chronic underperformance and/or potential status and demonstrate a powerful commitment to work with other appropriate administrators and public policy makers to raise achievement levels and remove the district from sanction status.

A-5. Public Policy: Understanding of Federal Law and Regulation



Score

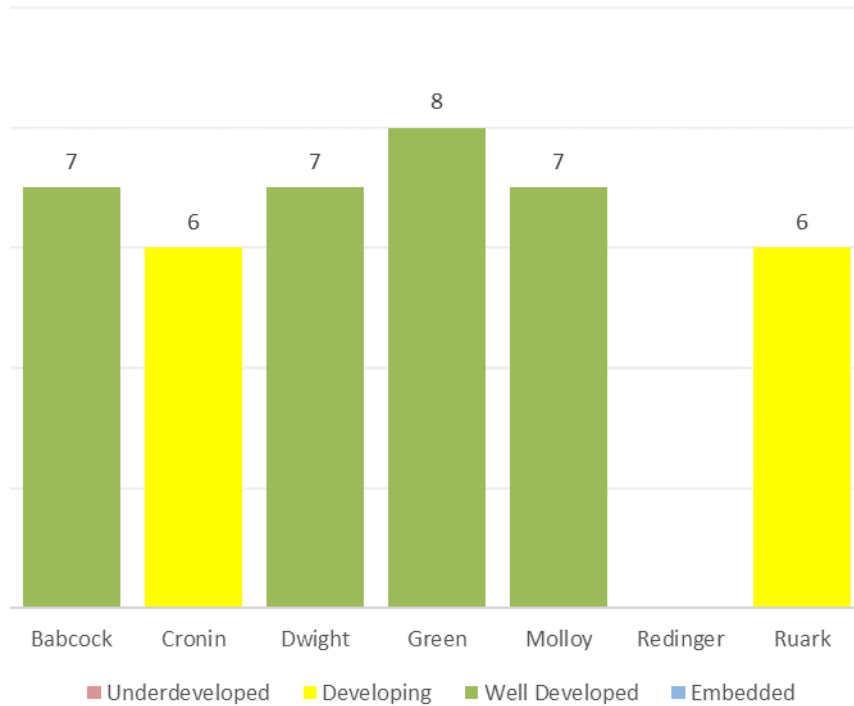
5.67 (5.67)

Comments

Babcock	Federal law as referenced in the criteria indicators does not come directly into play in this district. A number of years ago we did learn about and participate in initial stages of the Race to the Top program - which indicates we would address relevant issues that come up.
Cronin	This seems like a great area for more information sharing and discussion. In the last 6 months since I've been attending as a public member, I don't recall discussion about the various federal laws/regulations. No doubt some members are familiar, but there doesn't seem to be an open dialogue, in-house training mechanism, or regular culture/habit within the committee to discuss how federal legislation impacts student achievement.
Green	We have not been focusing on events happening at the federal level but would expect the Superintendent and committee members to bring forward any risks or opportunities they became aware of.
Molloy	A next-level seminar or workshop on federal laws would be helpful. The Committee can take a more active role in advocacy going forward.
Redinger	I have no idea what members know about Federal Legislation with regard to funding, but I do think that as a district we are maximizing our use of state and federal funding and that the administration is mindful of these funds when making budget recommendations.
Ruark	I feel like whatever understanding individual members have of federal laws and regulations is due to their own initiative of research. We are not briefed on relevant federal topics.

Underdeveloped (1-3)	Members are not mindful of the principles and purposes of the Elementary and Secondary Education act, Individuals with Disabilities Improvement Act, Perkins Vocational Technical Education Act, ARRA, or other special laws, including those that impact their work including special appropriations and special law and regulation. The School Committee has not made deliberate decisions nor planned effectively for the implementation of special grants, including Race to the Top, School Improvement Grants and other programs. The School Committee has not developed with the superintendent a master fiscal planning arrangement to ensure equity and balance among schools and programs.
Developing (4-6)	The School Committee has had some discussion about the way federal law and regulation will impact student achievement, financial planning, and long term strategies for student success. There has been little briefing on federal law and regulation and members are minimally aware of the growing importance of federal programs. Ongoing disputes about integration of state and federal funds may continue.
Well Developed (7-9)	The School Committee is well briefed on key legislation and makes informed decisions that are aligned with local priorities and state mandates. The School Committee has made informed decisions on participation in federal programs and understands the ways in which federal support will bolster student achievement and the work of the district.
Embedded (10)	Members are fully briefed on various federal laws, including Elementary and Secondary Education Act, Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, Perkins Vocational Technical Education Act, ARRA (Stimulus),; and various sources of federal funding in order to fulfill their responsibilities and make informed and strategic decisions. As a result, they are able to integrate other policy planning and budgeting with federal policy.

A-6. Public Policy: Understanding of State Law and Regulation



Score

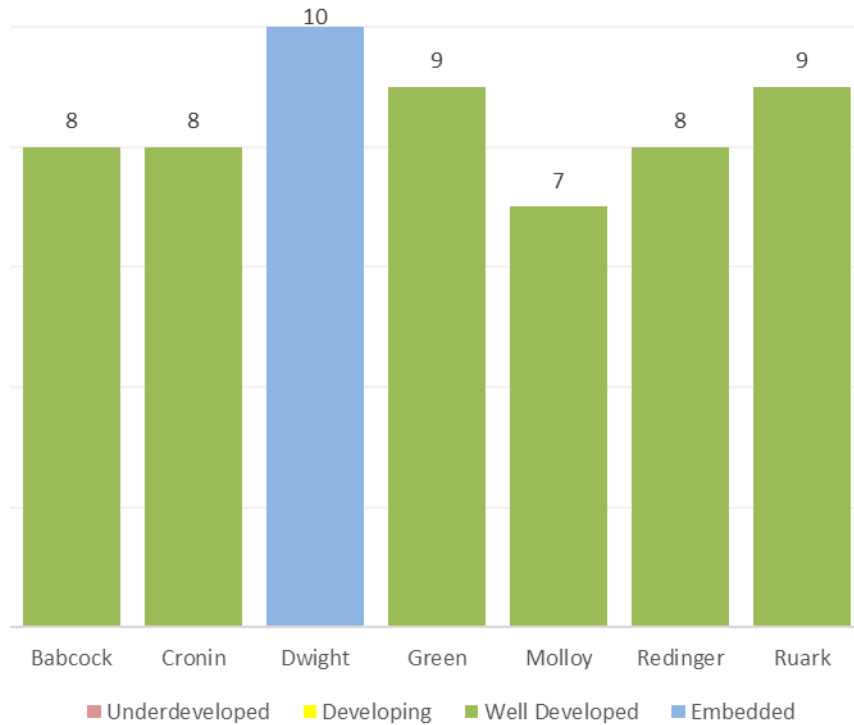
6.83 (6.80)

Comments

Cronin	This seems like a great area for more information sharing and discussion. In the last 6 months since I've been attending as a public member, the only regulation that I recall being discussed was the Foundation budget, which is certainly important, but not the only topic mentioned in this rubric which the committee needs to better understand.
Dwight	This was a hard area to define with this rubric as they lumped a lot together; some of it irrelevant to our system. The SC spent time to understand the Chapter 70 funding. We could do better about using media to inform the community about policy changes, although our meetings are on Cable Access. The Special Education program review was shared with the SC several years ago.
Molloy	More effort could be made to engage the public on policy and budgetary decisions. The School Committee could articulate the relationship between its decision making and student achievement more frequently. This year the School Committee engaged with our local representative, state senator, and the teachers' union, educating itself on state legislative priorities and taking a public position in favor of Chapter 70 reform. The Committee can take a more active role in advocacy going forward.
Ruark	We have a better grasp of state laws and regulations thanks to Charting the Course, MASC conference, and some occasional SC meeting topics that address state requirements.

Underdeveloped (1-3)	Members have little understanding of state accountability systems and assessment programs, funding mechanisms, Special Education programs, and budget and related policy. As a result decisions may be ill-informed and unaligned to policy goals and objectives. Key decisions are delegated or made without recommendations and guidance from administrators jeopardizing the flow of resources to important programs. Members cannot explain the implications of various accountability, assessment and accreditation programs to constituents. The board appears unprepared to make informed decisions, undermining credibility with the public.
Developing (4-6)	Board members are acquiring an appreciation for concepts like Adequate Yearly Progress, Levels I-V Accountability status, Consolidated Program Reviews, and other regulatory mandates in order to make decisions that are linked to student achievement and public confidence.
Well Developed (7-9)	The School Committee is knowledgeable about important state regulatory and accountability systems and articulates the principles behind them in making budget and policy decisions. Recommendations of the administrative team are sought and thoughtfully considered. The public is involved in the discussion. The district uses local media as part of a strategy to inform the public about school policy. Members work carefully to address critical measures for improving student achievement and consciously link their actions to student achievement.
Embedded (10)	School Committee members have identified and understand their obligations under law, including the Chapter 70 finance system, accountability and assessment standards, special education, and other measures to improve student achievement. In addition, districts understand their regulatory mandates sufficiently to fulfill their duties to support an effective management team, set effective policies, and budget responsibly.

A-7. Establishes District Policies: General Operations



Score

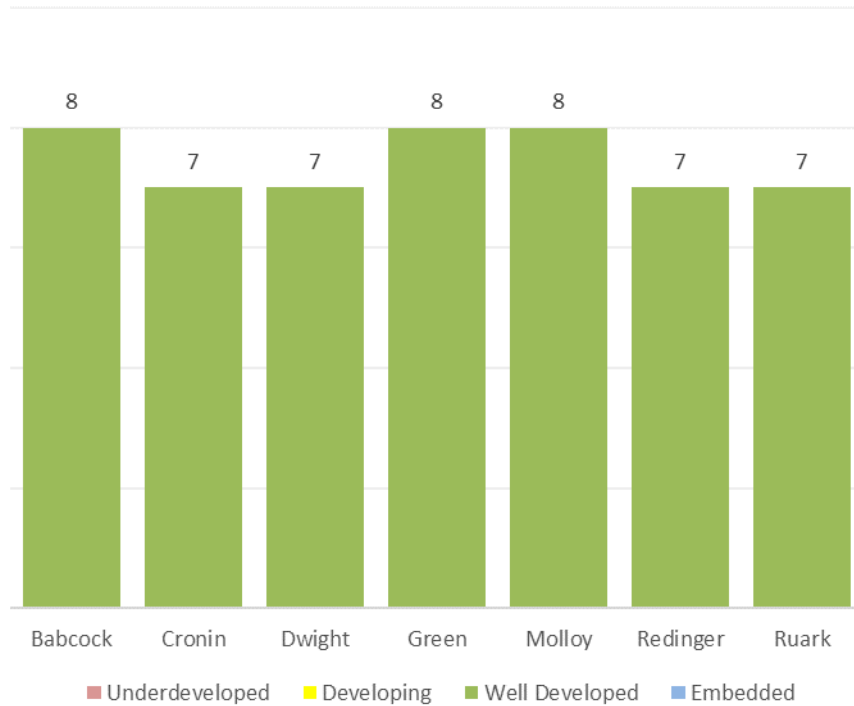
8.43 (8.17)

Comments

Molloy	The School Committee has improved its policy review procedures this year and as a result has adopted, eliminated, amended, or reviewed XX policies through March 2019 vs XY in the 2017-18 school year. The Committee is on track to meet MASC policy review goals for the first time in at least three years. A future goal in this area could be to set aside time to consider new, possibly non-MASC policies. Policy review and adoption could be more frequently referenced in decision making; awareness of policy could be more central both on School Committee and in the public realm.
Redinger	I think our SC has been reliable in maintaining and following its policies. The recent work done by John and Shannon in documenting policy changes has increased the committee's knowledge and appreciation for our policies.
Ruark	We are doing well here, but behind schedule on policy review, and we do not allocate enough (or sometimes any) time for new policy development and policy review or communication with constituents.

Underdeveloped (1-3)	District policies are in disarray or are not used to facilitate district operations and governance. A policy manual may not exist or may be inaccessible. Boards regularly discuss matters before it outside of the context of policy making roles.
Developing (4-6)	District policies are in generally order but not necessarily complete or followed consistently. The board recognizes the importance of organizing policies and is working to do so.
Well Developed (7-9)	School Committee members are aware of the various sources of policy and location of key policy within school district resources. The board addresses constantly the need to update policies and keep them current. The board makes frequent reference to policy in making its decisions and collaborates with the administrative team to ensure consistent practice and public awareness to bolster district image. Through policy, ambiguities in Roles and Responsibilities are reconciled to avoid conflict among board members and the administrative team.
Embedded (10)	The School Committee and the administrative team operate efficiently and collegially because district policies are clear, complete, and accessible. Roles and Responsibilities, district financial practices, meeting operations, and planning are efficiently carried out in ways that promote student achievement.

A-8. Establishes Policies: Focused on Student Achievement



Score

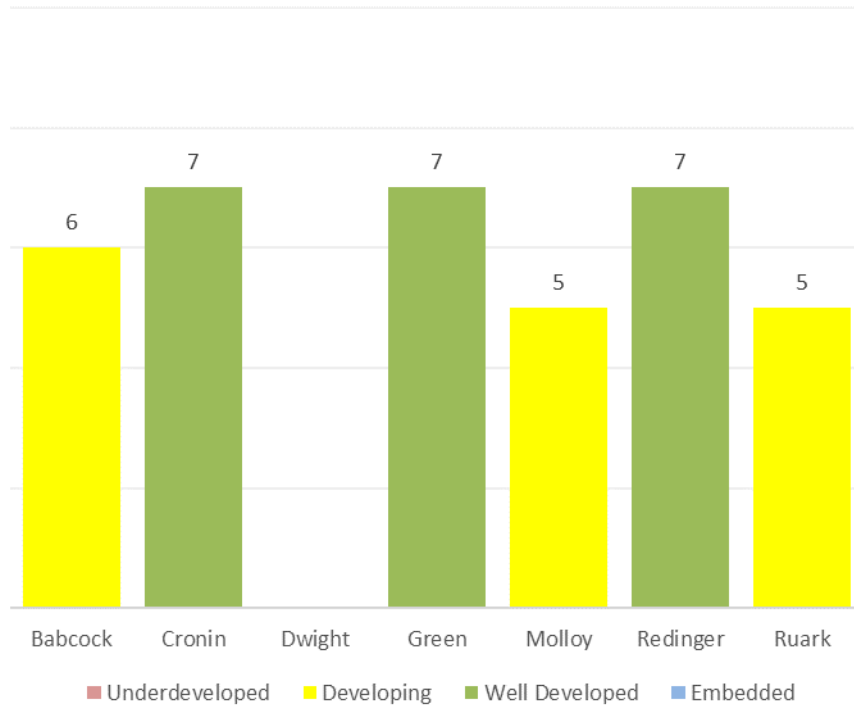
7.43 (7.50)

Comments

Dwight	This was another difficult area because parts of each color are true. If I only read the blue, I could agree. Parts of the green are true and parts of yellow are true. Again, too many things seem to be included to make this a clear choice.
Molloy	This is both an active area and one in which the School Committee has further opportunities for improvement. Student safety and inclusion support were explicitly behind the resolution adopted by the School Committee in support of 2018 Ballot Question 2. Replacing Columbus Day with Indigenous Peoples Day provided support to vulnerable student populations and promoted awareness and accountability, while also bringing the district into alignment with the new social studies framework ahead of the implementation timeline. An important next project to consider is later start times in middle and high school. We must also find more ways to purposefully address student stress and its impact on student achievement. Finally, the upcoming year is a critical one for collective bargaining.
Redinger	The administration has clearly defined policies regarding attendance, graduation requirements, harassment, etc. The superintendent has brought items to the negotiation process that impact student achievement and continues to keep track of what could be improved in future negotiations.
Ruark	We should review our policies with student achievement as a primary focus and see if there are changes we would recommend with that in mind.

Underdeveloped (1-3)	There is no evidence that district policies either affect student achievement or are designed to do so. The School Committee is not able to identify practices to link policy to student achievement.
Developing (4-6)	The School Committee has acquired a basic understanding of how district policies promote student achievement. Members plan to identify and address achievement advances in a deliberate way, but have not yet made meaningful progress.
Well Developed (7-9)	Districts have clearly defined policy deliberately targeting student achievement. These include policies regarding attendance, grading, promotion or graduation requirements, student safety and security, budget, length of school day and year, and other areas. The board has identified the link between collective bargaining and student achievement and uses the bargaining process as another strategy to secure and evaluate a proficient work force. (See below)
Embedded (10)	A comprehensive set of policies provide directions and tools for administrators to implement effective programs for student achievement. These include a range of policies specifically promoting high standards, accountability, assessment, efficiency and support for children, families, and educators.

A-9. Engages in Professional Development



Score

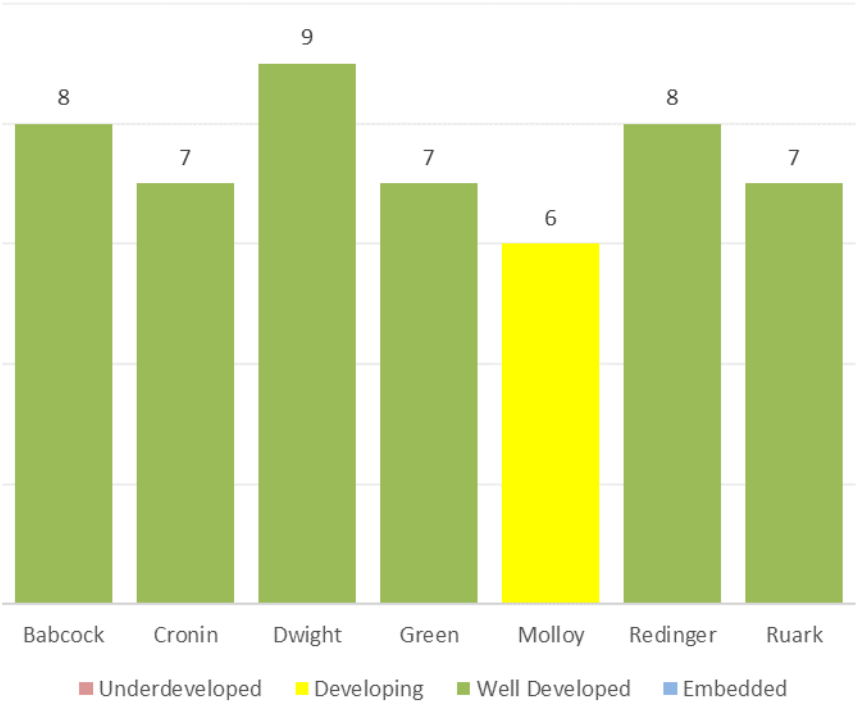
6.17 (6.17)

Comments

Babcock	In addition to Charting the Course, the committee does seem to do additional work every few years. We brought in someone from MASC to guide us through creating meeting norms most recently
Green	Few board members have been trained in collective bargaining for student achievement
Molloy	Most members participated in some form of professional development this year. The annual retreat could provide more space and encouragement for discussion about how the Committee's work might be improved. In the interests of professional development and continuity, training in areas such as collective bargaining should be available to the entire Committee if possible, rather than only subcommittee members. The School Committee did not follow through this year on a commitment to hold a MASC workshop in spite of a demonstrated need following a situation with poor outcomes.
Redinger	Most members attend the annual conference. I think it could be a good idea to increase training (perhaps by bringing someone in) next year to ensure new members have sufficient training.
Ruark	We should consider doing more formal training individually and as a group, whether that's bringing in outside trainers or doing some internal sharing of knowledge.

Underdeveloped (1-3)	The School Committee does not engage in professional development for itself; members do not attend briefings and training available to them. The board does not have planning or retreat sessions to help improve its work. Members may not have completed orientation training for their work.
Developing (4-6)	Members have had some professional development but need more to improve boardsmanship, understanding of roles and responsibilities, budget and finance, leadership, and other topics.
Well Developed (7-9)	The School Committee schedules periodic training for itself in collaboration with the superintendent. This may also include training with other members of the administrative team (i.e., principals; Central Office, etc.). Training includes Roles and Responsibilities updates, Collective Bargaining for Student Achievement, School Finance, Leadership and Collaboration, or customized programs to meet their needs.
Embedded (10)	The School Committee prioritizes professional development and ongoing training to maintain up to date knowledge of their roles and the strategies required to bolster student achievement, community support, and effective long term strategic planning.

A-10. Maintains an Ongoing Self-Assessment to Determine Board Effectiveness and Best Practices for Student Achievement



Score

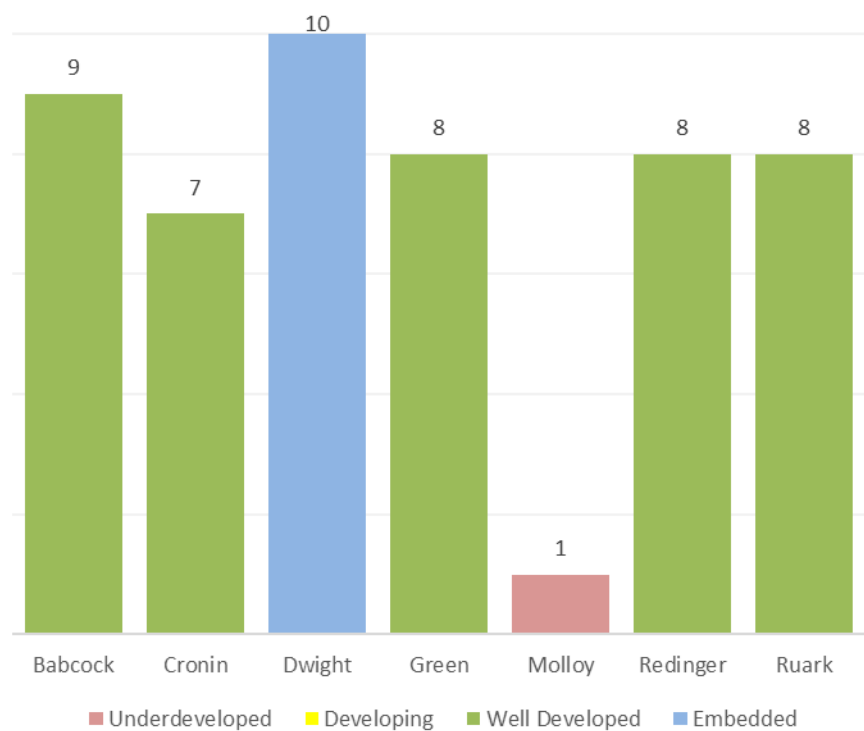
7.43 (7.17)

Comments

Babcock	I'd never thought I'd say this, but I miss the old tool. There is overlap in the content of many of the descriptions in this tool and some don't seem relevant to our district. The self evaluation process is carried out each year by the school committee and we benefit from the self-reflection each time.
Dwight	The tool has been completed each year and used to work towards improvements. Interestingly, Mary remembers this rubric being used in the past and the SC decided to create a more specific one for Harvard. I wonder if developing a rubric for scoring that one might be more relevant to us?
Green	This is year 1 of this instrument and future customization may be required.
Molloy	The self-assessment could be used as a more active tool to guide decision making in pursuit of improvement throughout the year.
Redinger	We evaluate ourselves each year and many of the suggestions from past evaluations have led to improvements in SC operations, training and interactions.
Ruark	I am hopeful we can find some targeted areas of improvement with this new self-assessment format. Generally, we have been good at doing the self-assessment each year and having that drive some of our planning for yearly goals at our retreat.

Underdeveloped (1-3)	The School Committee does not engage in self assessment and rarely reviews its practices and behaviors. The role of the School Committee relative to student achievement has not been discussed.
Developing (4-6)	The School Committee conducts a self assessment on a regular basis, but the instrument does not weigh critical strategies linked to promoting collegiality, clarity, and best practices nor the levels of achievement for the school district.
Well Developed (7-9)	The board conducts an annual self-assessment that is thorough and carefully developed to identify the critical practices and bases of knowledge for the School Committee. The board takes the data from the assessment and uses it to improve its operations, direct its goal setting, and build a strong relationship with the superintendent and the public.
Embedded (10)	The Self-Assessment tool is a valuable gauge for the School Committee to effect continuous improvement, greater focus on student needs, and the short and long range goals of the school district.

AA-1. Effective Meeting Process



Score

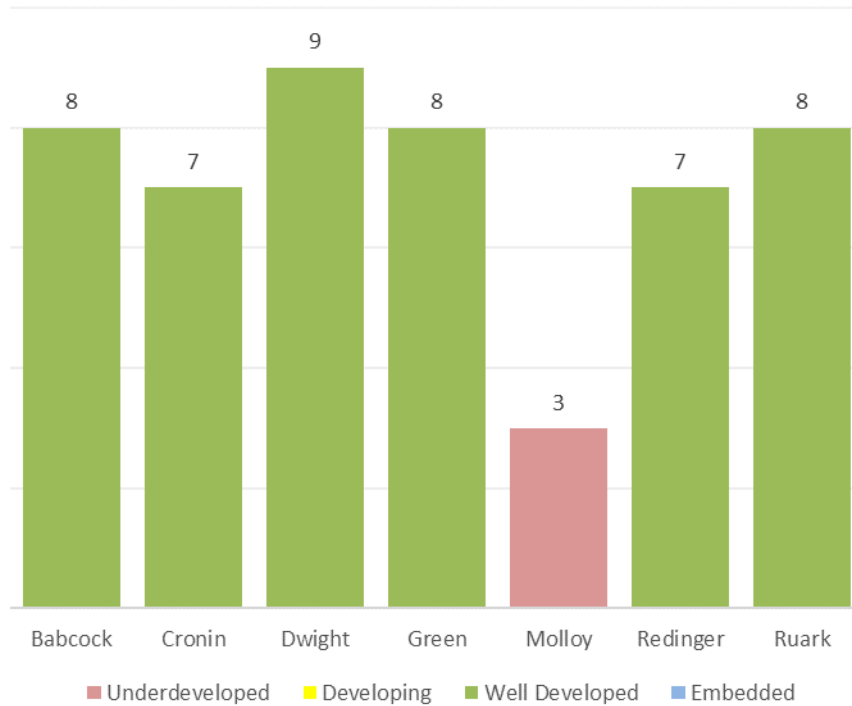
7.29 (6.83)

Comments

Babcock	Agendas are thoughtfully developed and an incredible amount of content is covered through the year. Time is managed well in consideration of all members of the committee. Overall, the committee meetings are very effective.
Dwight	The meetings are effective and purposeful. We have done a better job of providing background information for discussions.
Molloy	A two business day minimum should be provided to allow appropriate review of all reports and materials reasonably expected to be part of the night's agenda. The Committee engaged this year with a personal attack on an individual member. Committee officers and administration invited an offsite ambush at the annual Committee retreat, then allowed multiple extended public comments on the same topic, which was not relevant to the agenda. The situation was allowed to continue unchecked for months, and finally encompassed seven very personal, threatening, and protracted individual attacks across three different meetings. During this time the Committee never moved to support its newest member, whose actions had been independently confirmed by MASC as appropriate efforts to carry out a fiduciary responsibility. Despite receiving this information, Committee leadership proceeded to initiate a baseless deliberation of censure in open session for purely political reasons. Though the Committee eventually agreed with the MASC determination, significant damage was done. Further examination of this course of events should probably take place in order to ensure no future member is ever treated in a similar way.
Redinger	Aside from the occasionally over-scheduled agenda meetings are efficient and members have time to debate the issues in front of them. Agendas regularly include topics related to student achievement, policy and budget.
Ruark	Agenda does not always allow sufficient time for discussion of important items, and there is an inferred pressure to limit discussion if we appear that we will run long. Sometimes there is insufficient introduction of topics that are only visited infrequently. We should strive to stick to the policy of introduce one meeting, vote the next.

Underdeveloped (1-3)	Board meetings are not focused and lack attention to procedural rules, and without agendas that address appropriate topics. The meetings are sufficiently disruptive so as to affect public credibility and the image of the board and to undermine confidence in its work. Members may use meetings to address inappropriately administrative operations. Members may engage in attacks upon the superintendent, colleagues or others. Decisions are resolved on the basis of local political criteria rather than factual and data driven information.
Developing (4-6)	Meetings are orderly but do not routinely address important policies and issues that affect student achievement and district success. Only a few members understand the basics of parliamentary procedures. They have an inadequate amount of time spent on basic board information including data that links student and school success to strategies and tactics that require policy or budgetary support. Recommendations of the superintendent may be rejected without adequate discussion or for inappropriate reasons without principled dissent.
Well Developed (7-9)	Meetings are orderly and consistent with parliamentary rules which board members understand clearly. Public comment period is orderly and based on items appropriately before the School Committee. Agendas include thoughtful and thorough discussions and briefings on topics related to student achievement. Student and faculty success is recognized and morale of the district is promoted through board outcomes. The board uses clear and reliable strategies to ensure that meetings are strong tools for successful outcomes for policy and operations.
Embedded (10)	Orderly and effective, purposeful meetings are the hallmark of the district, instilling confidence and support for the public who attends, views, and reads about the meetings. Meetings are clearly designed to focus stakeholder and the community on successful schools and students. Information provided to the public and to members is sufficient to foster a discussion and additional resources may be available on the district web site or by request.

AA-2. Demonstrated Teamwork and Collegiality



Score

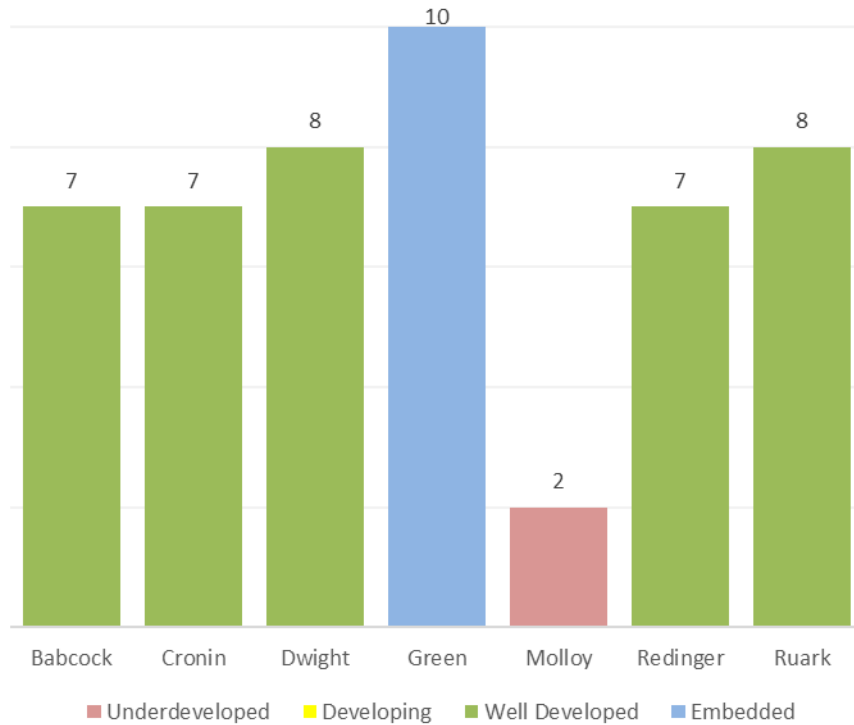
7.14 (6.83)

Comments

Molloy	Civility is generally observed, but tension, distrust, and a lack of true collegiality exists.
Redinger	Members are always respectful and civil. Use of sub-committees has varied, but policy and finance sub-committees seem to be working well. Members take on work as available.

Underdeveloped (1-3)	Relationships between the School Committee and superintendent are poor. Little respect and support is demonstrated. Members bicker inappropriately with the administration and among themselves. Similarly, other stakeholders with whom the School Committee might relate sense the lack of teamwork and collegiality and engage in improper behaviors, including end-runs around the chain of command. As a result, the board is unable to conduct a coherent discussion and debate on critical matters before it.
Developing (4-6)	Members maintain civility in general. Members participate on subcommittees and there is some delegated leadership. Faculty members and community stakeholders are developing respect for the board processes. Through a collegial setting, the members are able to conduct orderly and coherent meetings that will lead to less tension and support for best practices. Faculty and community members are comfortable coming to and appearing before the School Committee.
Well Developed (7-9)	The School Committee works effectively and collegially among themselves. Debate is civil and members set a good example for the public. The board uses its subcommittees to help expedite decision making. Members engage in principled dissent when there is disagreement and use discretion outside of the meeting. Members are careful to speak for themselves rather than for the board when addressing topics outside the board room.
Embedded (10)	The public recognizes that School Committee members work together for the best interests of the district and address their roles and responsibilities effectively and efficiently. The district is able to expedite its work in ways that build public credibility. Municipal officials take note and engage the School Committee as colleagues for the success of the community.

AA-3. Communications Among Board Members and with Superintendent



Score

7.00 (6.83)

Comments

Molloy

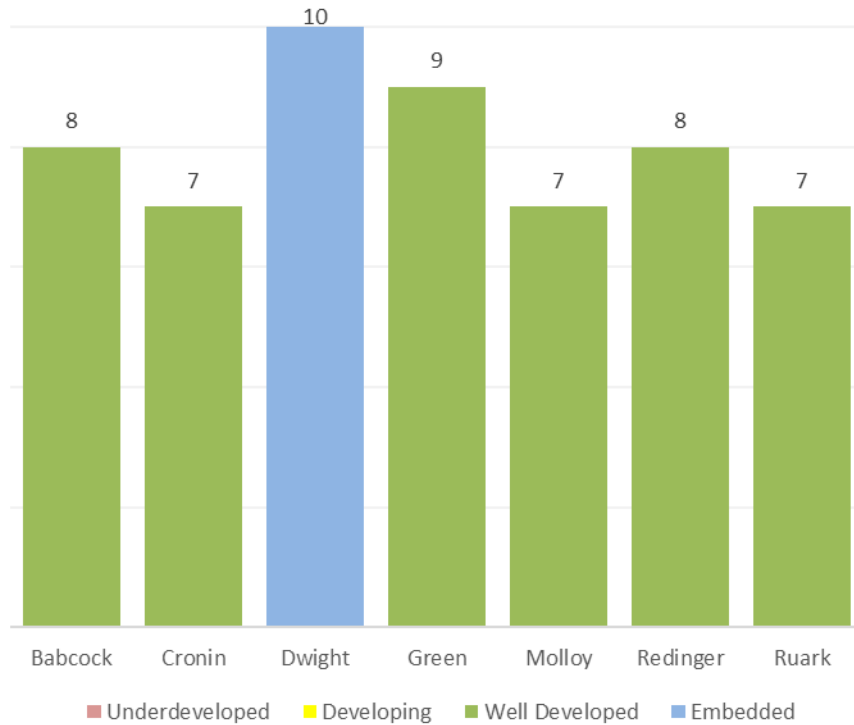
Committee leadership should never be used for the purpose of silencing any individual member. Requests to share relevant fiduciary information with the Committee have been refused. Committee members have independently attended stakeholder meetings and expressed Committee support to them without Committee authorization. Requests to have opinions reflected in the record or to place an item on the agenda for discussion are not always honored. The Committee has failed to follow up on an agreed-to training.

Ruark

I believe we can improve the sharing of information made available by school leaderships to school committee members. This includes providing materials for meetings earlier as well as sharing information to all members when information is requested by individual members.

Underdeveloped (1-3)	The School Committee fails to act as a cohesive unit by failing to share information, generating ex-parte communications that disrupt the chain of command, or communicates with other members, stakeholders or community leaders in ways that undermine both the board and the effectiveness of the superintendent.
Developing (4-6)	The School Committee understands the importance of using a communications protocol that includes sharing information, delivering a consistent message, supports the efforts of the superintendent, uses principled dissent to explain differences, and communicates through the chair and superintendent on matters involving the district and member communities. However, this practice is not always followed nor adhered to by all members.
Well Developed (7-9)	All members of the School Committee understand the importance of using a communications protocol that includes sharing information, delivering a consistent message, supports the efforts of the superintendent, uses principled dissent to explain differences, engages in principled support when needed, and communicates through the chair and superintendent on matters involving the district and member communities. However, this practice is not always followed nor adhered to by all members.
Embedded (10)	Because a consistent and respectful line of communications is respected, the superintendent and the School Committee are able to fulfill their functions effectively without concern that their efforts would be undermined.

AA-4. Varied and Purposeful Meetings



Score

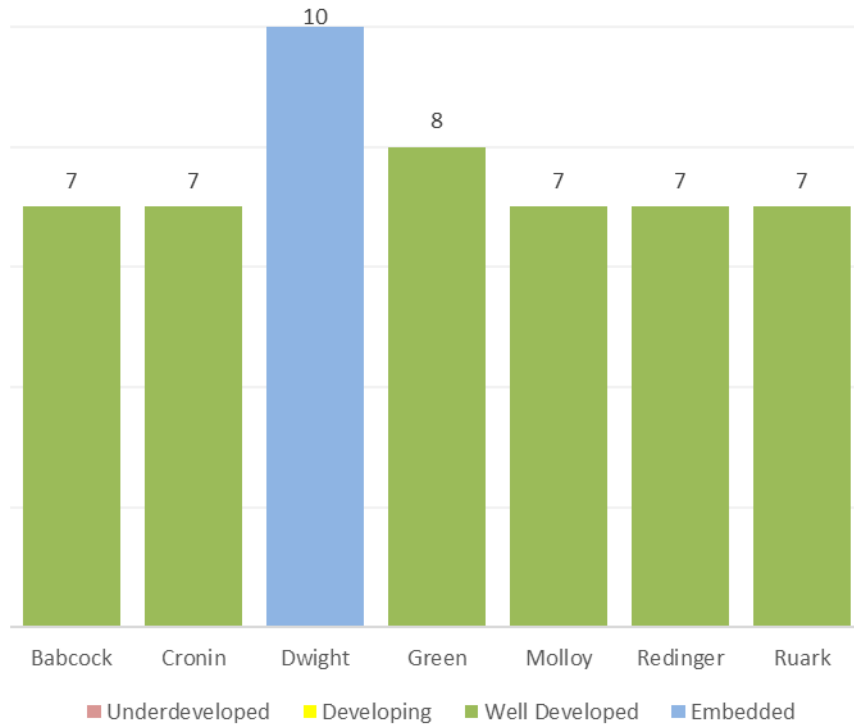
8.00 (7.67)

Comments

Dwight	This has been a welcomed change in recent years and the public does look forward to these program highlights often done with student involvement.
Molloy	Presentations are varied, informative, and well scheduled. The Committee needs to ensure that time is provided for questions and discussion during or following each presentation. Though media is almost always present, there is infrequent coverage of programs and curricula.
Redinger	We have received presentations from Special Education, Math, Science and Language Arts faculty. We have been joined by students from both schools who have demonstrated academic performance in various curricula.
Ruark	It feels like we did better last year than this year on curriculum presentations, as the presentations appear scheduled in a more ad-hoc way this year. The presentations we do have usually well focused on student achievement. It would be great to convince the media to report out on these curriculum efforts. Outside of the curriculum presentations, we rarely have PD for members during out meetings.

Underdeveloped (1-3)	Professional development rarely, if ever, occurs at School Committee meetings or special training sessions. The School Committee rarely, if ever, hosts meetings at which academic presentations and professional development for board members are provided by the superintendent in order to demonstrate value and effectiveness. Parliamentary procedures are poorly deployed and meetings lack focus. Meetings have poor outcomes with little policy direction and resolution of issues, resulting in significant delays in expediting short term objectives or long term goals.
Developing (4-6)	There are some opportunities for district program leaders to make presentations to the School Committee. These presentations provide helpful exposure but do not always make the link between the programs and student achievement or wellbeing. The public and the faculty may not make the connection.
Well Developed (7-9)	The School Committee and the superintendent invite program leaders and faculty members to make a public presentation about their work. All presenters realize their goal is to link their program to positive outcomes for students (and community). Staff who elect to use the opportunity for infomercials, self-promotion, or diversion are discouraged.
Embedded (10)	School Committee members and the public look forward to regularly scheduled academic presentations that clearly demonstrate the impact on student achievement of various school activities, curricula, programs, and faculty work. Meetings are run in an exemplary way with the chair visibly and demonstrably leading a constructive public session from which the public derives confidence in their public schools. Media cover these events to help the public understand the value of these programs and curricula.

AA-5. Shared Governance Through Aligned Subcommittees and Distributive Leadership



Score

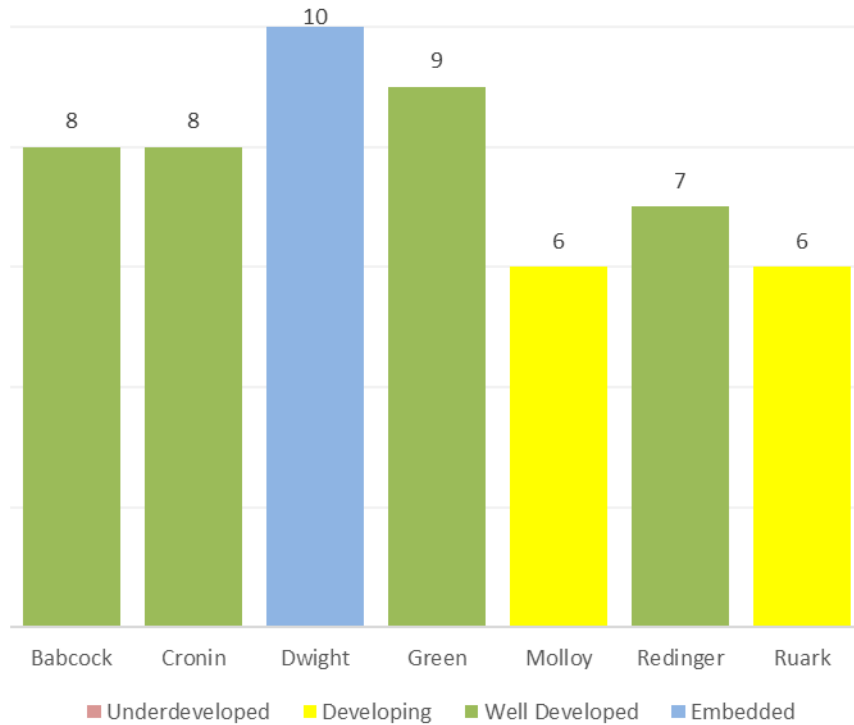
7.57 (7.17)

Comments

Dwight	I have appreciated how Chairs asks members to share their thoughts on a topic one by one. Everyone has a chance to express their ideas and ask questions.
Molloy	The policy and budget subcommittees are active. The School Committee could improve its budgetary process by providing input earlier and involving more members. The Committee has an opportunity to work more actively to create ad-hoc task forces and special assignments to respond to student concerns and strengthen relationships among colleagues, stakeholders, and community members.
Redinger	Members have taken on roles as their capacity has allowed. Liaisons actively attend council meetings, HEAC, DEAC, CPIC and Athletics meetings. Because the SC has limited goals this year the sub-committees have been less active.
Ruark	Our subcommittees could stand to use a re-assessment. Do we need a separate budget subcommittee given our size? Should we have other subcommittees to focus on some of these other topics? There also have not been opportunities for leadership among the members beyond subcommittee work.

Underdeveloped (1-3)	All activities are controlled by the chair or superintendent. Information is distributed to the membership in an untimely or incomplete manner. There are few or no subcommittees to take actions between meetings. Members have little or no chance to assume positions of leadership from which may aspire to make greater contributions to the success of the district and its students. The School Committee does not encourage the superintendent, nor evaluate the superintendent, on his/her ability to implement shared leadership principles.
Developing (4-6)	There are some subcommittees, but they are inactive. Members have little additional responsibility other than attending meetings and are discouraged from working with the community to promote public schools. The superintendent is not evaluated on the ability to work with the School Committee or faculty in a way that distributes leadership opportunities.
Well Developed (7-9)	Subcommittees are active and focused for the purpose of taking important actions in between meetings to develop draft policies, address important student concerns, organize for a strategic planning process, monitor district finances, and study the long range implications of curriculum effectiveness. The chair delegates authority and responsibility among the membership, allowing others to assume positions of leadership.
Embedded (10)	The chair and members understand and demonstrate good leadership abilities by handling their tasks responsibly and collegially. Subcommittees, ad-hoc task forces, and special assignments are delegated and members fulfill their responsibilities to expedite work between meetings and relationships among colleagues, stakeholders and community members.

AA-6. Establishes Goals for School District



Score

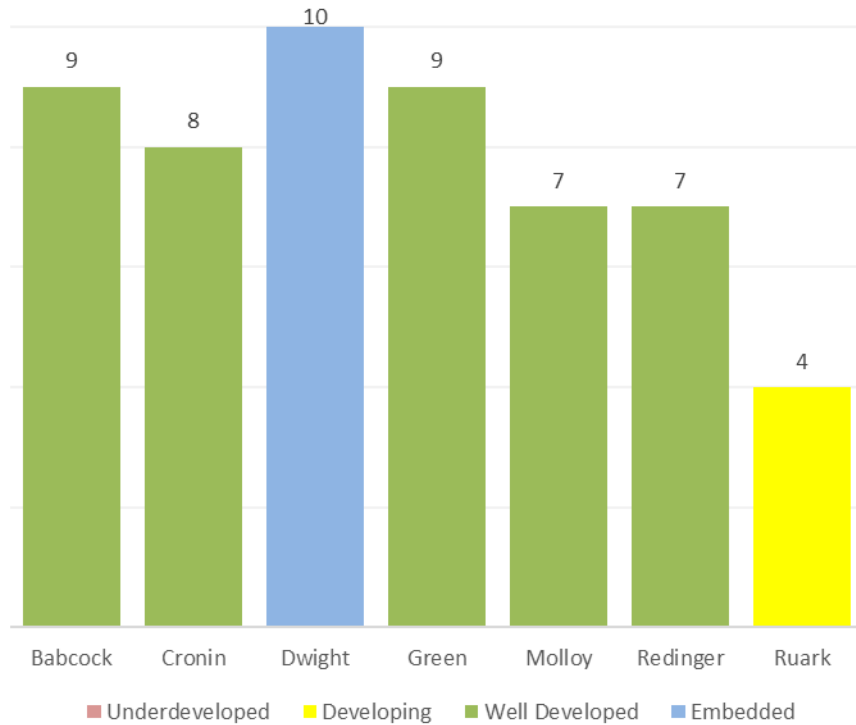
7.71 (7.33)

Comments

Dwight	The DIP creates an overarching structure for the SIPs at both schools. There is a mid-year review on all goals.
Molloy	Goals are in place and could be cited more frequently as guides for policy and budget decisions. Some goals could be more specific and/or measurable.
Redinger	The district goals are in placed and regularly reviewed.
Ruark	While we do set annual goals for ourselves and superintendent, I wouldn't say they are monitored carefully. We have gotten a bit better about creating SMART goals but could still do even better with identifying verifiable measures.

Underdeveloped (1-3)	The School Committee has not developed goals for the district that are timely and appropriate, and, therefore, does not engage in meaningful planning around budget, student achievement, and administrative stability. Goals that exist may address inappropriate areas or not focus on measurable achievement and clearly defined successes. A strategic plan, if in place, is ineffective or not followed.
Developing (4-6)	If the district has a strategic plan, it is not monitored or updated. Annual goals for the superintendent and the School Committee are perfunctory and ambiguous, and not clear and measured with deadlines, milestones, and accountable staff.
Well Developed (7-9)	Annually, in collaboration with the superintendent, the School Committee develops goals for itself, goals for the superintendent and the district. A strategic plan is in place and monitored carefully.
Embedded (10)	School Committee members, administrators, and stakeholders are aware of well structured, clear and relevant district goals and work carefully to achieve them. Where there is a strategic plan in place, members routinely use it to guide their policy making and budgeting.

AA-7. Establishes a Strategic Plan for Student Achievement



Score

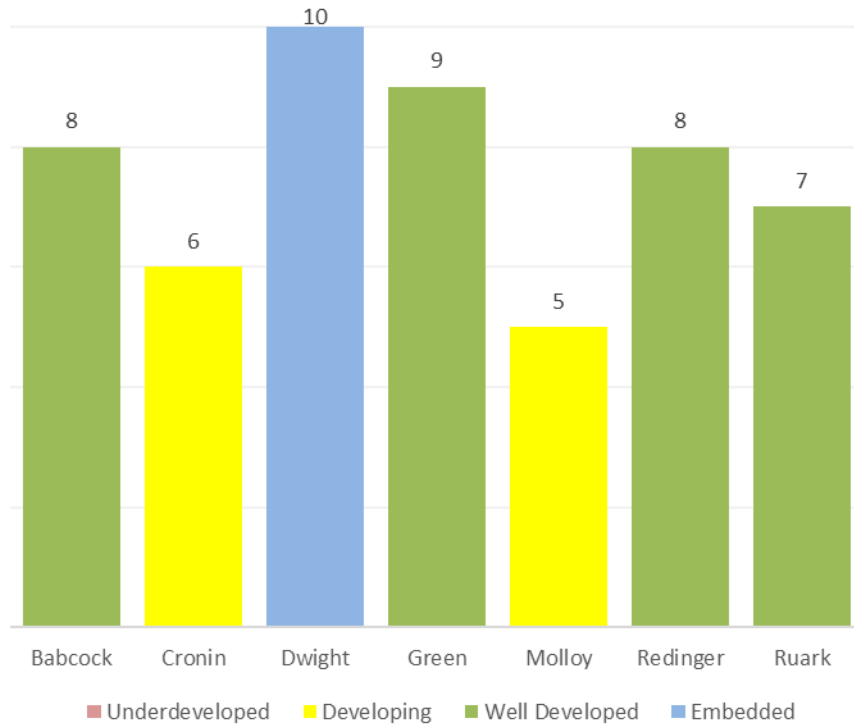
7.71 (7.33)

Comments

Babcock	A very well put together strategic plan is developed and reviewed by the SC twice each year. The thoroughness of the creation and review of these strategic plans is one of the strengths of the district.
Dwight	one of our strength areas
Molloy	The Committee should ensure that periodic review opportunities exist for guiding messages such as the vision statement.
Redinger	The district has a strategic plan which drives the district goals and the school improvement plans. The SC regularly reviews and gives feedback on these plans.
Ruark	Possibly a 3. I don't think we have a strategic plan at the committee level in place specifically around student achievement, although we do have the basic mechanisms in place that such a plan would recommend. It's not clear to me that we need a strategic plan at this time, but it could be worth discussion at the retreat again.

Underdeveloped (1-3)	There is no strategic plan, or a plan that may exist is not followed.
Developing (4-6)	A strategic plan is in place but it may not be sufficiently detailed, rigorous, or relevant. There are no measurable goals, timelines, and clearly defined strategies. As a result, the plan is not a helpful tool. Or, the district may be in the process of developing a model instrument, but such a plan is not yet ready for implementation.
Well Developed (7-9)	A strategic plan is in place and is reviewed regularly to ensure timeliness and relevance. The strategic plan addresses short term, moderate, and long range goals and attempts to cover financial planning to the extent possible. All School Committee members and administrators are aware of their roles under the plan. Key decisions, including policy making and budget, are made based on the plan.
Embedded (10)	A well crafted Strategic Plan is in place. It is a guide to policy making and budgeting. Stakeholders have had a hand in developing the plan and share the commitment to fulfill its parts. The plan includes a relevant Vision and Mission statement as well as reasonable milestones for accountable administrators. The plan is reviewed periodically during the year and revised annually.

AA-8. Addresses Dissent and Disagreement in Ways that Encourage Civic Engagement and Public Discourse.



Score

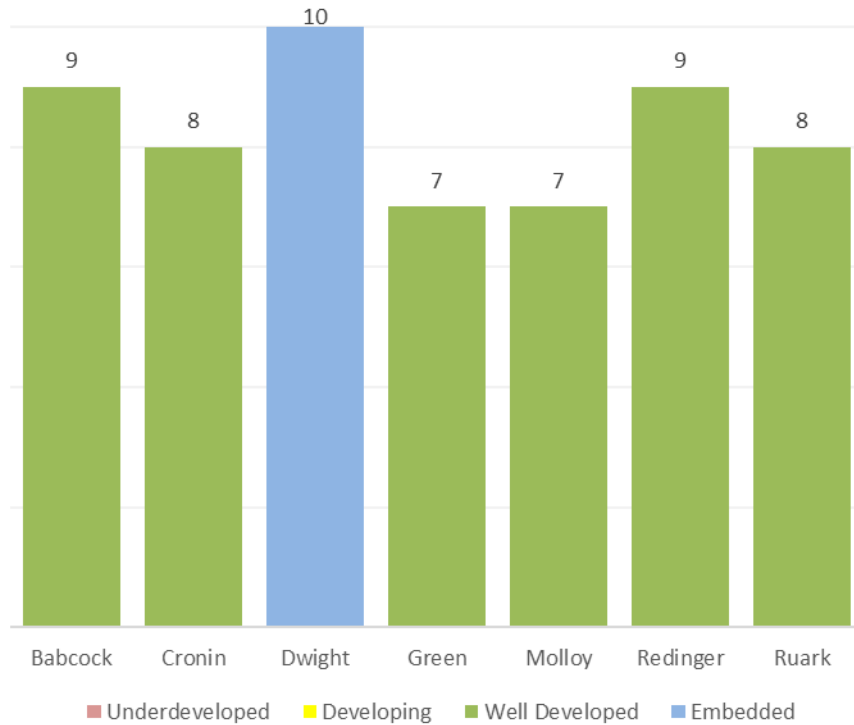
7.57 (7.17)

Comments

Cronin	The committee has an opportunity with the onboarding of our newest/incoming members to lean into challenging conversations and build trust amongst the committee to create a supportive and collaborative team.
Redinger	Members thoroughly debate issues and follow parliamentary procedure. Difficult issues have been thoughtfully addressed and even when members don't agree they show respect for the ultimate decision.

Underdeveloped (1-3)	School Committee members argue regularly and without focus so as to discourage public participation and interest in meetings. Disagreements disrupt the flow of discussion and debate, making rational decision making difficult or impossible. Members speak at length or multiple times and may show lack of respect for each other. Public comment period protocols fail to focus comments on legitimate issues. The chair is unable or unwilling to address this problem. Neither the chair, nor superintendent are able to steer the meeting efficiently.
Developing (4-6)	The School Committee has identified the importance of orderly and efficient meetings and is working toward conducting them, including best strategies for efficient conduct. The chair and superintendent mentor each other to help avoid meeting pitfalls. Members are encouraged to focus their remarks. Members have some understanding of parliamentary procedures to move the meeting forward. Members have an understanding of Principled Dissent and use the meeting to raise appropriate questions, make relevant points, and respect the time of others.
Well Developed (7-9)	An engaged chair helps lead focused and effective meetings. The chair understands rules of Parliamentary Procedures. The public participates under public comment policies that address meeting topics. Members debate respectfully and engage in principled and constructive criticism and principled dissent where appropriate. Members are mindful of the implications of the debate and use the meeting as a way to promote public support and to educate the community. When there is disagreement, members do so constructively and in a principled manner.
Embedded (10)	School Committee meetings are orderly, efficient, and collegial. The public is comfortable attending. Business is conducted in an orderly way. Meeting attendees and the public and media understand what is happening and appreciate the balance in the debate, respecting the majority perspective and the minority views.

AB-1. Hire and Retain an Effective Superintendent



Score

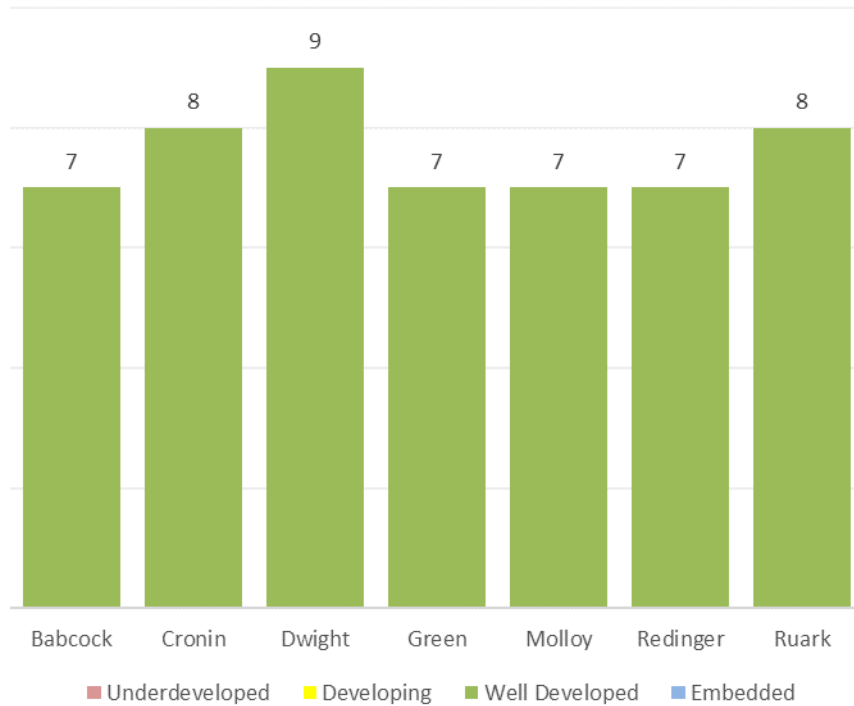
8.29 (8.00)

Comments

Green	We continue to work to improve and align the Superintendent's evaluation tool.
Ruark	Most of us were not here during the superintendent hiring process, but we do participate in planning and supporting PD and mentoring efforts.

Underdeveloped (1-3)	The superintendent hiring process was poorly planned and there was neither recruitment for able candidates nor interest in seeking a diverse pool. Superintendent was hired with little regard to potential success in meaningful areas. The process was politically driven rather than motivated by best interests of students. The School Committee does not use the evaluation process to help focus the work of their chief executive. The School Committee may remove a superintendent for inappropriate or invalid reasons. (NOTE: the failure to renew the contract of a superintendent or to terminate employment is not, ipso facto, grounds for criticizing the School Committee.)
Developing (4-6)	The School Committee has sought and retained an able superintendent by establishing criteria and measuring candidates against these standards. . An evaluation instrument is in the development stage but not finalized as a vehicle to measure the effectiveness of the administrative officer..
Well Developed (7-9)	The superintendent search process was transparent and engaged the public so as to create a positive climate for induction. An skillful mentor is used to help the new leader adapt to the district. Using a thorough and effective evaluation tool, the potential continued success for the superintendent is likely. Successful superintendent is provided with professional and economic incentives to continue in the district. Strategies for retaining an outstanding leader are understood and appreciated by the School Committee which also supports professional development and ongoing mentoring for their leader. Superintendent compensation is tied to performance. The evaluation tool measures appropriate standards and is used as a constructive tool as well as an instrument to help the public understand exemplary practices.
Embedded (10)	A highly competent superintendent models an exemplary relationship with the School Committee where they may mentor each other. Particular attention is paid to transitional leadership. They focus on mutually agreeable goals, measures of accountability, and strategies for success. Each respects the roles and responsibilities of the other. The community recognizes the strength of the relationship and supports it. The public schools are not only experiencing, but expected to continue experiencing student-centered policies and practices under the leadership team.

AB-1a. Develops Ongoing Working Relationship with Superintendent



Score

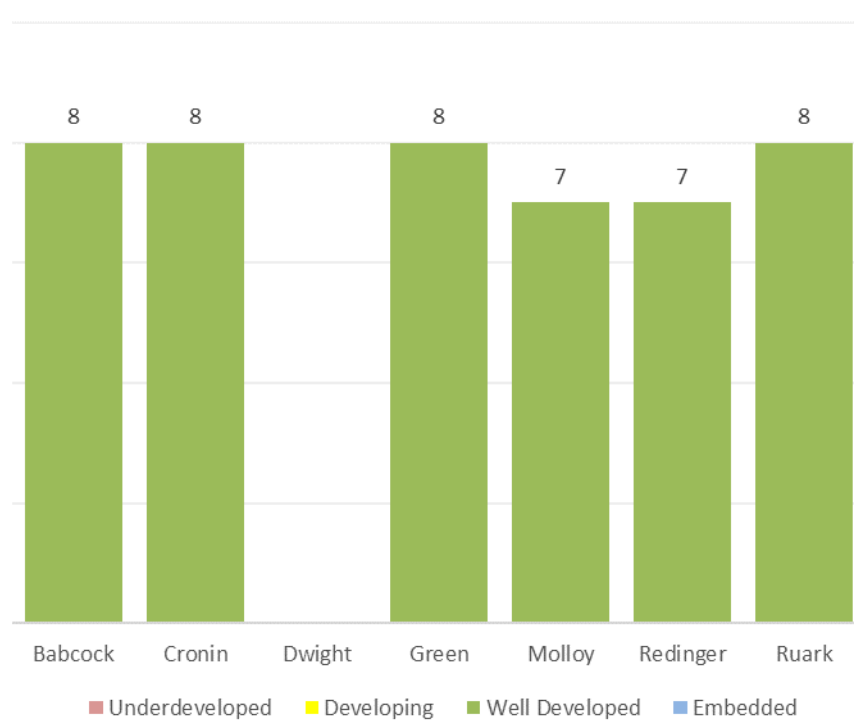
7.57 (7.33)

Comments

Green	We continue to work to improve and align the Superintendent's evaluation tool.
Redinger	The retreat two years ago was useful in demonstrating the differentiation in the roles/responsibilities between SC members and the Superintendent. The SC has consistently worked to support the Superintendent's recommendations. The SC evaluations the Superintendent each year and provides feedback on job performance.

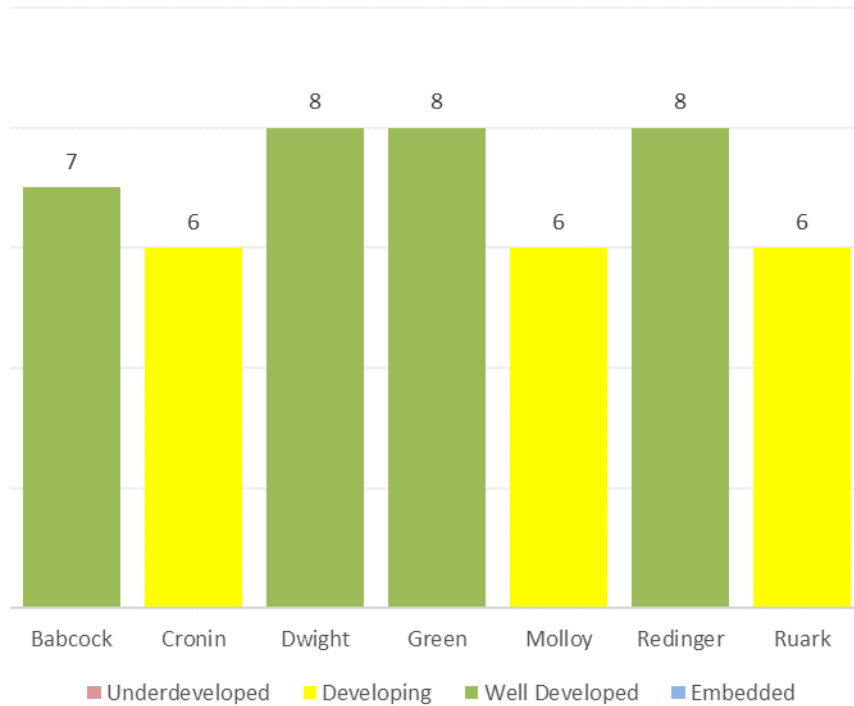
Underdeveloped (1-3)	School Committee and superintendent relations are poor. Evaluations are sporadic and ineffective. Faculty members sense the instability of the working relationship and performance at the school and district level is undermined in ways that can be identified. The superintendent's contract of employment is being terminated as a result. There is little trust among central office personnel and the board and the climate is discouraging for a potential superintendent search. There are neither interested internal candidates nor administrators who have been groomed for leadership. External candidates have little or no interest in this position because of the district climate.
Developing (4-6)	The School Committee has sought and retained an able superintendent. The board has engaged in professional development leading to a constructive and progressive administration. Roles and responsibilities of both board and superintendent are being clarified. An evaluation instrument is in the development stage but not finalized. The board may not be supportive of ongoing induction and professional development for the superintendent. The superintendent may not be current on critical developments and issues which could lead to internal tension at some point.
Well Developed (7-9)	The superintendent who has been hired has been supported by the board. Board and superintendent have engaged in team building and professional development to respect each other's roles. The School Committee supports the superintendent in fulfilling professional responsibilities and administrative leadership. Both engage in policy development, budgeting and goal setting strategies for student achievement and send a consistent message to all school stakeholders. The evaluation process is a tool used for constructive and developmental purposes, allowing members to analyze the superintendent's performance in relation to district goals and strategies. Superintendent compensation is tied to performance.
Embedded (10)	The chair and superintendent serve as mentors to each other's as an ongoing strategy to build a model relationship for leadership of the district. Members also model this behavior in their work. The public recognizes and respects this relationship and supports the superintendent.

AB-2. Establishes Mutually Agreeable Goals for Superintendent (and District)



Underdeveloped (1-3)	Annual goals for the superintendent are not set. Conversely, goals are not meaningful or realistic.
Developing (4-6)	The School Committee and superintendent set goals at the start of the administration and review them regularly as part of the normal course of action or as part of the superintendent's evaluation. These goals have some link to student achievement.
Well Developed (7-9)	The superintendent's annual goals are thoughtfully developed and all stakeholders understand them. They serve as part of an integrated planning process. (See strategic planning, above.) The goals are linked to student achievement, district strength, fiscal responsibility, and professional development.
Embedded (10)	The superintendent's goals are models for the rest of the school community, highlighting and identifying important objectives and milestones. The goals are clear, relevant, timely, and linked to the district strategic plan, financial master plan, and professional development.

AB-3. Maintains Relationship to Promote Student Achievement



Score

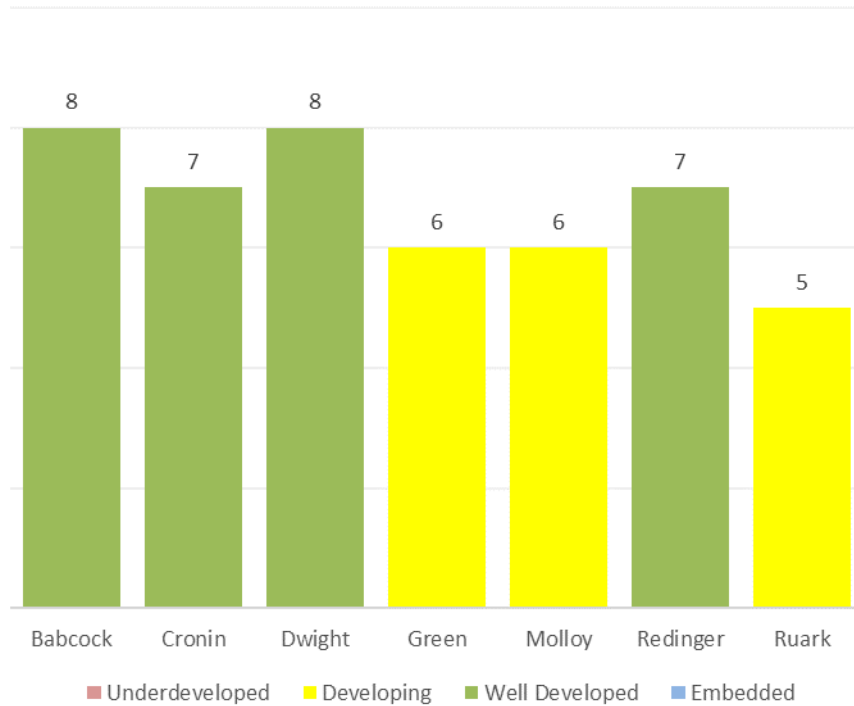
7.00 (6.83)

Comments

Cronin	I don't believe we have special tactics and strategies in place with timelines and responsible persons associates to each.
Green	Occurs in school and district improvement plans. More student achievement strategy training/discussions could be helpful.
Redinger	Student achievement is a regular focus of SC meetings. Dr. Dwight consistently brings requests for funding of programs/staffing to the SC and advocates for programs that benefit students academically and socially.
Ruark	As with the student achievement strategic plan, it feels like a lot of the pieces are probably in place, but as a committee we haven't tied them all together in a single place.

Underdeveloped (1-3)	School Committee does not routinely discuss student achievement or is unable to do so because of interpersonal or professional problems. The superintendent has not proposed such discussions or is unable to raise them. The School Committee has had little or no professional development to understand its role in promoting student achievement.
Developing (4-6)	The board has studied strategies to improve student achievement and has a plan to implement them, but has yet to make meaningful progress.
Well Developed (7-9)	The School Committee and the superintendent have discussed student achievement strategies and have implemented a plan to collaborate on this initiative. Specific tactics and strategies are in place with timelines and responsible persons. This plan includes integration with other budget and policy responsibilities.
Embedded (10)	The School Committee and superintendent have developed a clear understanding of what is required of the board to support the improvement of student achievement outcomes. A culture exists where the board routinely integrates these strategies into its policies, budget, and public discourse and where the public recognizes this commitment and respects the academic stakeholders for it.

AB-4. Provides Rational and Effective Evaluation of the Superintendent



Score

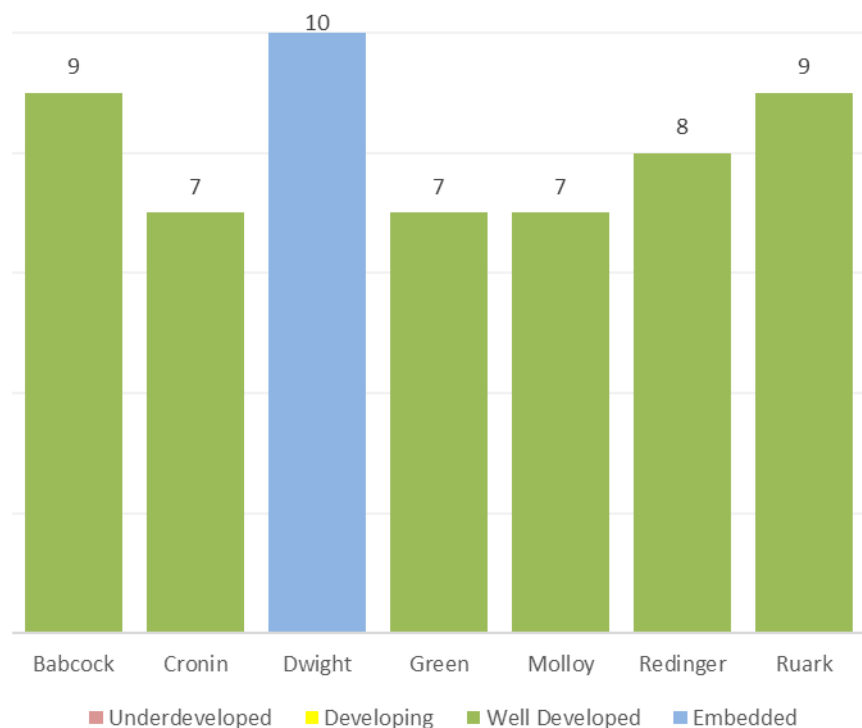
6.71 (6.50)

Comments

Babcock	The superintendent evaluation instrument has some limitations, but the process is productive. It is important to consider the accomplishments of the superintendent outside of the confines of the tool.
Green	Current evaluation instrument does not always provide evidence of effective effort.
Molloy	The Committee could provide more feedback to the superintendent on potential areas of improvement.
Redinger	The SC evaluates the Superintendent each year. The evaluation method has been flexible, but the committee provides constructive feedback to the superintendent which is publicly discussed.
Ruark	We provide an annual plan at the start of the year, review at the mid-point (mostly as communication from the superintendent to us), and then review at the end of the year. Based on the descriptions here, there is probably more we could be doing, especially in terms of ongoing review and tying goals to student achievement more explicitly.

Underdeveloped (1-3)	An inadequate or outdated evaluation instrument is used. The instrument does not include appropriate areas linked to leadership and performance for a chief executive. The evaluation does not take place in a timely way. Superintendent evaluations do not include meaningful input on the superintendent's performance as a factor in student achievement from the superintendent. The School Committee has not been able to reach agreement with the superintendent on an appropriate instrument.
Developing (4-6)	The School Committee has reviewed with the superintendent best practices and strategies for the superintendent and administrative team to improve student achievement and have worked them into an evaluation instrument. The School Committee may be considering a more detailed system to gather data from available accountability systems or from other appropriate faculty members. .
Well Developed (7-9)	The superintendent's evaluation includes discerning descriptors of how the superintendent is working to improve student achievement as well as other criteria. Members rank and comment about the superintendent's performance during the year and provide thoughtful and helpful input that will benefit their chief executive. The process is constructive and promotes a good working relationship and specific actions to achieve excellence.
Embedded (10)	The annual (and mid-year "temperature taking") evaluation(s) of the superintendent focus thoughtfully on the work of the superintendent to improve student achievement. School Committee members make clear and helpful comments and recognize successful strategies while citing potential areas of improvement.

AB-5. Receives and Addresses School Improvement Plans



Score

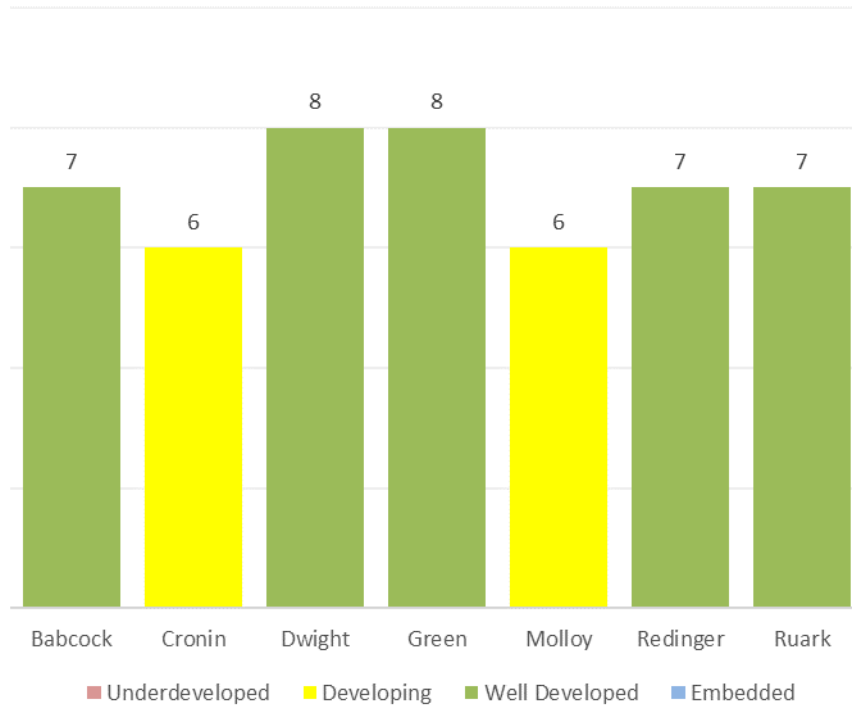
8.14 (7.83)

Comments

Molloy	The Committee used SIPs to assist in prioritizing budget cuts this year.
Redinger	Done twice/year
Ruark	We are doing quite well with this, excepting that we should probably have the DIP and SIP more visible throughout the year, both to us and to parents and the community.

Underdeveloped (1-3)	The School Committee does not receive or review School Improvement Plans. If it does, it is not the subject of meaningful discussion. The board has little or no training on the importance and value of the SIP. In the case of schools in turnaround status, the board does not review the plans and use them to measure progress.
Developing (4-6)	School Committee members understand the link between the SIP and the work of the superintendent with the principals to address the plan goals. Goals and SIPS may or may not be filed in a timely way and discussion may or may not take place.
Well Developed (7-9)	The School Committee is aware of the School Council and the School Improvement Plan and understands the process for developing a plan, its purpose, and its potential. Members read the plan, make inquiries, and link the SIP to its goals and policies.
Embedded (10)	The School Improvement Plan is a valued tool to assess school performance relative to district goals, engage parents and stakeholders, and build a continuum of leadership that ties student achievement from the school to the superintendent to the School Committee.

AB-6. Receives Feedback from the Public and Stakeholder Interests



Score

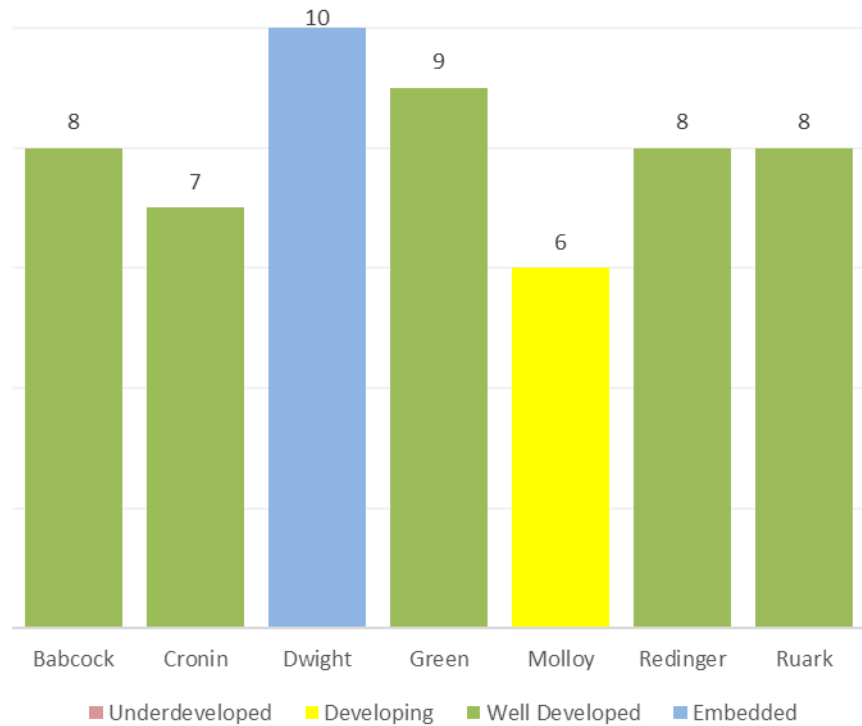
7.00 (6.83)

Comments

Molloy	Some members actively seek feedback; others seem not to. The Committee could create more opportunity for public engagement and input if it did not vote on issues that have only just been presented in that meeting. It could also benefit by creating other avenues to strengthen relationships with stakeholders.
Redinger	SC has two public commentary sections at each SC meeting. It conducts regular surveys of parents, most recently for bus usage that informed budget decisions. I do think the SC should bring back a regular communication tool to keep the community informed about its activities.
Ruark	Or possibly a 6. Feedback influences budget, policy, and planning in a somewhat ad hoc way. We could be doing more to solicit feedback from the public; whether the public would provide feedback is a different issue. One example would be getting feedback on upcoming policy reviews.

Underdeveloped (1-3)	There is no public comment period, public engagement, or other opportunity for the community members and stakeholders to engage the School Committee. There is little or no interest in feedback from others. No surveys or other avenues of feedback are developed. The School Committee and superintendent do not demonstrate value in building external relationships. The School Committee has not authorized a school climate assessment, focus groups, advisory committees or considered a 360-degree evaluation to obtain relevant feedback.
Developing (4-6)	The School Committee authorizes strategies for feedback, including public forums, Public Comment Periods at meetings, district climate surveys, TeLLs survey, focus groups tied to strategic planning or superintendent searching; or other tactics to demonstrate to the community that feedback is encouraged and welcomed.
Well Developed (7-9)	The School Committee uses the feedback from various strategies to inform budget, policy and planning. Regularly scheduled avenues for communication are scheduled, promoted, and conducted and discussions are framed in a way to encourage public input and follow-up.
Embedded (10)	The community expects and appreciates that the School Committee will engage stakeholders and other citizens in discussion and in search of feedback to make important decisions about public education. These include community forums, public round tables, collaborative events and discussions, surveys, cable television, and other public venues as sites for data and information gathering.

AC-1. Takes Steps to Significantly Promote Leadership Team and District Instructional Capacity



Score

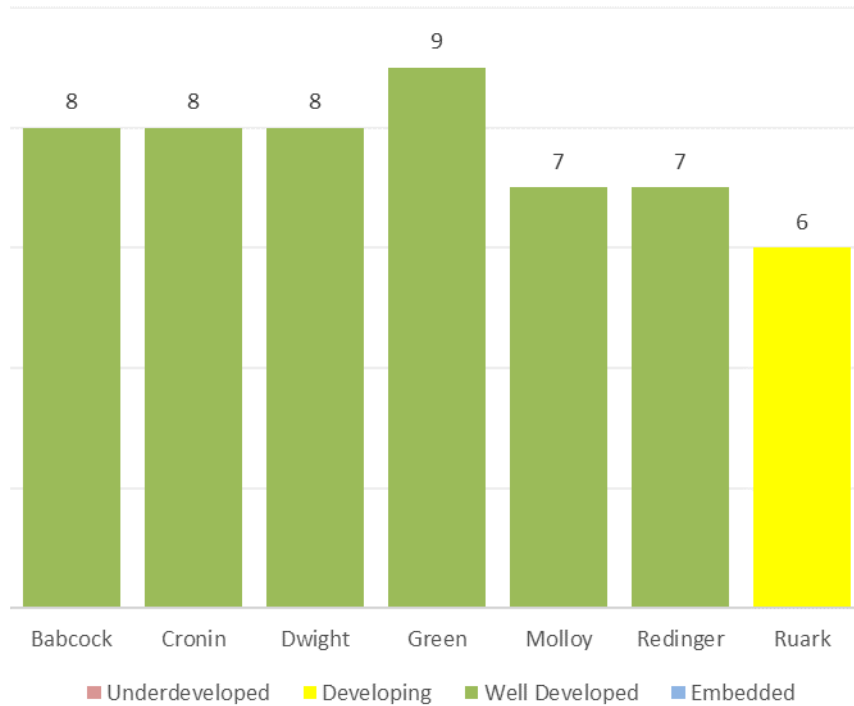
8.00 (7.67)

Comments

Molloy	A district leadership team overseen by the superintendent exists but without School Committee representation.
Ruark	Kind of both a 10 and a 5. In particular, we don't have a leadership function in superintendent evaluation (e.g., 360 review process).

Underdeveloped (1-3)	The School Committee does not address the capacity of the administrative leadership team to fulfill its responsibilities. A district leadership team involving the School Committee and/or stakeholders may not exist. There is no public discussion of leadership, including leadership transition or leadership cultivation, within the district.
Developing (4-6)	As part of the budget and policy making process, the School Committee understands the link between policy making and district leadership and capacity to lead. A leadership function is integrated into the budget planning process, superintendent evaluation, and goal setting.
Well Developed (7-9)	The School Committee understands the link between policy making and fiscal management to provide the district leadership team with the support it needs. Recommendations of the superintendent are sought and considered and a plan of action is in place and is activated.
Embedded (10)	The School Committee, in collaboration with the district educational leadership as overseen by the superintendent, establishes policies and provides adequate resources for the leadership team to work for student achievement.

AC-2. Establishes Strong Relationship with Municipal or Regional Civic Leadership



Score

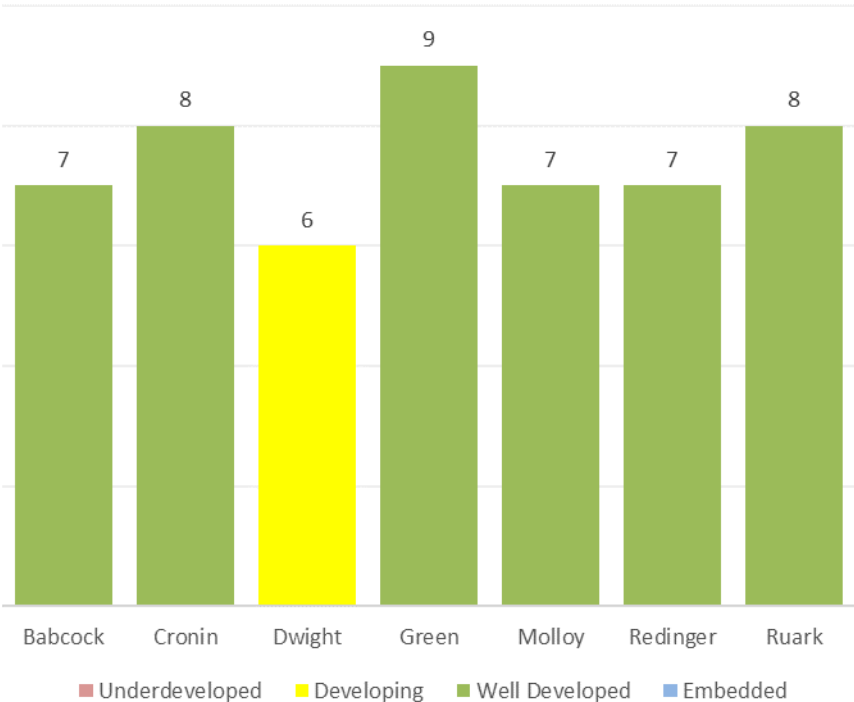
7.57 (7.50)

Comments

Molloy	Expanded lines of communication with the Select Board and other town committees would benefit relationships and district objectives.
Redinger	I think SC has a good working relationship with other boards, and regularly includes a select board member in collective bargaining. I think there should be better sharing of information between the SB and the SC (as evidenced by the recent breakdown surrounding the softball field relocation).
Ruark	Team building efforts would be valuable. It might make sense to attempt more general purpose joint meetings as well.

Underdeveloped (1-3)	School Committee, superintendent, and municipal officials have a poor relationship. Issues include finance, shared resources, personnel practices (including collective bargaining), operational coordination, and use of facilities. Interpersonal relationships are very poor. Information is not shared. The municipal representative for collective bargaining does not participate as the law allows. The community loses respect for one or the other party to this difficult situation. A communications strategy as part of the relationship building function is not in place. Further problems ensue because of efforts of the the state regulatory agencies to control other agencies of municipal government without authorization.
Developing (4-6)	School Committee, superintendent, and city/town leaders have agreed to develop a better relationship and discuss shared facilities use, appropriate consolidation of some services, appropriate participation in collective bargaining, and collegiality. Accurate information is provided when available for informed discussion. Relationships between the parties to not impede the progress of the district. The School Committee has worked with the appropriate municipal agencies and state authorities to resolve potential disagreements about oversight and authority.
Well Developed (7-9)	Relationships are good with the local officials, including sharing of financial information, participation in collective bargaining, sharing of facilities, participating in team building exercises, and joint meetings periodically to share perspectives and concerns.
Embedded (10)	The community leaders, including municipal officials, respect and support the public schools. This is demonstrated in annual support for the school budget and, if needed, override votes. Schools and the host cities and towns work together to build credibility and confidence in the public schools.

AC-3. Works Effectively with Municipal or Regional Governance, Administrative, and Operational Personnel



Score

7.43 (7.67)

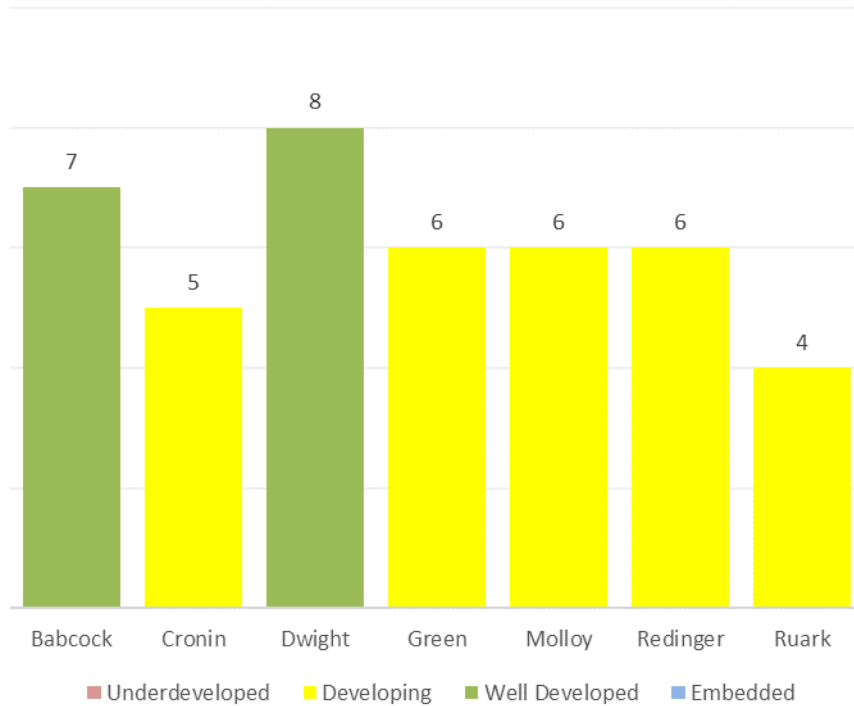
Comments

Dwight

The field issues are an example of an area for needed improvements. We have also struggled with snow removal issues in the recent past.

Underdeveloped (1-3)	There is little or no collaboration with the municipal entities in the district or region. Resources are not shared nor are potential economies of scale explored. The contentious nature of the school-municipal relationship interferes with education of children and creates unnecessary public conflict.
Developing (4-6)	The School Committee cultivates good relationships with the municipal leadership and department heads, considering ways to maximize efficiencies, save money, and build mutual bases of support. Such strategies are measurable and clear.
Well Developed (7-9)	Through continued collaboration, relationships with the municipality/ies are strong. Support for the school district is also strong with local officials. Strategies are in place to make the best shared use of important resources through mutual agreement and support.
Embedded (10)	Member municipalities and the public schools are supportive of each other and both explore and share resources, personnel, and facilities whenever appropriate. The municipal legislature (city council, town meeting), town administrators, and finance committees work in harmony with the school district to strengthen measurably public education in the district.

AC-4. Establishes a Communications Strategy to Promote Public Schools and Student Achievement



Score

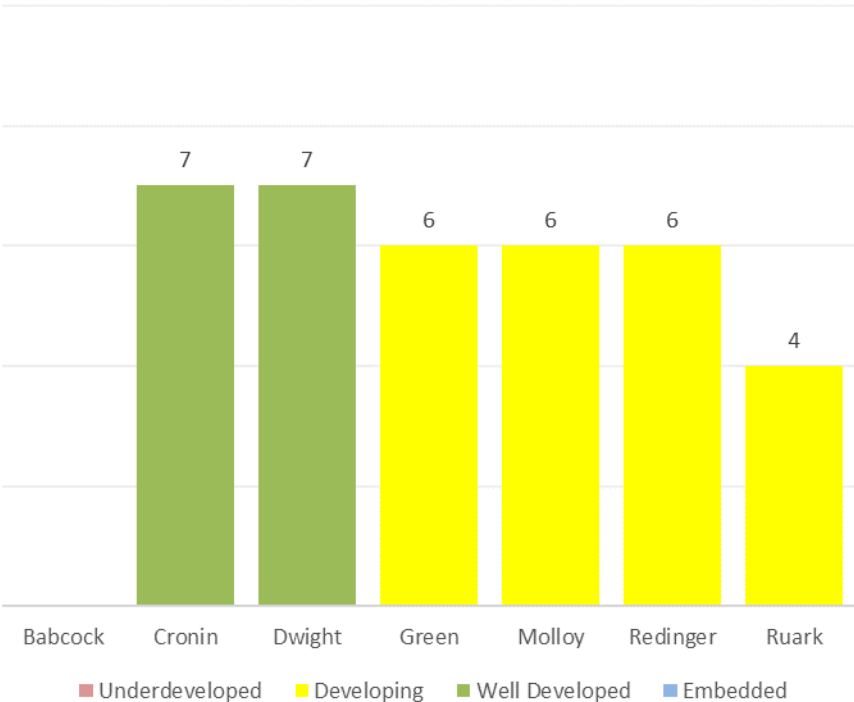
6.00 (5.67)

Comments

Babcock	Not aware of an official communications strategy - but sharing with the community is regular and informative.
Cronin	Recent events/newspaper articles indicate that misinformation can occur within the district/community.
Green	Most of the elements are in place but would be improved by integrating them into a strategic framework.
Molloy	The Committee should consider exploring expanded and more effective avenues of communication.
Redinger	We rely on the administration to send out information about the district and they are reliable in doing so. We have never aligned on a strategy.
Ruark	Communications to parents has improved via school-specific newsletters. The superintendent is active on social media and periodic newspaper pieces. The school committee itself has no communications plan and makes no effort of its own. Hence, I have a sense of misinformation and lack of appreciation of the schools within the community.

Underdeveloped (1-3)	There is no communications strategy in place. The school district does not respond effectively, nor proactively to promote its programs or schools. The district does not explore possibilities inherent in having and implementing an effective communications strategy. Internal and external communications are poor and the public image of the district suffers as a result.
Developing (4-6)	The basic elements of school communications are in place but not as effective as necessary. As a result, the district confronts misinformation, lack of appreciation of the public schools, and even inaccurate information that undermines the effectiveness of the district.
Well Developed (7-9)	The district has incorporated a communications strategy around its strategic plan. An active communications plan is in place that includes development and distribution of positive information on the school district. The district also communicates effectively within its stakeholder community including to faculty, parents, students, and interested citizens. Means of distribution of information are accessible and the strategy is linked to a more positive image for the school district.
Embedded (10)	Through development of a strong communications plan and diligent management of this plan, the district enjoys a positive image in the community. Information can be distributed quickly to stakeholders and the public. The district is able to manage the flow of information to ensure accuracy and access in the face of 21st century social media and instantaneous release of potentially inaccurate information from other sources.

AD-1. Advocates to Promote Public Policy for the Advancement of Public Schools and Student Achievement



Score

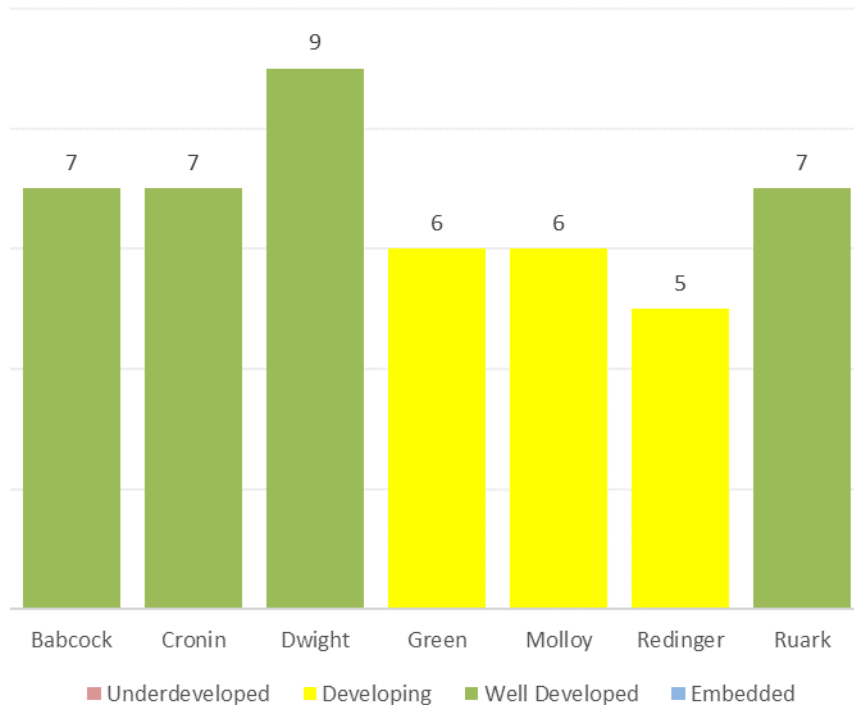
6.00 (5.80)

Comments

Dwight	We have been improving in this area.
Green	I'm not aware of relationships at the federal level.
Molloy	Local legislators attended and spoke at a Committee meeting this year, and commented that they could not recall the last time they'd been asked to come before the Committee.
Ruark	We have recently engaged as a full committee with state representatives, and we recently endorsed a message regarding state legislation. It's not clear we have bandwidth to be doing much more than that, but we do have plenty of room to grow here.

Underdeveloped (1-3)	There is no plan in place to advocate for public policy at the local, state or national level.
Developing (4-6)	The School Committee has adopted principles for public policy and advocates for them. The board reaches out to legislators and members of Congress to promote helpful legislation. District leaders maintain regular contact with the elements of the state regulatory system to identify issues and concerns, even though the state is generally indifferent to their plight.
Well Developed (7-9)	The School Committee is active and involved in communicating with local government, state public policy makers and national public policy leaders including administrative officials, state and national legislators, and editorial and consultant stakeholders. Local constituents respect and appreciate the aggressive steps to promote public schools taken by its School Committee and Administration.
Embedded (10)	Key public policy makers rely on the school committee and the school district to provide important input into decision making, regulation writing, and other elements of public policy. Their input is reliable, dependable, well researched, logical and well-reasoned and focused on student achievement and strengthening public education.

AD-2. Working with Superintendent, Establishes a Comm. Strategy for Consistent Message to Promote Student Achievement



Score

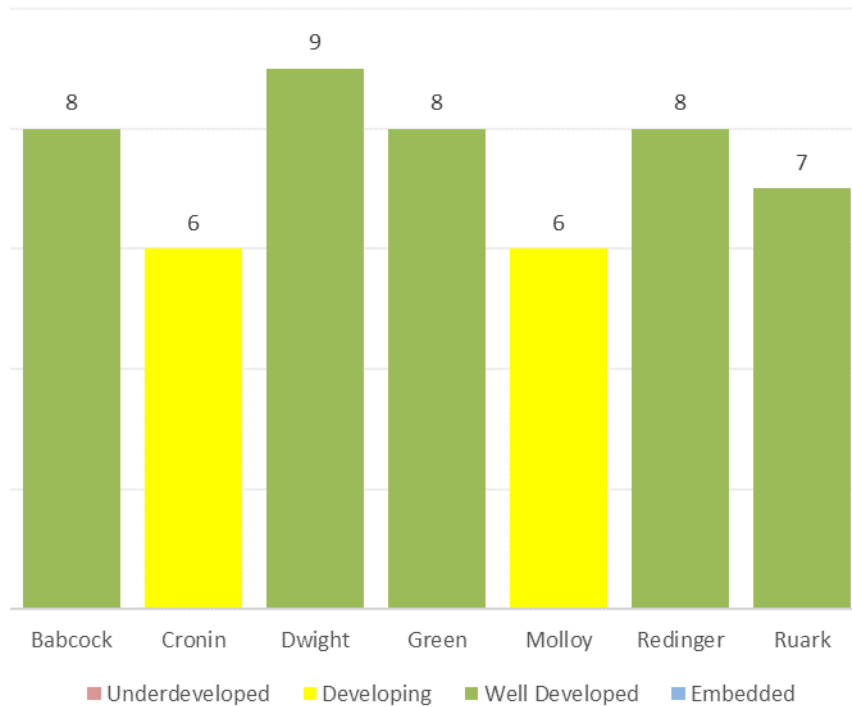
6.71 (6.33)

Comments

Babcock	We do not have a formal communications strategy in place, but in the course of business share the distribution of positive information on the schools through different tools - the Bromfield Bulletin, HES newsletter, newspaper articles, social media posts. Considering an official communications strategy would be an asset to the school committee and schools.
Cronin	I believe we are successful in our outreach within certain demographics (especially to current students/families) and have the opportunity to expand our outreach to be inclusive of a broader swath of the community, including parents with younger children not yet attending our schools, parents of recent (last 5 years) graduates, and seniors.
Green	Most of the elements are in place but would be improved by integrating them into a strategic framework.
Molloy	The website could be improved and updated. Some public perception exists around lack of transparency.
Redinger	Again, we have nothing formal in place.
Ruark	I took this to mean communications plan largely from the district leadership team.

Underdeveloped (1-3)	There is no communications strategy for the district. The web site is poor or not functioning. The district lacks a critical incident policy. Information is not provided to local media or to the public. There is no effort to inform the public about what is happening in the school district. Parents report that they do not feel welcome in schools. Others indicate that requests for information and questions are not responded to.
Developing (4-6)	The School Committee adopts a communications strategy and policies for public information internally and externally. Press releases from the school district reach the public to inform them of school developments. There is some effort to provide information to parents and the public.
Well Developed (7-9)	A well-crafted communications strategy is in place. It establishes a timely and well maintained web site; periodic bulletins to parents; regular press releases to the local media; presence on social media as appropriate; a climate and culture is established to share and distribute information widely as soon as possible.
Embedded (10)	The community supports and engages the school district because information is free flowing and accurate, and documents the effectiveness and efforts of the school district. The public feels confident that the school district operates transparently and in the interests of children. School stakeholders and the School Committee are viewed with trust and respect. (See AB-3.)

B-1. Demonstrates High Levels of Collaboration with Superintendent to Establish Excellence in Curriculum and Instruction



Score

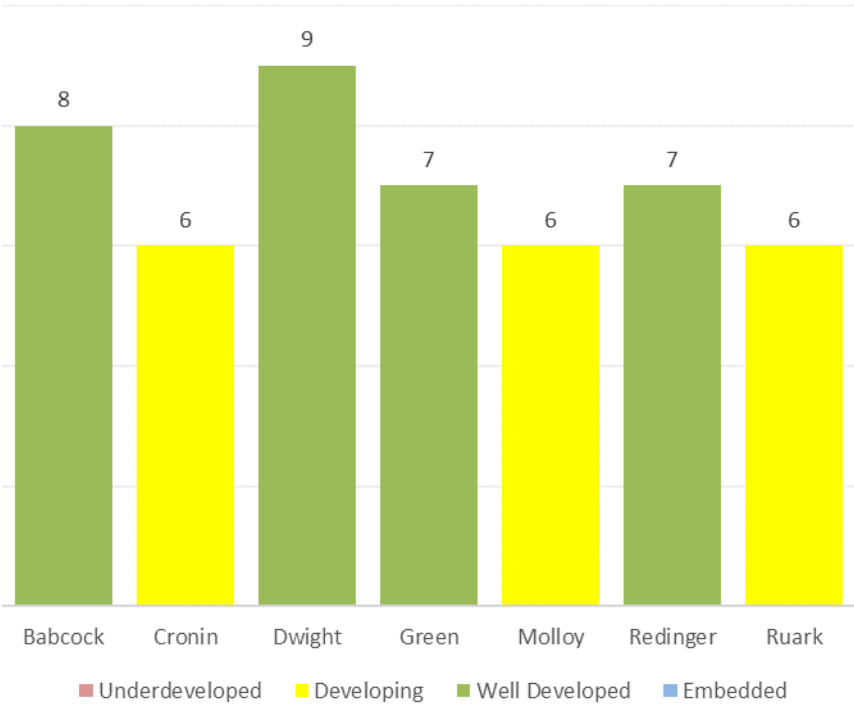
7.43 (7.17)

Comments

Babcock	The hiring of high-quality staff has helped guide excellence in curriculum and instruction.
Cronin	Our Instruction policies haven't been updated/reviewed since 2015.

Underdeveloped (1-3)	The School Committee has not engaged in a discussion of its role relative to curriculum and instruction and may have a poor understanding of the administrative role of the superintendent vs. the policymaking role of the board.
Developing (4-6)	The School Committee demonstrates an understanding of the administrative and policy making functions relative to curriculum and instruction. The committee and superintendent respect areas of responsibility.
Well Developed (7-9)	The School Committee takes an active and appropriate role to ensure that district policies addressing curriculum and instruction foster student achievement and leave to the superintendent and the administrative team the discretion and flexibility to fulfill its functions.
Embedded (10)	The School Committee establishes policies to promote an ability-based achievement standard for all students through by policy and budget in areas of curriculum and instruction. The budget is equitable and adequately distributed, high standards are set, and policies related to student achievement are also set at a high level.

B-2. Maintains Policies to Address Curriculum and Instructions to Sustain Student Achievement



Score

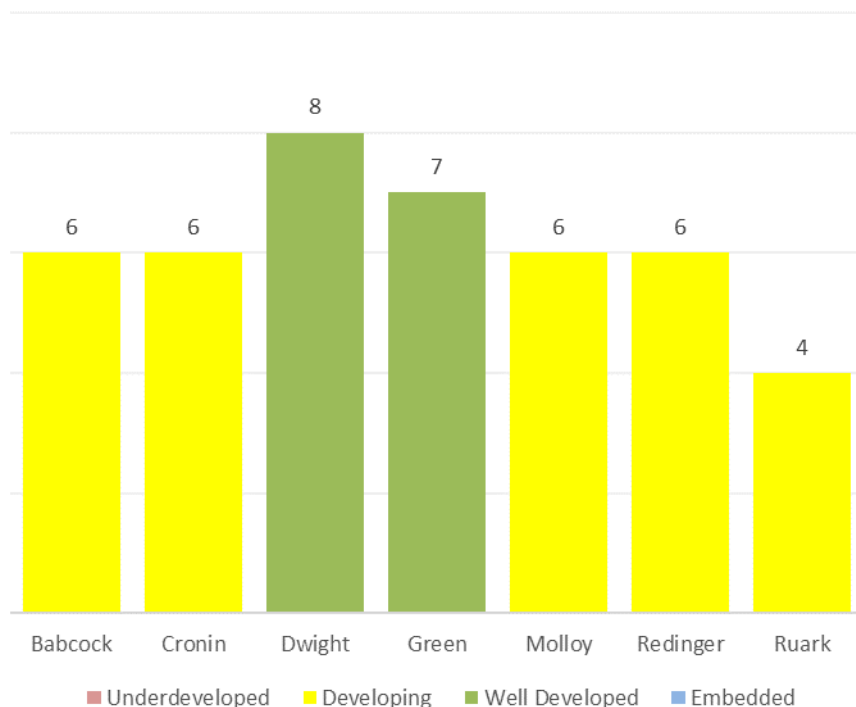
7.00 (6.67)

Comments

Cronin	See above comment on these policies not being reviewed since 2015.
Green	Academic presentations would benefit from including higher level discussion of effectiveness and evidence of effective effort.
Ruark	We should review our homework policy and graduation requirements.

Underdeveloped (1-3)	Appropriate policies are not in place. The School Committee has not addressed specific policies related to curriculum, instruction and standards that would promote student achievement.
Developing (4-6)	Some policies are in place, but they may not be focused, effective, or relevant.
Well Developed (7-9)	Policies address curriculum and instruction. They are in place, and the School Committee reviews them periodically as part of its work and as part of academic presentations at board meetings. The School Committee takes focused action on appropriate policy questions and understands the lines separating them from administrative roles. The board may set higher graduation requirements or curriculum demands than minimum standards set by law or regulation.
Embedded (10)	A strong and coherent set of policies advance student achievement through excellence in curriculum and instruction. The policies are regularly reviewed.

B-3. Uses Collective Bargaining Process to Improve Curriculum and Instruction.



Score

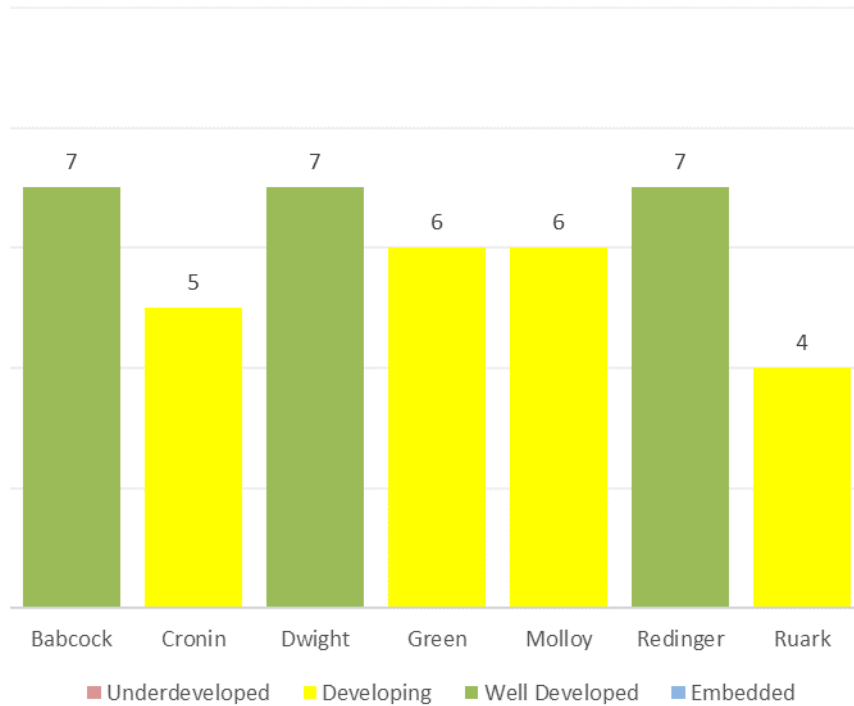
6.14 (5.83)

Comments

Cronin	I don't believe anyone beyond the current chair has had any training in collective bargaining and this remains a significant and time-sensitive opportunity of improvement for the committee.
Green	Not all board members have been trained in collective bargaining for student achievement.
Molloy	Some resolution must be found such that the salaries portion of the schools budget doesn't itself create an override scenario for the town.
Redinger	Our contract seems to be fairly set in place and bargaining with the teachers rarely seems to focus on student achievement but rather on financial impacts.
Ruark	I have heard this mentioned as a desirable goal, but not discussion of what that might look like as we begin a negotiating year.

Underdeveloped (1-3)	The School Committee has no bargaining strategy to improve curriculum and instruction. The School Committee does not make demands relative to student achievement and does not engage in professional development to learn of appropriate and effective strategies to do so.
Developing (4-6)	The School Committee articulates a goal of promoting student achievement through the bargaining process, but does not do so effectively.
Well Developed (7-9)	The School Committee has been trained in collective bargaining for student achievement and executes a targeted strategy to use the union contracts as vehicles for improvement in curriculum and instruction. The board comes to the bargaining table prepared to make demands to improve student achievement and follows through on them.
Embedded (10)	Through a diligent bargaining process, the School Committee seeks meaningful strategies to collaborate with administrators and faculty to improve student achievement. Specific bargaining strategies and demands focus on student achievement by strengthening continuously the curriculum and instruction.

B-4. Integrates Data to Assess Effectiveness of Curriculum and Instruction to Sustain Student Achievement



Score

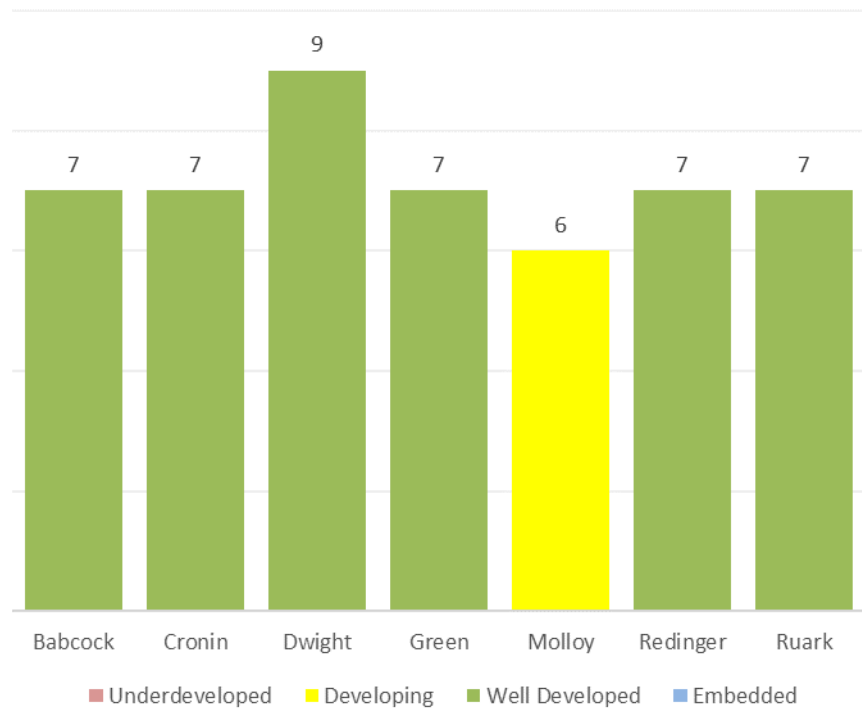
6.00 (5.83)

Comments

Cronin	The data collection effort in the district is just getting underway and we are years behind other districts.
Green	Superintendent evaluation and program assessments would benefit from a more data driven approach.
Molloy	The Committee could integrate more data to measure effectiveness. Professional development in this area would be helpful.
Redinger	Dr. Dwight has increased the use of data to support budget recommendations. Presentations by district leaders regularly use data to show student achievement.
Ruark	We definitely could be doing more here.

Underdeveloped (1-3)	The School Committee does not use data effectively as a policy tool to promote improvement in curriculum and instruction. The board has not engaged in professional development to understand how to deploy data to improve student achievement.
Developing (4-6)	The School Committee recognizes the value of data in curriculum and instruction, but does not follow through on critical steps including, but not limited to, superintendent evaluation, budget planning and implementation, setting of district standards, and program assessment.
Well Developed (7-9)	District policies prioritize accurate and valid data as key resources to measure effectiveness of curriculum and classroom instruction. Data are routinely used and the superintendent routinely provides reports to the School Committee to demonstrate data-based assurance of effectiveness.
Embedded (10)	The School Committee and Superintendent use reliable data to measure effectiveness of curriculum and instruction and deploy these data throughout the year in making critical decisions on budgeting, programs, and strategies that promote student achievement.

C-1. School Committee Maintains an Appropriate Self Assessment Tool



Score

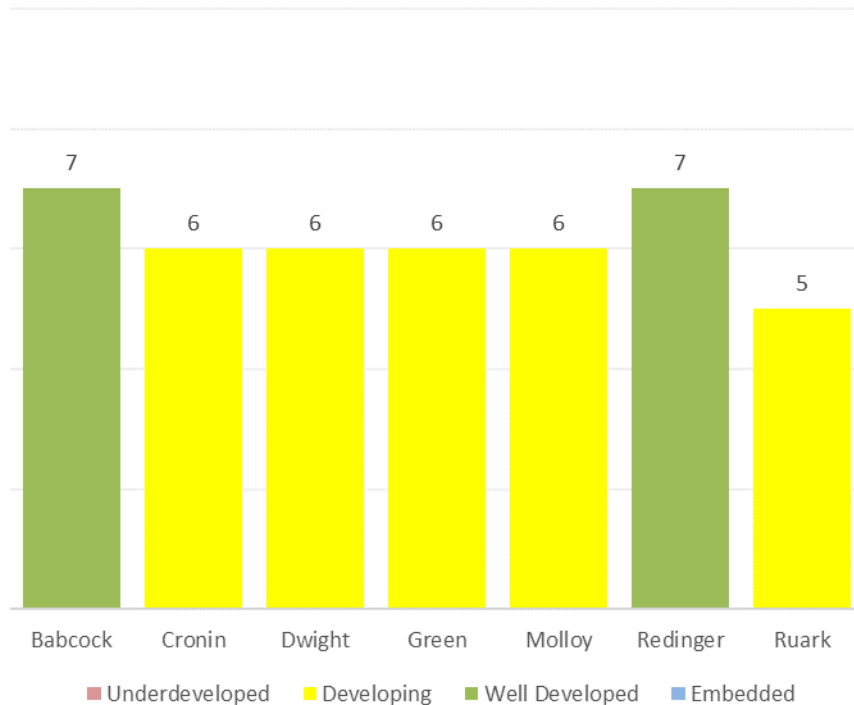
7.14 (6.83)

Comments

Green	This is year 1 of this instrument and future customization may be required. Members take self assessment seriously as a way to identify areas of improvement.
Molloy	Using a more detailed and MASC designed self-assessment tool this year represents the Committee's effort to improve in this area.
Redinger	We are using this tool for the first time, but SC has regularly evaluated itself and uses the feedback for improvement.
Ruark	I guess we will see how this new form goes! We have not customized it much, however.

Underdeveloped (1-3)	The School Committee has not performed a self assessment tool to identify individual strengths and areas for development. There appears to be little interest in doing so.
Developing (4-6)	The School Committee participates in an annual self-assessment tool that is customized to their situation and which identifies key skills, exemplars, and strategies for improvement.
Well Developed (7-9)	The School Committee develops a customized self-assessment that will focus on critical issues and key competencies for student success. Members use the evaluation as a tool for continued improvement and board operational proficiency. Members appreciate the document and collaborate with the superintendent to ensure that self-evaluation looks at board success without recriminations.
Embedded (10)	The School Committee operates at a high level, fine tuning its operations and practices as it strives to promote district, school, and student success. There is a palpable factor of introspection and reflection through the self-assessment process.

C-2. School Committee Collaborates with Superintendent to Assess Programs and Services as Part of Strategic Planning and Budget Process.



Score

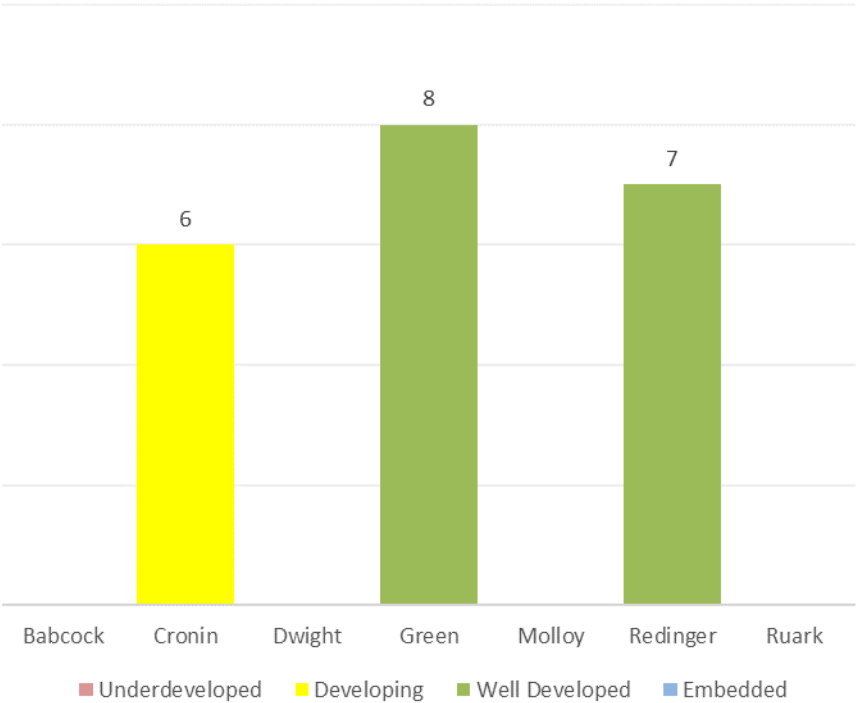
6.14 (6.17)

Comments

Cronin	See earlier comment about the data dashboard effort
Green	I do not recall the committee using assessment data directly for planning and budgeting, but expect that the Superintendent and leadership team do to formulate their recommendations. Recommend more program assessment presentations and reports.
Molloy	Program and department presentations are generally more informational than assessment focused. Clearer lines between data and impact/effectiveness would enable the School Committee to make stronger and more contextual budgetary decisions.
Ruark	We do not seem to engage much data at the level of full committee discussion for making budgeting decisions. Sometimes getting at data feels like a visit to the dentist, and we rely more on logic and speculation.

Underdeveloped (1-3)	The School Committee does not encourage assessment of programs nor does it seek or use information available to it to make informed judgments.
Developing (4-6)	The School Committee receives and considers program assessments from the superintendent, but does not make informed budget decisions using assessment data. Similarly, various data related to student assessment are available but not used as a part of the planning or budgeting process.
Well Developed (7-9)	The School Committee receives and uses assessment data to develop the strategic plan, budget, and mid-year program and budget decisions.
Embedded (10)	The School Committee makes informed judgments using data from assessments of programs that measure effectiveness and impact on student success. The School Committee also encourages the superintendent to follow the same process to encourage other educators to assess programs.

C-3. Negotiates or Establishes a Teacher Evaluation Tool that is Effective, Relevant, and Uses Appropriate Criteria for Administrators to Deploy for Effective Assessment of Staff



Score

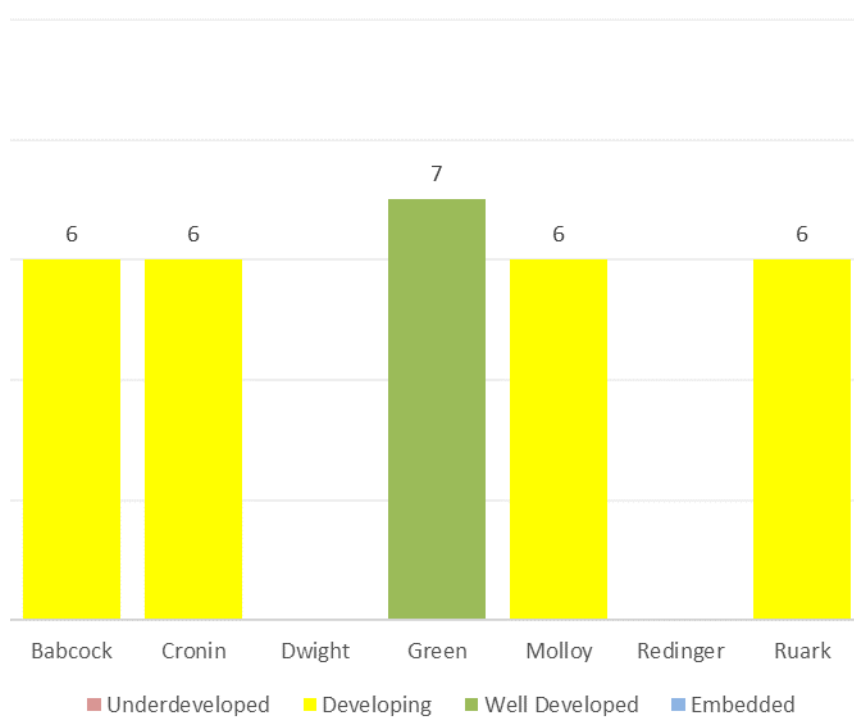
7.00 (7.00)

Comments

Molloy	I am not aware of Committee involvement in a teacher evaluation tool or of how the concept of evaluation may have been used in collective bargaining.
Redinger	We did this negotiation a few years back.
Ruark	This will be measurable in next year's assessment.

Underdeveloped (1-3)	There is no effort to negotiate any facets to promote student achievement into the collective bargaining agreement
Developing (4-6)	The School Committee understands the possibilities inherent in the collective bargaining agreement to improve student achievement, but has not aggressively pursued this end. The board has not moved effectively to use the teacher evaluation instrument and administrator evaluation tool to improve student achievement by using measurable data in a meaningful way.
Well Developed (7-9)	The School Committee comes to the bargaining table with a clear strategy to use the union contract to improve student achievement. These include specific demands and incentives in a multi-faceted strategy. The School Committee has participated in a careful examination of such specific strategies and demands. The board uses student achievement data as part of this process.
Embedded (10)	The School Committee pursues a well-planned and detailed strategy to use the union contracts to improve student achievement. As a result, accountability is raised and student outcomes are likely to be improved.

D-1. Establishes Policies Related to Personnel that Promote Student Achievement and Effective District Operations



Score

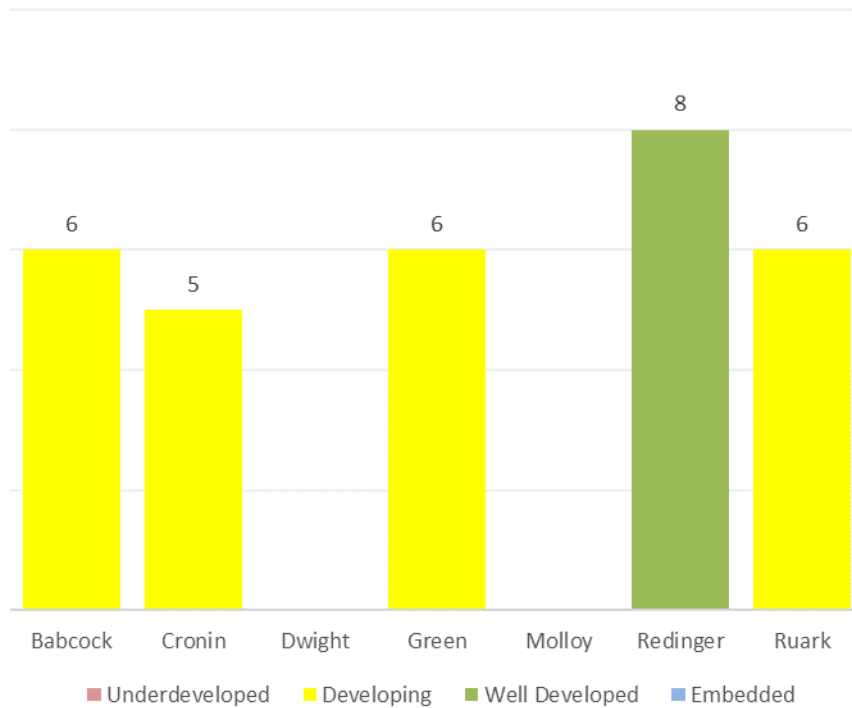
6.20 (6.20)

Comments

Redinger	I have no idea how to respond to this question. I believe our principals do a good job hiring teachers/staff. HR is run through the town hall and I don't know how effective our HR administrator does her job.
Ruark	We could do more to link these things directly to student achievement. We will have to see where such goals fall out in the negotiating effort.

Underdeveloped (1-3)	There are no effective or implemented personnel policies that can be used to promote student achievement. School Committee members do not make the connection between their work and the success of their students.
Developing (4-6)	Specific actions have been taken to use the personnel policies of the district to improve student achievement. For example, the School Committee has created a professional personnel officer who oversees human resources under the direction of the superintendent. The bargaining process targets student achievement in a clear way. Policies on recruitment, hiring, and retention are used to promote student achievement by ensuring a process for professional competence to be rewarded. Policies are enacted that incorporate stakeholder roles in educator selection and promotion; incentives for outstanding performance; professional development and leadership cultivation.
Well Developed (7-9)	The district human resources function is professionally administered and driven at all levels. The district, through board policy, has created a healthy climate of transparency and excellence in recruiting, retaining, and promoting competent staff at all levels. (See below)
Embedded (10)	A professional personnel officer, under the supervision of the superintendent, ensures excellence in personnel selection; compliance with effective evaluation tools; policies that recognize and reward excellence in staff performance; and overall HR management. The public supports and respects the public schools for the quality of its outstanding staff who maintain currency in the many issues and proficiencies necessary to promote excellence.

D-2. Uses Collective Bargaining Process to Promote Student Achievement



Score

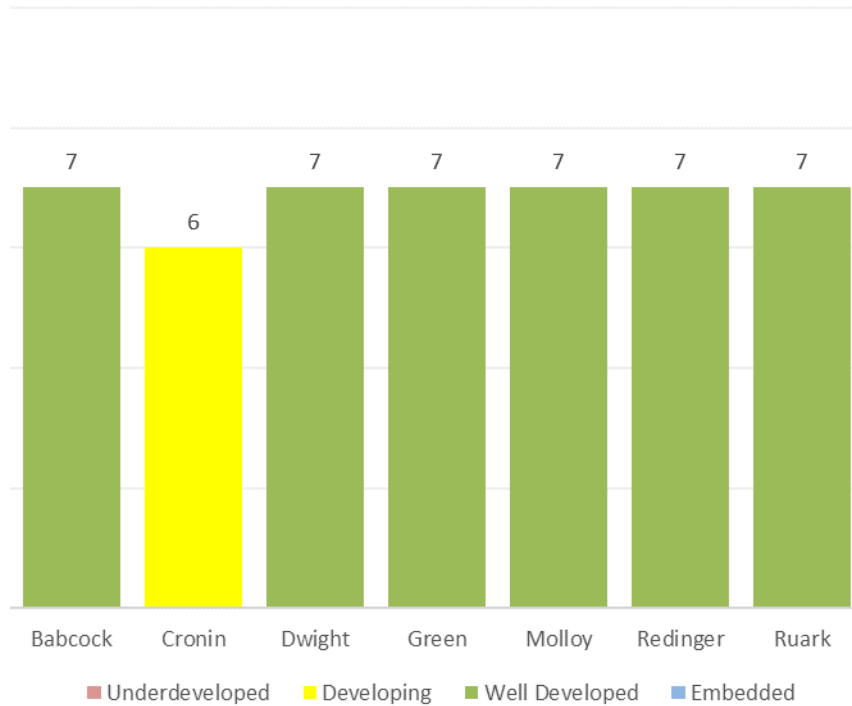
6.20 (6.20)

Comments

Cronin	This needs to be a top area of focus for our committee, especially with the coming contract negotiations.
Green	Not all committee members have been so trained.
Molloy	I have not been trained in collective bargaining, but I have not been on School Committee during a contract year. The current agreement appears to be mainly economic in nature.
Redinger	The teacher's contract was negotiated two years ago and followed DESE's requirement for time in learning. Wages and stipends are in line with hiring and retaining quality staff. Funds were increased for PD.
Ruark	Opportunities exist for training in the coming year.

Underdeveloped (1-3)	The board delegates collective bargaining to others and limits bargaining to the minimum number of topics to expedite a settlement. Bargaining issues are limited to economics and are not linked to student achievement or school or district success.
Developing (4-6)	The School Committee has been briefed and trained on bargaining strategies to promote student achievement but is only developing a strategy to win meaningful provisions into the collective bargaining agreement.
Well Developed (7-9)	All School Committee members have been trained in and recognize the many areas of bargaining for student achievement. These include issues of learning time, evaluation, educator competence, promotions and advancement, professional development, and use of data to help teachers support student achievement.
Embedded (10)	The district collective bargaining agreement is a model of linkage of various human resources strategy to achieving gains in student achievement. The use of a range of data and student performance measurements in a fair and reasonable way are used as incentives for recruitment, retention, and assignment of faculty. The board frequently reassesses the value of traditional vs. interest based bargaining. (NOTE: See resource materials prepared by MASC on Collective Bargaining for Student Achievement.)

D-3. During Budget Process, Ensures Adequate Allocations for Professional Personnel Needs.



Score

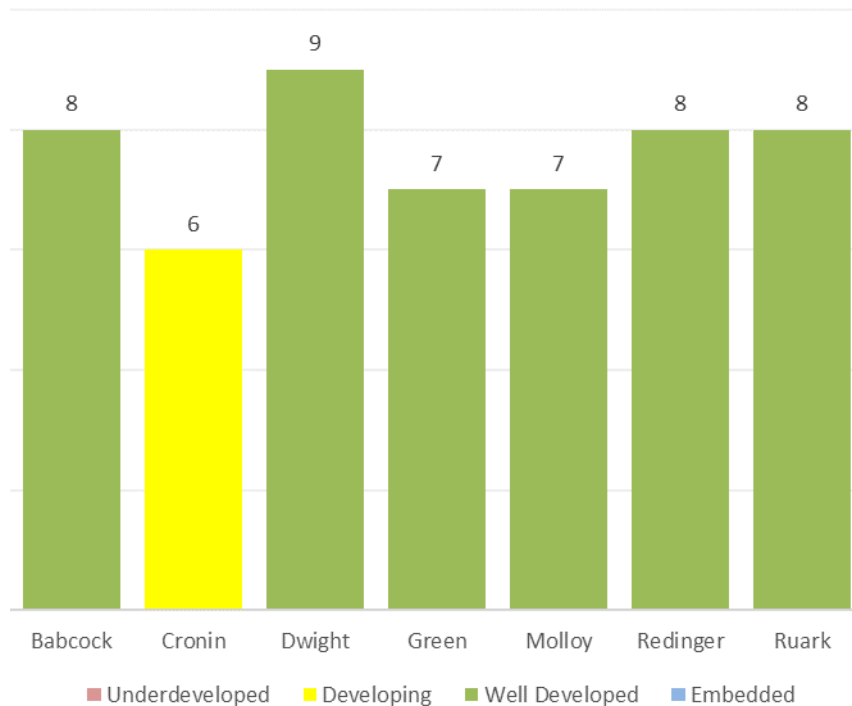
6.86 (6.83)

Comments

Babcock	Professional development firmly in place for teachers and administrators. School Committee could add more PD for itself.
Cronin	It would be helpful to have a working definition of "adequate" funding as well as data to link PD programs to student achievement.
Green	More committee development would be beneficial.
Molloy	The School Committee ensured the return of funding for teacher PD to the FY20 budget. More professional development opportunities for Committee members could be highlighted, but some members do seek independent training.
Ruark	Aside from MASC conference, we do not really allocate time or money for our own PD. We cut some PD funding from upcoming year, but generally make sure to fund PD efforts by staff. We don't tie outcomes to PD efforts with data.

Underdeveloped (1-3)	The School Committee does not plan for sufficient funding for Professional Development for the faculty or itself.
Developing (4-6)	The School Committee allocates funding for professional development but has not had a meaningful discussion with the superintendent about the appropriateness of the district's professional development spending. The School Committee has not planned for appropriate professional development for itself.
Well Developed (7-9)	The district Professional Development programs are adequately funded and linked to student achievement. The School Committee incorporates PD for itself to address important topics including policy making, budget and finance, state law and regulation, efficient meetings and parliamentary procedures, goal setting and strategic planning, team building, or other appropriate topic.
Embedded (10)	The School Committee recognizes the importance of professional development for stakeholders and for itself. It ensures sufficient resource allocation and scheduling flexibility to make relevant professional development available. The School Committee holds the superintendent accountable for providing meaningful and relevant professional development for district stakeholders.

EE-1. For Student Safety, including Physical and Emotional Wellbeing



Score

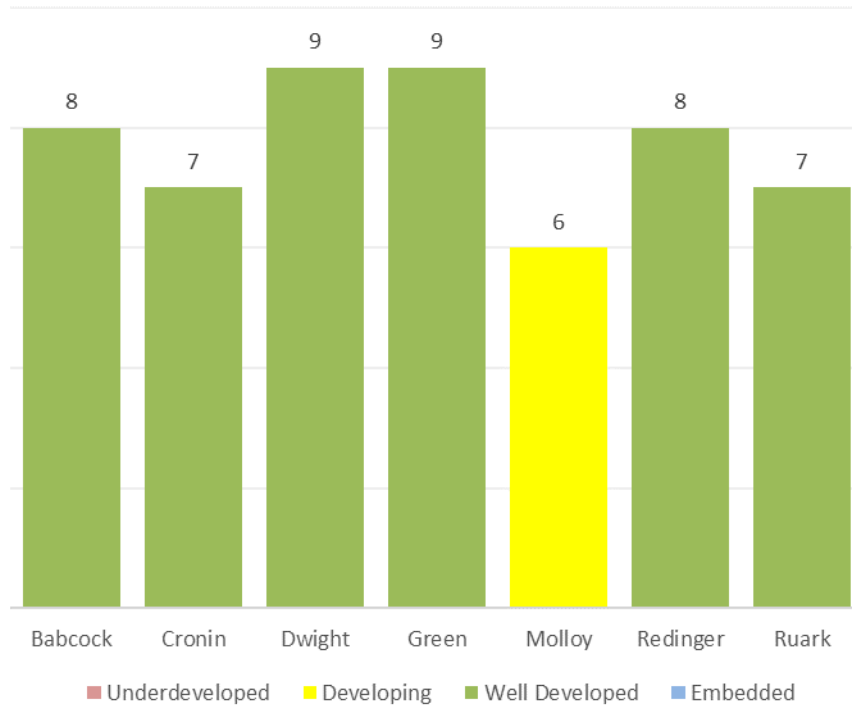
7.57 (7.33)

Comments

Babcock	An area of continuous progress. Not many years ago there was no health/wellness program in the HS. It is now an asset in the district. Recent additions include refresh day, the SWAT team, Challenge Day.
Cronin	Most of these policies look like they have not been reviewed in 3+ years
Green	Missing from this rubric is committee and Superintendent monitoring of implementation and effectiveness through presentations and reports to the committee of actions taken and data showing outcomes. e.g. school climate
Molloy	The resolution on Ballot Question 2 was adopted by the Committee this year with a clear view toward student well being. The Committee has more opportunities for work in this area and it should be a focus moving forward. The Wellness Committee should be more active.
Ruark	On the face of it we are doing quite well here. But we don't always explicitly tie wellbeing and SEL needs to our decision making processes.

Underdeveloped (1-3)	Policies are disorganized, missing, or out of date. The School Committee has not addressed the physical or emotional wellbeing of students.
Developing (4-6)	The School Committee has recognized the relationship between physical and emotional wellbeing and student success. Policies are being developed in appropriate areas, including those related to budget that establish the resources to support students. This may include incorporating into the school setting sufficient guidance, physical health and mental health services. Bullying is addressed and student safety is a concern.
Well Developed (7-9)	The School Committee has recognized and implemented successfully programs that recognize the relationship between physical and emotional wellbeing and student success. Policies are in place in appropriate areas, including those related to budget that establish and support the resources to support students. This may include incorporating into the school setting sufficient guidance, physical health and mental health services. Bullying is addressed and student safety is a concern. Relationships with external agencies are cultivated. A police/school protocol is in place for appropriate instances.
Embedded (10)	The district has clear policies that relate to student physical and emotional well being including budget allocations for important programs; policies related to bullying and harassment; policies identifying vulnerable students and students at risk; and these policies are monitored. The superintendent is held accountable for the enforcement of these policies.

EE-2. Academic Support for Students



Score

7.71 (7.50)

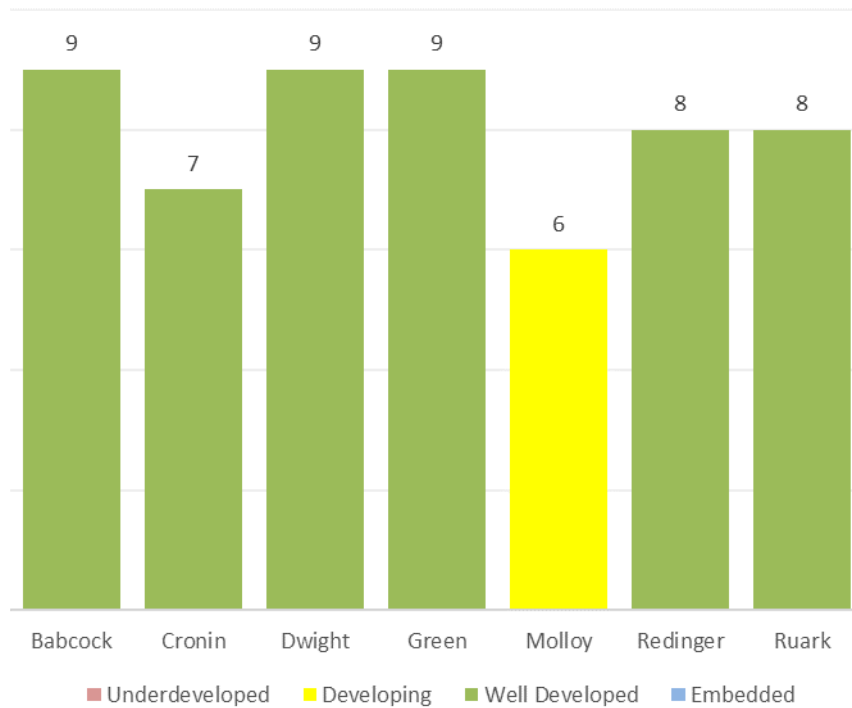
Comments

Molloy

The Committee ensured protection of funds dedicated to some FY20 academic programs. If the Committee challenges itself to develop further in this area and achieves only limited results, it should ask whether more funding is needed.

Underdeveloped (1-3)	Policies related to academic support are disorganized, missing, or out of date. The School Committee has not engaged in professional development nor been briefed about the strategies to link between policy making and academic support. Budget decisions are not focused on support for the academic advancement of students.
Developing (4-6)	The School Committee understands the importance of policy making for academic supports, including budget and program policies. However, policies are not implemented fully.
Well Developed (7-9)	The School Committee has addressed policy making related to academic support and has budget and program policy that reflects prioritization of academic programming. Decisions are based on the ways that funding can be deployed to advance academic achievement in both direct and indirect ways. Budget decisions are based on needs of students. Inappropriate concerns are ruled out during the deliberation process.
Embedded (10)	The district budget and related policy supports the academic programs for students including funding for remedial programs, services to students at risk, and programs to support the "whole child" including enrichment and extra-curricular programs.

EE-3. Timely and Relevant Skills and Programs for the "Whole Child"



Score

8.00 (7.83)

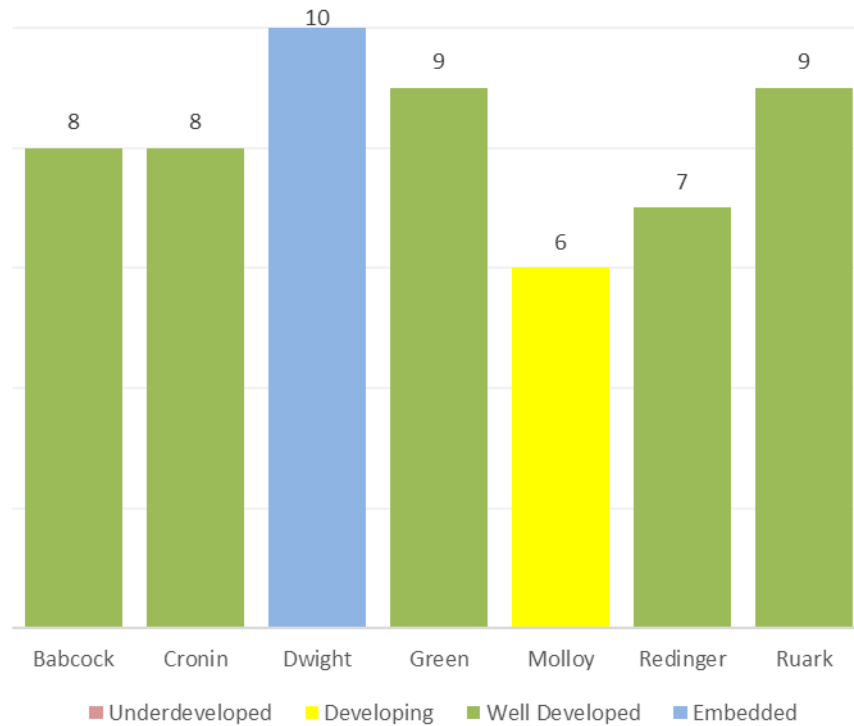
Comments

Babcock

Opportunities in a small district beyond required academic courses are outstanding - arts & music, health & wellness, drama, clubs, and sports programs. The students find many opportunities to pursue their interests and get leadership opportunities.

Underdeveloped (1-3)	There is little, if any policy addressing a commitment to education of the "Whole Child" including the scope of curriculum content and foundation. The School Committee has not addressed this issue.
Developing (4-6)	The district incorporates some of the goals, objectives and programs that assure enrichment and depth in curriculum and programs, but insufficient resources and time have been devoted to it.
Well Developed (7-9)	The School Committee has recognized a responsibility to provide a fully enriching education to students including "Whole Child" curriculum, extra-curricular activities, fine arts, physical education. The board, through its policy, prioritizes 21st Century Skill Building that fosters academic excellence, creativity, thoughtfulness, and innovation throughout its curriculum.
Embedded (10)	The School Committee, recognizing the value of education of the Whole Child assures public policy prioritization of a full range of curricular and extra-curricular content. This includes not only basic skills but also critical thinking and creativity, in a full range of content including arts, music, drama, dance, and physical education.

EE-4. Uses the Budget Process to Ensure Equitable Distribution of Public Resources and Professional Talent

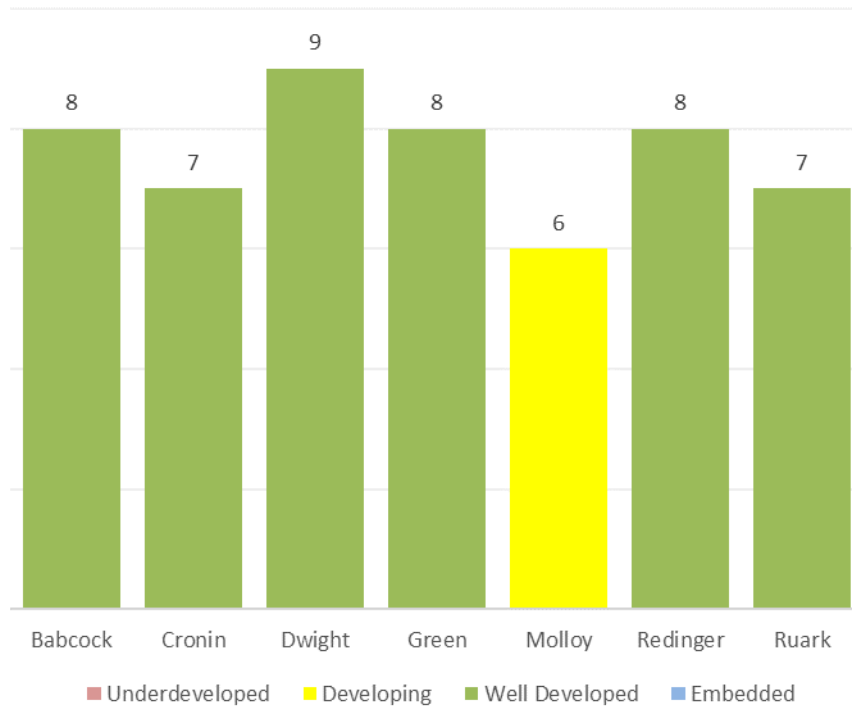


Score

8.14 (7.83)

Underdeveloped (1-3)	District budget making process does not involve review of equitable distribution of resources.
Developing (4-6)	The School Committee is mindful of the importance of equitable distribution of resources but has been ineffective in enacting and implementing an equitable budget. As a result, there are still distinct and inappropriate inequities between schools and/or within schools.
Well Developed (7-9)	The School Committee considers and plans carefully to provide an equitable distribution of resources district wide as part of its budget process and through its policy making function. The board acts deliberately in allocating funds and other resources.
Embedded (10)	District resources are distributed fairly and equitably. The policies of the district and actions of the School Committee ensure that schools are adequately funded with consideration for the specific needs of individual buildings and students. There is little, if any visible distinction between resources among schools.

FF-1. Collaborates with Superintendent to Obtain and Assess Best Available Data for District Finance and Planning



Score

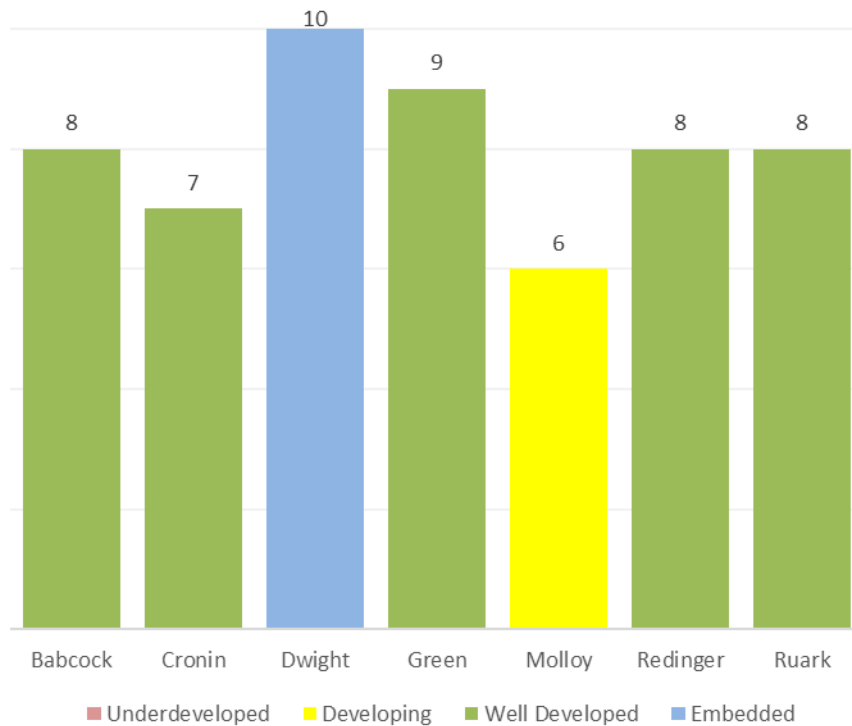
7.57 (7.33)

Comments

Molloy	Our process seems to be less direct involvement in analysis and more that the administrative leadership team has these discussions independently and brings forward recommendations for approval.
Ruark	Doing pretty well here in terms of mid-year changes, but not always data driven.

Underdeveloped (1-3)	The School Committee does not use district data, including student achievement data, to make budget decisions and planning, including goal setting, or to make mid-year adjustments as needed. Decisions may reflect more political priorities than academic goals. Recommendations of the superintendent that address critical district needs may be ignored.
Developing (4-6)	The School Committee engages in a discussion and debate on the school budget, reviewing student achievement data and other available information to make informed decisions.
Well Developed (7-9)	The School Committee analyzes a range of available data to make informed decisions on allocation of the budget and for the planning process. Decisions are student focused and address strategic goals. During the school year, the superintendent will recommend and the School Committee will review proposed mid-year changes to the budget based on available data and the priorities of the district. .
Embedded (10)	The School Committee is skilled at using various data to assess program effectiveness, student achievement, and strategic goals. The board is diligent about focusing its decisions on the best available information.

FF-2. Confirms the appointment of a highly qualified school business officer and uses the expertise of this administrator.



Score

8.00 (7.67)

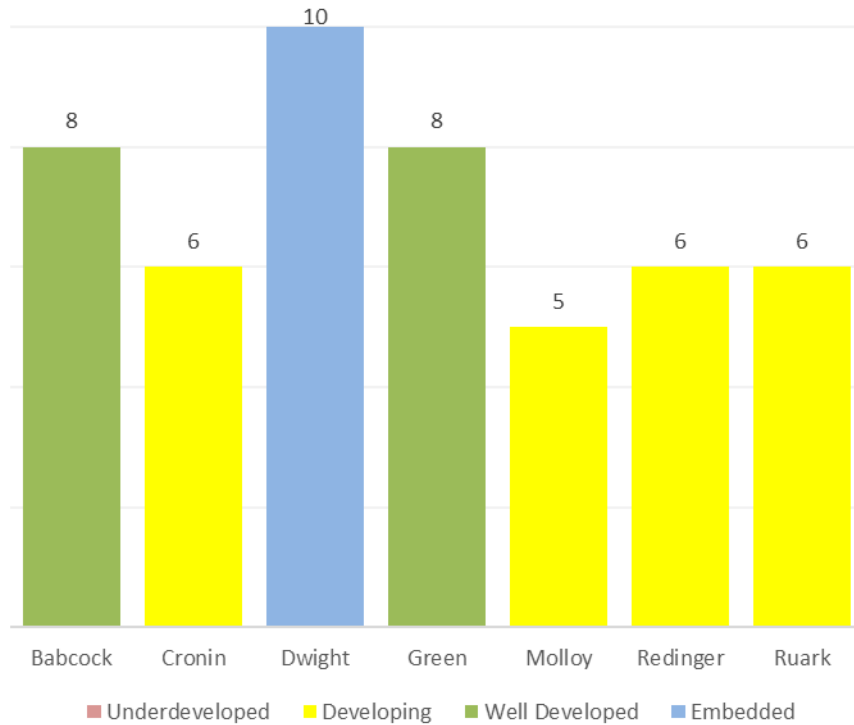
Comments

Molloy

The Committee did not interview the school business officer.

Underdeveloped (1-3)	The school business officer has been hired without a careful screening and review and does not possess the skills necessary to fulfill the responsibilities of the position. The budget process is clear and the School Committee discusses issues in various degrees of detail. However, the link to district policy, relationship to student achievement, or relationship to strategic or long term planning is vague or ambiguous. The budget process does not provide a continuum of planning or support for the long range needs of the district.
Developing (4-6)	The School Committee does not regularly rely on the recommendations of the superintendent or, post-hire, the recommendations of the superintendent or school business officer on financial operations. Key budget decisions are made without the advice and guidance of key administrators and may be focused on other concerns. .
Well Developed (7-9)	Exercising its fiduciary responsibility, the School Committee interviews and confirms the appointment of a highly qualified school business officer who possesses the skills and experience necessary to lead the financial operations. The board respects the recommendations of the business officer and superintendent during the budget and planning processes and, where there is disagreement, uses principled dissent and thoughtful arguments in doing so.
Embedded (10)	A well-qualified school business officer works in collaboration with the superintendent and School Committee to manage highly efficient and accurate business practices and budget management. The business officer is a highly regarded member of the administrative team whose contributions are clearly linked to high public credibility and sound financial practices.

FF-3. Follows a Clear and Transparent Budget Process to Establish Fiscal Roadmap for District



Score

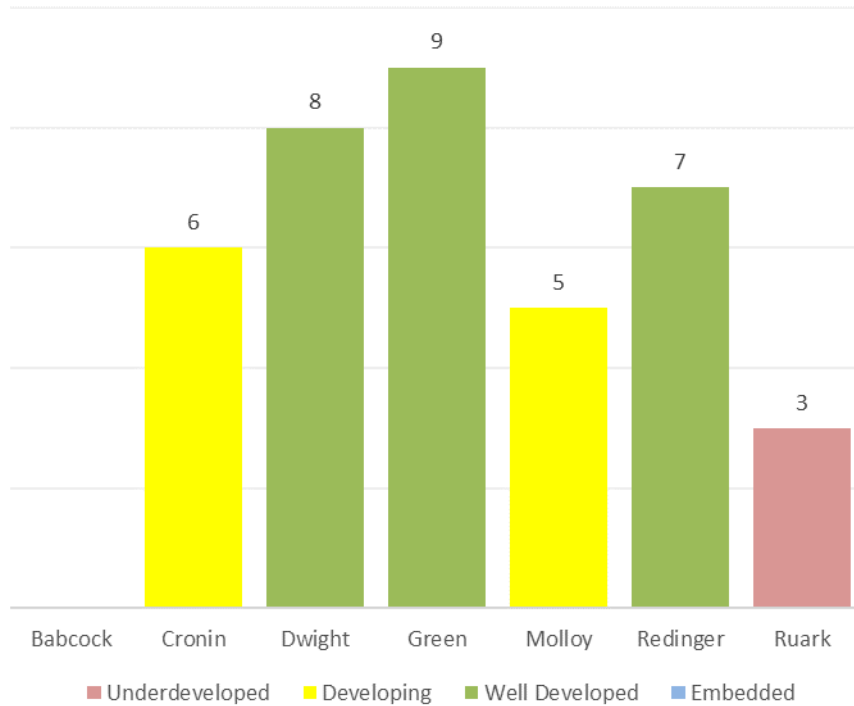
7.00 (6.50)

Comments

Babcock	Zero based budgeting provides has been very effective.
Cronin	It's unclear what strategic or long-term planning is happening (beyond that relating to the new school building).
Molloy	If the School Committee used a full Committee process for budget development, the planning process would be more transparent to the public and to Committee members alike, and more input would be received. The budget cycle is short, but the Committee should take care that time is provided for public feedback, particularly when cuts are made, or when an override will be needed. Stronger lines can be drawn between long term strategic planning and annual decisions.
Ruark	I would struggle to indicate how specific changes in budget were made with student achievement specifically considered in electing that change.

Underdeveloped (1-3)	The budget is adopted without deliberation or with minimal discussion. Members are indifferent, eager to delegate fiscal decision making. The district budget gives little or no indication of important strategies and milestones. The public and media note that the budget and financial plan are not good resources.
Developing (4-6)	The budget process is clear and the School Committee discusses issues in various degrees of detail. However, the link to district policy, relationship to student achievement, or relationship to strategic or long term planning is vague or ambiguous. The budget process does not provide a continuum of planning or support for the long range needs of the district.
Well Developed (7-9)	The School Committee, in collaboration with the Superintendent and School Business Officer have developed a clear, policy-driven budget and financial plan that the stakeholders can understand. The financial plan informs operations, program development, collective bargaining, and overall spending.
Embedded (10)	The district has a clear and understandable financial plan that uses the budget document as the principal road map for fiscal stability, strategic planning, program continuity, and student achievement.

FF-4. Establishes a Clear, Coherent Budget with a Financial Plan for One or More Fiscal Years



Score

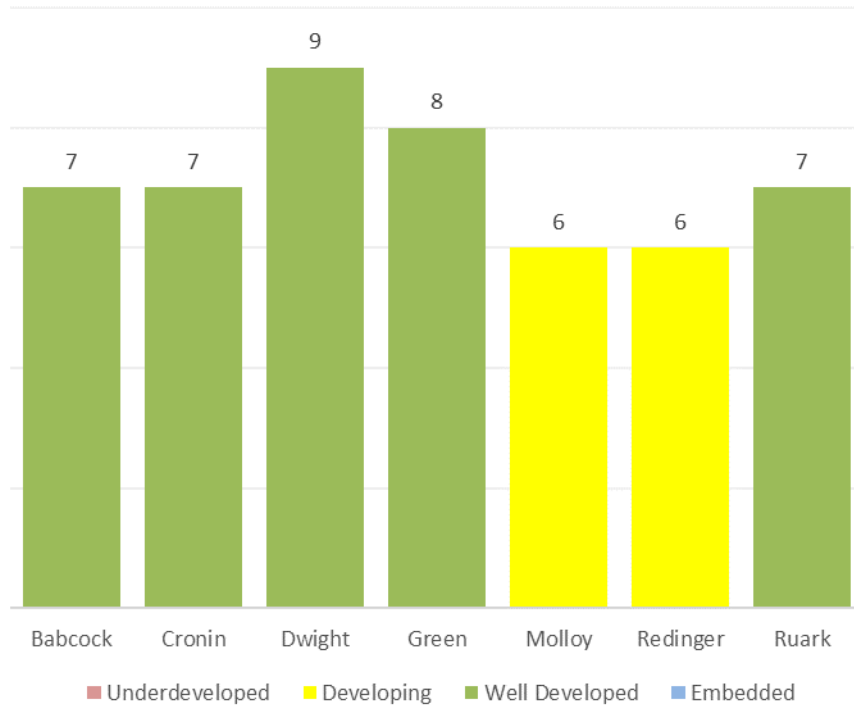
6.33 (6.00)

Comments

Cronin	Beyond our capital plan, it's unclear as to whether we have a multi-year financial plan that spans 2-5 budget cycles.
Molloy	Some longer range planning may exist but not with consistent Committee-wide visibility.
Redinger	We have a five year capital plan in place. Budgeting for omnibus spending is on a year to year basis.
Ruark	Developing a multi-year plan, which would allow us to plan for a potential override, would be a worthwhile effort.

Underdeveloped (1-3)	The school district operates from year to year without planning beyond the current or approaching fiscal year. Moreover, the budget provides little policy guidance, effect of strategic planning or relationship to student achievement.
Developing (4-6)	An effort is made to establish a multi-year financial plan. Integrated into the discussion are strategic planning and collective bargaining. While the plan is in place, the district may not monitor carefully the mid-year fiscal developments to maintain the plan.
Well Developed (7-9)	The School Committee has a multi-year strategic plan that incorporates financial master planning through 2-5 budget cycles. The plan integrates programmatic and capital planning with estimates of available funding from the full range of sources.
Embedded (10)	Given that there is a Nobel Prize in Economics for anyone who can really craft a multi-year financial plan in this climate, the district is able to demonstrate to stakeholders and the public that it is working to integrate its strategic plan with the realities of a fluctuating economic environment.

FF-5. Integrates Policy Making into Budget Process



Score

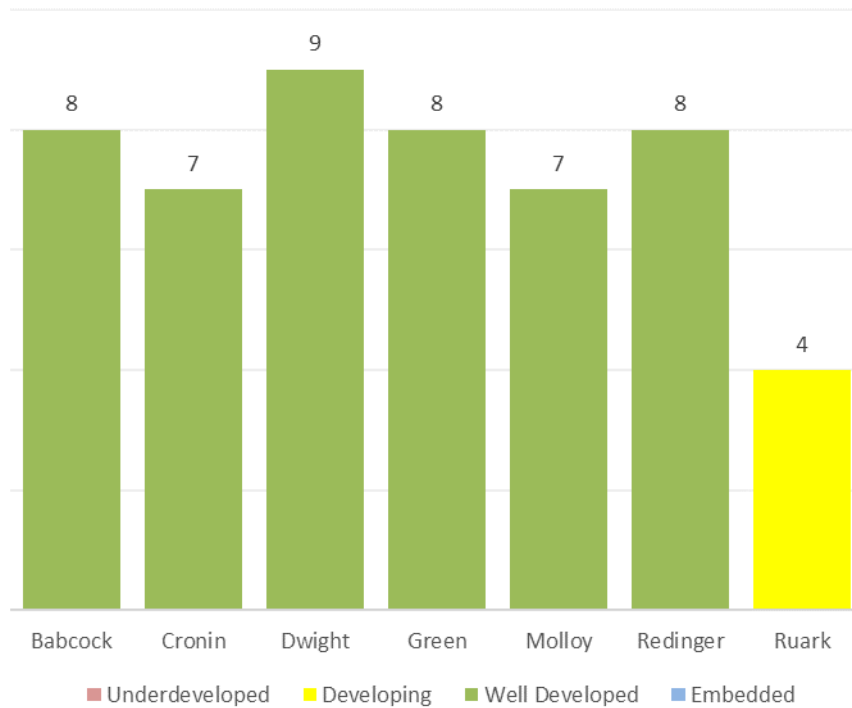
7.14 (6.83)

Comments

Molloy	Text annotation and incorporation of more visuals would make the budget document more transparent and more easily understandable.
Ruark	Ignoring the turn-around portions of these characterizations, we do not annotate the budget at all.

Underdeveloped (1-3)	The School Committee does not have sufficient discussion as part of its budget deliberation to integrate policy into budget making. The budget document does not include carefully detailed policy directions related to fiscal strategies and program goals. Looking at the budget document, it is difficult to discern the policy interests and goals of the School Committee. There is little attention to the requirements of turnaround schools or a turnaround district to establish equity and targeted resources.
Developing (4-6)	The School Committee has some understanding of the role of policy making in district budgeting and incorporates policy into the development, promulgation and oversight of its budget. The School Committee has paid some attention, but has not carefully studied the implications for equity and distribution of resources to schools in turnaround status or at high risk. There is some anticipation of possible litigation around state intervention and the fiduciary responsibility of the board.
Well Developed (7-9)	The School Committee makes detailed policy-oriented decisions as part of the budget, carefully annotating its budget document to reflect specific policies of the board. The budget becomes a roadmap for the administration to follow. Clear effort has been made to ensure that schools in turnaround status have the resources needed to fulfill their mission while protecting the rest of the school district from inequitable shortfalls. Relationships have been built with the municipal government to anticipate potential conflicts or litigation regarding state interventions.
Embedded (10)	The district's budget and financial plan is based on a fiscal master plan, with policy clearly incorporated where appropriate. It provides a fiscal blue print for the year and, to the extent possible, for the future. Stakeholders understand the fiscal and policy implications and the community recognizes the responsible budgeting of the board.

FF-6. Exercises Due Diligence to Fulfill the Fiduciary Responsibility of Locally Elected Legislative Body.



Score

7.29 (7.00)

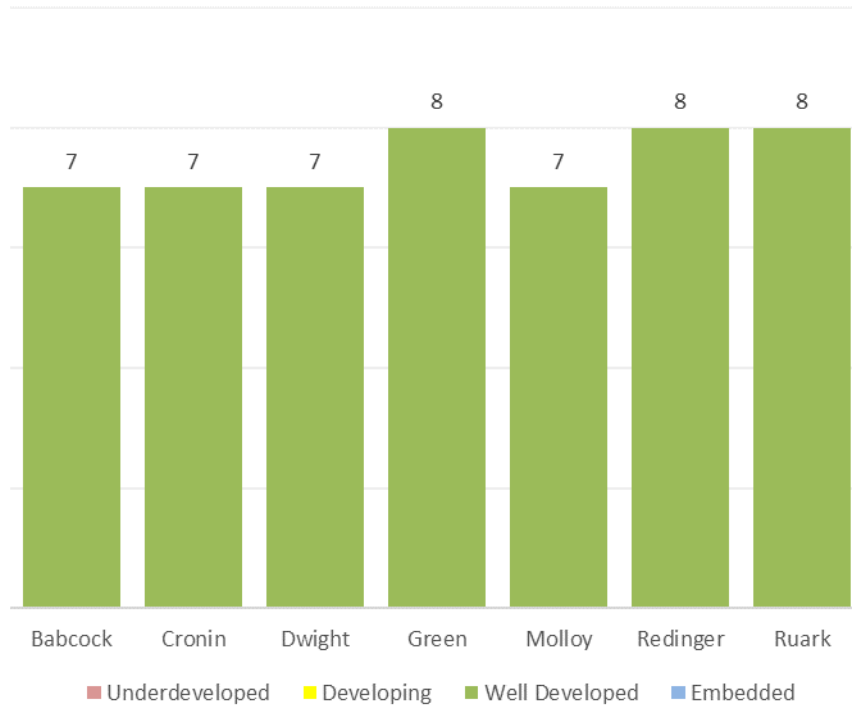
Comments

Ruark

We do not receive periodic financial updates. We are due for a mid-year financial review, with two months left in the year. On the other hand, warrants are reviewed appropriately.

Underdeveloped (1-3)	The School Committee fails to exercise due diligence in fulfilling its fiduciary responsibility. The board may a) fail to consider fully the financial implications of budget decision; b) fail to explore more responsible options for spending; c) establish cost centers or line items with which to manage the budget during the year; d) establish a plan to review spending on grants; e) fail to review and warrants; or f) fails to engage in periodic financial review during the year.
Developing (4-6)	Members engage in tasks necessary to fulfill a fiduciary responsibility, including those noted (see adjacent box). The board receives and reviews quarterly reviews of its budget but rarely probes to examine the effectiveness of programs. The board cooperates with responsible municipal officials in overseeing the assets of the municipalities or members of the regional district.
Well Developed (7-9)	The School Committee requires periodic financial reports to assess the progress of the district financial plan. Warrants are reviewed and signed as required. Members ask thoughtful and relevant questions about district spending during the year. Members also review and vote thoughtfully on a superintendent's recommendation to appoint a school business officer. The School Committee enjoys the support of the municipal leaders.
Embedded (10)	The public is confident that school district finances are transparent and accurate because they see School Committee members acting knowledgeably and thoughtfully during school budget process and in mid-year (monthly or quarterly) financial reports.

FF-7. Uses Good Judgment in Allocating and Reallocating Fiscal Resources to Promote Student Achievement.



Score

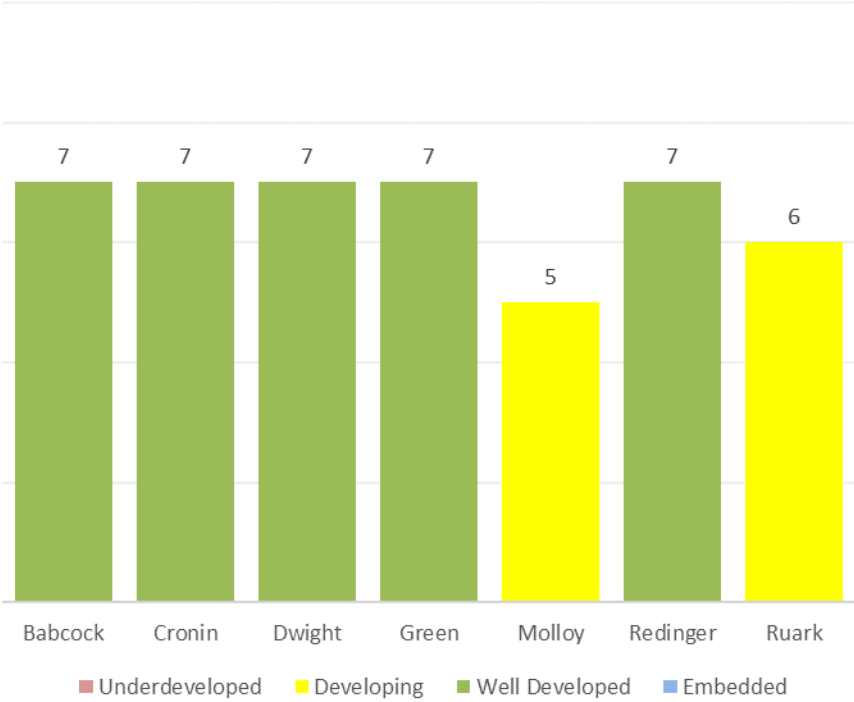
7.43 (7.50)

Comments

Cronin	We have an opportunity to bolster our existing data collection efforts to better support our decisions about allocating funds/financial resources. For those items which we fund, what are the expected outcomes and how will we track those outcomes?
Ruark	I do believe that, absent data, we do still consider student achievement concerns when examining potential changes.

Underdeveloped (1-3)	Budget decisions and expense allocations are not based on a strategic use of information or data to promote student achievement. Decisions may be politically inspired rather than rationally resolved. Deployment may support outdated or ineffective programs.
Developing (4-6)	The School Committee makes deliberate budget decisions but does not make specific decisions tied to influencing student achievement.
Well Developed (7-9)	The School Committee uses available and credible data to identify district needs and allocates financial resources through the budget and mid-year correction process to target those areas that impact student achievement and district needs.
Embedded (10)	The School Committee develops a budget that clearly addresses student achievement by allocating funding and other resources carefully and deliberately. The budget document, accompanying policy and mid-year corrections, in collaboration with the superintendent, promote student achievement.

FF-8. Engages in Training to Understand Best Practices and Strategies for Using Data to Effect Student Achievement.



Score

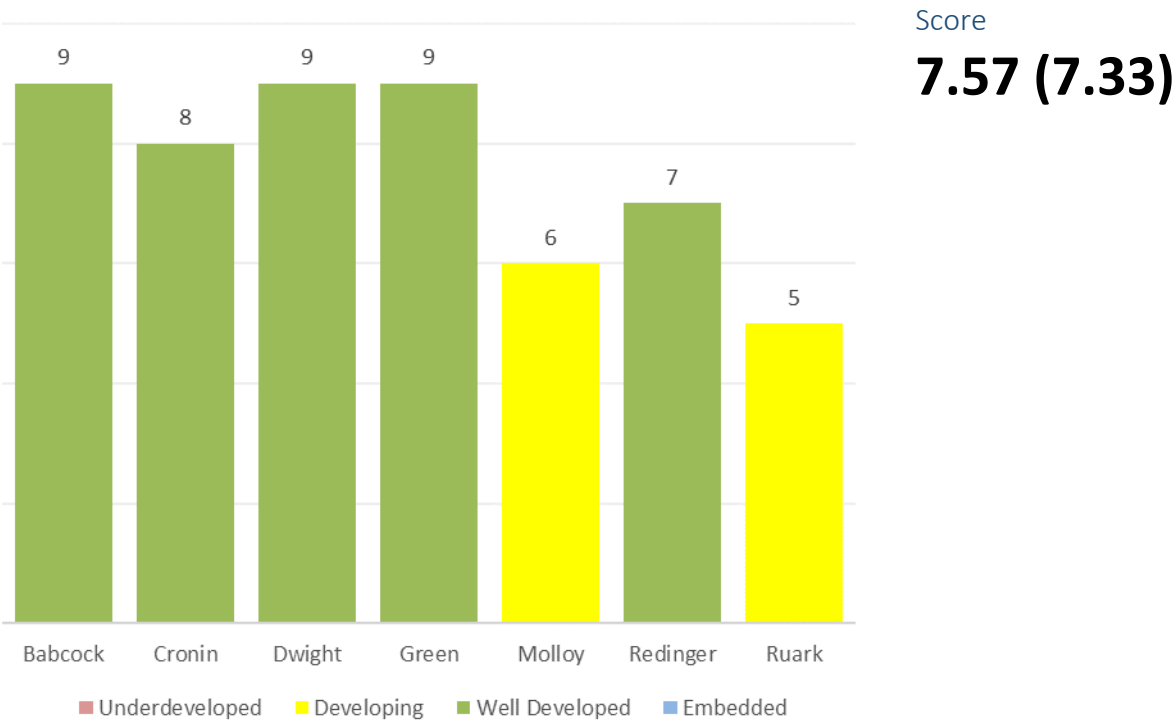
6.57 (6.50)

Comments

Cronin	I would like to see more data shared to serve as evidence of the efficacy and success of the programs.
Green	More committee development would be beneficial.
Molloy	The budget is thoughtfully developed, and the administration brings forward recommended corrections in real time, but training is limited. The Committee can improve its use of data. The Committee would benefit from a best practices subcommittee or goal.

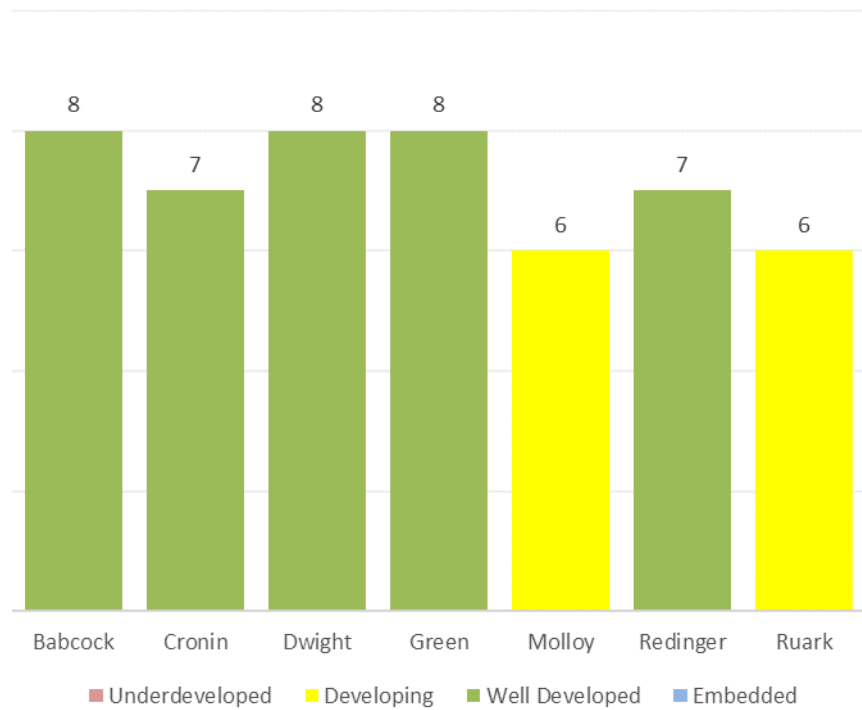
Underdeveloped (1-3)	The School Committee does not engage in any briefing or technical assistance to identify best practices and use of resources.
Developing (4-6)	There is some connection between budget and best practices that use data to identify academic and programmatic needs.
Well Developed (7-9)	The School Committee engages in professional development and academic presentations to gauge the effectiveness and success of the programs and personnel who use taxpayer funds. The budget reflects careful study and commitment to programs and strategies that are likely to be successful.
Embedded (10)	The budget and mid-year corrections reflect the School Committee's commitment to making informed decisions based on research and experience.

FF-9. Engages the Municipal Government to Provide the Most Effective Efficiencies and Economies of Operations.



Underdeveloped (1-3)	The School Committee does not collaborate with the municipal government(s) to study best practices and potential cost savings.
Developing (4-6)	There is some collaboration, but there is resistance and lack of trust for each party and the most successful outcomes are not viable.
Well Developed (7-9)	The School District and the member municipalities work together on budget planning, strategic planning, collective bargaining, collaborative administrative tasking, and facilities usage. The schools are viable and well utilized community resources.
Embedded (10)	The School District and member municipalities are able to build trust and support by collaborating and committing to the success of the public schools.

FF-10. Uses Available Data to Inform Budget Decision Making.



Score

7.14 (7.00)

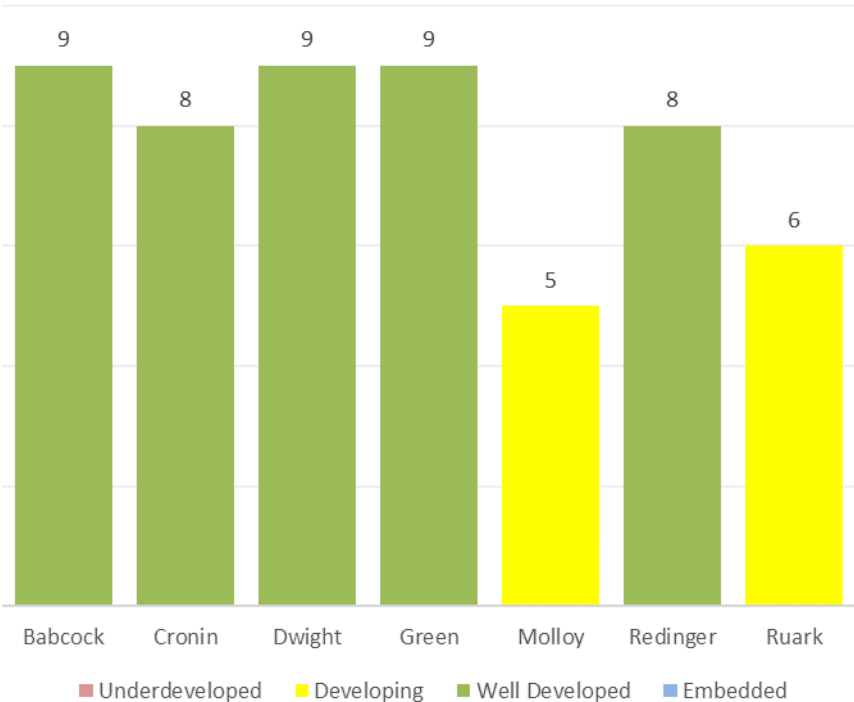
Comments

Cronin

The committee has received some estimates of work as points of comparison (e.g. fixing the leaky HES roof). It would be great to expand upon current practices and include more data around student achievement, etc.

Underdeveloped (1-3)	The School Committee avoids taking time to study available data to improve district operations or student achievement.
Developing (4-6)	Some information is used, but careful examination would identify untapped potential to do more.
Well Developed (7-9)	The superintendent has oriented the School Committee to the use of a range of information in order to inform decision making in critical areas including facilities, fiscal, planning, student achievement, and other areas.
Embedded (10)	The district has and uses a range of data obtained from various sources to strengthen programs and services for students.

FF-11. Engages in Capital and Long Range Planning Linked to the Financial Plan of the District



Score

7.71 (7.50)

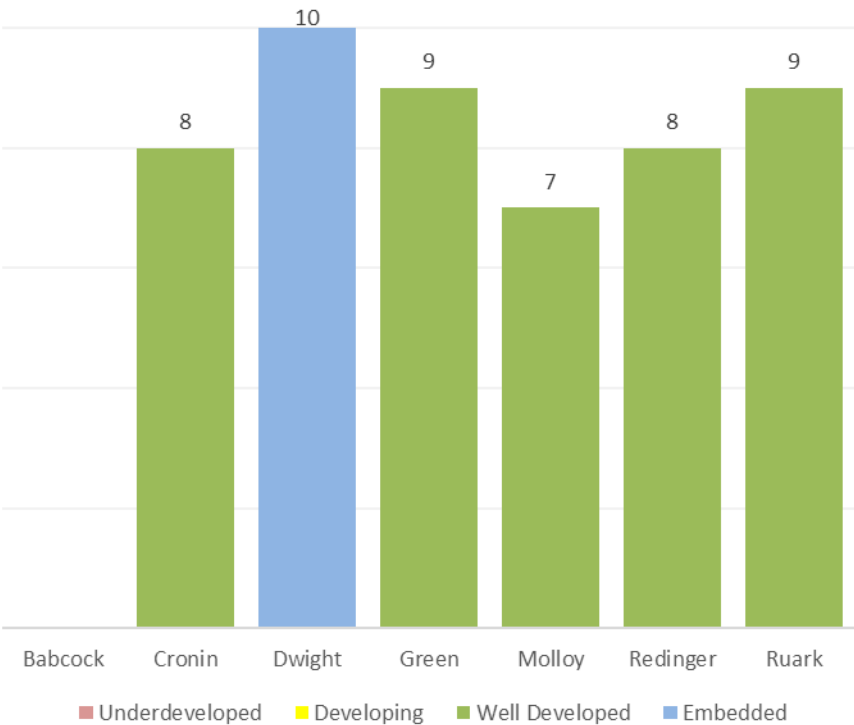
Comments

Ruark

We should consider a capital plan that extends beyond five years.

Underdeveloped (1-3)	There is no long range capital plan or financial plan.
Developing (4-6)	The district has an inadequate capital plan and fiscal plan. Both do not look beyond a short horizon and do not provide a link to the policy making responsibilities inherent in the budget process.
Well Developed (7-9)	A capital plan is in place. It outlines short, moderate and long term purchasing, maintenance, replacement, and construction needs and is the result of realistic financial planning. A financial plan is in place using the best available data to project revenues, expenses and financial needs of the district for more than a year and for as long as data is reasonably accommodating.
Embedded (10)	District financial and capital planning are well formed, clear, practical, and based on estimated available funding. The public appreciates the presence of such good planning. Planning is done in collaboration with the municipality or other regional member towns.

FF-12. Exercises Due Diligence by Reviewing and Signing Warrants



Score
8.50 (8.20)

Underdeveloped (1-3)	School Committee does not pay attention to warrants and does not review schedule of payments, expenses, or financial reports. However, the School Committee may use the warrant approval process to divert superintendent and business officer attention from their duties to respond to unnecessary questions.
Developing (4-6)	Board reviews warrants, but may use the warrant review to intrude in administrative operations or to detain the superintendent and business officer with unnecessary or irrelevant questions. .
Well Developed (7-9)	The School Committee assigns members to review and sign warrants in order to determine that bills are legitimate, represent payment for services that are appropriate, and payments are made through the appropriate line items. The School Committee relies on the superintendent and business officer for an assurance that documents are correct and legitimate.
Embedded (10)	The financial payment and review system of the school district is exemplary and the School Committee demonstrates its commitment to its fiduciary responsibility and guardianship of the public treasury.