

Report to the Legislature

Implementation and Fiscal Impact of Innovation Schools

Chapter 12 of the Acts of 2010, Section 8 authorizes the creation of innovation schools. The statute requires an annual report to the Legislature on the implementation and fiscal impact of innovation schools.

February 2016

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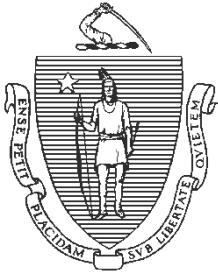
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Dear Members of the General Court:

I am pleased to submit the 2015 Report to the Legislature: *Implementation and Fiscal Impact of Innovation Schools* pursuant to Chapter 12 of the Acts of 2010, Section 8. The innovation school initiative is a component of *An Act Relative to the Achievement Gap* that allows in-district schools to operate with increased autonomy and flexibility and create custom-made solutions to their particular student needs. Through a collaborative, local approval process, schools may use autonomy and flexibility in the areas of curriculum, budget, school schedule, staffing, school district policies, and professional development.

In the five years since the innovation schools legislation was signed into law, 57 innovation schools and academies have been approved and serve approximately 19,446 students in 25 school districts across the Commonwealth. A majority of the schools are STEM-themed, while other innovation schools and academies implement dual language, alternative pathways, early college, and International Baccalaureate (IB) programs.

Within this report you will find an overview of the innovation school model; information regarding the state's efforts this past year to support implementation; fiscal year 2015 grant recipients; and an updated list of operating innovation schools throughout the Commonwealth.

Sincerely,

Mitchell D. Chester, Ed.D.
Commissioner of Elementary and Secondary

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Introduction

The Department of Elementary and Secondary Education respectfully submits this Report to the Legislature: *Implementation and Fiscal Impact of Innovation Schools* pursuant to Chapter 12 of the Acts of 2010, Section 8, which established M.G.L. Chapter 71, Section 92(p), which states, in part:

(p) The commissioner of elementary and secondary education shall, to the extent practicable, be responsible for the following: (i) the provision of planning and implementation grants to eligible applicants to establish Innovation Schools; (ii) provision of technical assistance and support to eligible applicants; (iii) the collection and publication of data and research related to the Innovation Schools initiative; (iv) the collection and publication of data and research related to successful programs serving limited English-proficient students attending Innovation Schools; and (v) the collection and dissemination of best practices in Innovation Schools that may be adopted by other public schools. The board of elementary and secondary education shall promulgate regulations necessary to carry out this section. Annually, the commissioner shall report to the joint committee on education, the house and senate committees on ways and means, the speaker of the house of representatives and the senate president on the implementation and fiscal impact of this section.

This report includes the following: 1) overview of the innovation school model; 2) information regarding the state's efforts this past year to support implementation; 3) fiscal year 2015 grant recipients; and 4) an updated list of operating innovation schools throughout the Commonwealth.

1. Overview of the Innovation School Model

The innovation schools initiative, a signature component of *An Act Relative to the Achievement Gap* that was signed in to law in January 2010, provides educators and other stakeholders across the state with the opportunity to create new in-district and autonomous schools that can implement creative and inventive strategies, increase student achievement, and reduce achievement gaps. These unique schools operate with increased autonomy and flexibility in six key areas: curriculum; budget; school schedule and calendar; staffing (including waivers from or exemptions to collective bargaining agreements); professional development; and school district policies.

Innovation schools can be established by teachers, school and district administrators, superintendents, union leaders, school committees, parents, parent-teacher organizations, colleges and universities, non-profit community-based organizations, non-profit businesses or corporations, non-profit charter school operators, non-profit education management organizations, educational collaboratives, consortia of these groups, or other non-profit groups authorized by the Commissioner of Elementary and Secondary Education.

Operation of Innovation Schools

Innovation schools operate according to an innovation plan which describes the areas of autonomy and flexibility and specific strategies that will be implemented in the school. At least one of the six areas of autonomy and flexibility must be addressed in this plan, and the applicant can determine which additional areas will be utilized in the short and long term. An innovation plan must include detailed information about the following:

- Specific instructional, curricular, and assessment strategies that will be implemented to improve student achievement and school performance;
- Allocation of fiscal and other resources;
- School schedule and calendar;
- Specific recruitment, employment, evaluation, and compensation strategies for staff members and, if applicable, a description of proposed waivers from or modifications to collective bargaining agreements;
- Professional development opportunities for all administrators, teachers, and staff members; and
- If applicable, proposed waivers from district policies.

The innovation plan must also include annual measurable goals that assess factors such as student achievement and school performance. In exchange for the authority to operate the school with increased autonomy, innovation school operators are held responsible for advancing student learning and meeting these annual benchmarks. Innovation schools receive the same per pupil allocation as any other school in the district, and their operators can also secure grants or other types of supplemental funding to implement the innovation plan.

Eligible applicants can create an innovation zone that may include a set of schools within a district or geographic region, schools that will operate in accordance with particular

instructional or curricular themes, or schools that are defined by other factors as determined by the applicants.

In addition, multiple districts can work together to establish an innovation school that would serve students from different communities.

Authorization Process

Innovation schools are established in accordance with a locally-based authorization process.

1. An eligible applicant submits an initial prospectus to the district superintendent. Within 30 days of receiving the prospectus, the superintendent must convene a screening committee that includes the superintendent or a designee, a school committee member or a designee, and a representative from the local teachers' union; two-thirds approval from the screening committee is required for the applicant to move forward.
2. An innovation plan committee that includes up to 11 school, district, and community representatives develops the innovation plan.
3. Upon completion of the innovation plan, specific steps are required.
 - A conversion school requires a two-thirds majority vote of educators in the school.
 - A new school requires negotiations among the applicant, teachers' union, and superintendent if the innovation plan includes proposed waivers from or modifications to the collective bargaining agreement.
4. The innovation plan is submitted to the school committee, which must hold at least one public hearing. A majority vote of the full school committee is required for approval.
5. Upon approval, the innovation school is authorized for a period of up to five years, and can be reauthorized by the school committee at the end of each term. The superintendent will work with the school committee to evaluate the school in accordance with the annual measurable goals included in the innovation plan. In addition, the superintendent can work with the operator of the innovation school and the school committee to revise the plan as necessary. Any revisions that propose changes to the collective bargaining agreement require a two-thirds vote of approval from the teachers in the innovation school.

2. Academic Year 2014-2015 Implementation Highlights

The innovation school model experienced continued interest from the field in academic year 2014-2015 and resulted in three new schools and academies receiving innovation status. This fall, there are currently a total of 57 innovation schools and academies approved and operating.

To date, there are approximately 19,446 students enrolled in innovation schools and innovation academies in 25 school districts across the Commonwealth.

Of the 57 innovation schools and academies noted above, eighteen were located in Gateway Cities¹. Several schools implemented a science, technology, engineering and mathematics or science, technology, engineering, arts and mathematics model, while others implemented a combination of one or more of the following educational models: multiple pathways, early college, dual language immersion, or International Baccalaureate (IB).

Technical Assistance & Information Sharing and Gathering

As in past years, the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (Department) continued to share information across the state on this redesign model to innovation school operators, stakeholders, and prospective applicants. The information was shared through a combination of, webinars, technical assistance, onsite presentations, field guides, and frequent communication.

Innovation Schools Network

The Innovation Schools Network was launched in 2012 by the Executive Office of Education (EOE) as a means to bring together innovation school educators, stakeholders, and prospective applicants across the state to network and share best practices. In 2015, the Department hosted the 4th Annual Innovation Schools Network Convening in webinar format. The webinar was conducted in two parts: the first connecting the redesign model of innovation schools and the ways in which it supports the goals of the Department. The second half of the presentation was a discussion on the renewal process as outlined in the innovation schools statute with renewal examples from Pathways Early College and the Paul Revere Innovation School.

In keeping with the goal of providing and fostering high-impact network events, the Department solicited input from innovation school operators and stakeholders to inform planning for the current academic year. The input provided will result in up to three (3) innovation school visits scheduled for spring 2015 and the re-establishment of the Principals Network. The Principals Network is a branch of the Innovation Schools Network and was established to provide targeted support to innovation school leaders while also providing opportunities to share ideas and best practices with their peers.

3. FY15 Innovation Schools Grant Funding

Planning, Implementation, and Enhancement Grants

In addition to providing technical assistance and fostering collaboration, the Department supported the innovation schools initiative through a number of focused competitive grants.

¹ The primary purpose of the Gateway Cities Education Agenda is to close achievement and attainment gaps that disproportionately affect students living in poverty, students of color, students with disabilities, and students who are English language learners in our Gateway Cities.

While the innovation school model aspires to be cost-neutral with regard to the longer-term operation of an innovation school, one of the primary methods of support to schools and partner districts continues to be through the issuance of competitive grants intended to support the development and implementation of innovation schools and academies.

In fiscal year 2015 the Department awarded a total of \$648,153. These funds have allowed the state to provide continued support for the development and implementation of innovation schools and academies.

FY15 Innovation Schools Partnership Planning Grant

The purpose of innovation schools planning grants is to support the planning process needed to develop new and/or conversion innovation schools and academies for operation for the following academic year.

In a continued effort to support the development of high-impact innovation schools and academies, the Department created the Innovation Schools Partnership Planning grant and awarded a total of \$223,425.00 to three school districts to support the planning process. Applicants were required to identify a partner that would be responsible for assisting with all aspects of the innovation schools planning process. Identified partners were required to have expertise related to the community that the innovation school or academy will serve; expertise in the areas of autonomy identified in the application; and/or expertise related to the content or educational model.

Partnership Planning Grant Recipients	Amount
Amesbury Public Schools (Amesbury Innovation High School, 9-12)	\$75,000
Brockton Public Schools (International School of Brockton, K-5)	\$73,425
Wareham Public Schools (Academy for Innovators and Entrepreneurs, 9-12)	\$75,000
Total State Funds	\$223,425

FY15 Innovation Schools Implementation Grant

The purpose of the innovation schools implementation grant is to provide districts and schools support for the implementation of approved innovation plans. Eligible applicants for this funding opportunity must successfully complete the final stage of the authorization process as outlined in the innovation schools statute and operate an approved innovation school or academy.

In FY15, the Department awarded a total of **\$194,956.00** in implementation grants to eight innovation schools and academies to support the implementation of approved innovation plans. The focus of the grant was on innovations schools’ measurable annuals goals (MAGs) and it supported high-quality professional development, acquisition of curricular materials, and the development of new curriculum units. The awards benefited approximately 2,604 students in grades PK-12.

Innovation Schools Implementation Grant Recipients	Amount
Boston Public Schools (John F. Kennedy Innovation School, K1-5)	\$30,000
Pentucket Regional School District (Design & Engineering Academy @ Dr. Elmer S. Bagnall School, PK-6) (Design & Engineering Academy @ John C. Page School, PK-6) (The Merrimac School (IB) at the Dr. Frederick N. Sweetsir School, PK-2) (The Merrimac School at the Helen R. Donaghue School, 3-6) (The Pentucket Academy of Movement Science & Athletics @ Pentucket Regional MS and HS, 7-12) (The Pentucket Arts Academy @ Pentucket Regional MS and HS, 7-12) (The Pentucket Safety & Public Service Academy @ Pentucket Regional MS and HS-7-12)	\$164,956
Total State Funds	\$194,956

FY15 Innovation Schools Enhancement and Sustainability Grant

The purpose of the innovation schools enhancement grant is to provide a supplemental opportunity for approved innovation schools that are currently implementing their innovation plans.

In FY15, the Department awarded a total of \$229,772 to support the enhanced implementation of established innovation plans of ten innovation schools and academies by focusing on MAGs and how they have been used to inform key organizational decisions. The awards benefited approximately 2,500 students in grades PK-12.

Enhancement and Sustainability Grant Recipient List	Amount
Auburn Public Schools (STEM Academy for Middle School Engineers, 6-8)	\$14,370
Boston Public Schools (Blackstone Elementary School, PK-6)	\$28,748
New Bedford Public Schools (Renaissance Community School for the Arts, PK-3)	\$28,748
Quabbin Regional School District (The IB School, 11-12)	\$14,374
Quaboag Regional School District (Innovation Early College, 9-12; Warren Community Elementary School, PK-6)	\$43,122
West Springfield Public Schools (21 st Century Skills Academy, 9-12)	\$28,538
Worcester Public Schools (Goddard School of Science and Technology, PK-6; University Park Campus School, 7-12; Worcester East Middle School, 6-8)	\$71,872
Total State Funds	\$229,772

4. Annual Evaluation and Measurable Annual Goals

By statute, superintendents are required to review innovation schools in their district for progress against their Measureable Annual Goals (MAGs). Annual reports must then be submitted to the local school committee and the commissioner of elementary and secondary education. These

reports include information about the progress of individual innovation schools in meeting their goals, including areas required by law such as MCAS achievement data and other measures that capture progress on innovation plan goals. Many innovation schools have goals that address areas such as school climate, staff morale, and community involvement.

The information contained in annual reports also provides the Department with the necessary information about the particular challenges faced and successes attained by innovation schools. This information is important to state level staff as it determines the focus of targeted technical assistance and support.

For spring 2015 MCAS data, please go to <http://profiles.doe.mass.edu/> to review school level profiles.

Massachusetts Innovation Schools

There are 57 innovation schools and academies in the Commonwealth established in urban, suburban, and rural communities. These include schools of varying grade levels (e.g., elementary, middle, and high school) and school types (e.g., new or conversions schools or academy models). Many of these schools are organized around specific themes like STEM, dual language instruction, International Baccalaureate (IB) programs, alternative education opportunities (like dropout prevention and dual enrollment at community colleges), and wraparound services.

AMESBURY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

- Amesbury Innovation High School: grades 9-12, at-risk student population

AUBURN PUBLIC SCHOOLS

- STEM Academy for Middle School Engineers: grades 6-8, STEM focus
- Auburn High School 21st Century Skills Academy: grade 9 freshman academy

BOSTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

- Blackstone School: conversion school, grades K-5
- Charlestown High School Diploma Plus Innovation Academy: grades 9-12, off-track students
- Eliot School: conversion school, grades PK-8
- Dr. William Henderson K-12 Inclusion School-Lower: conversion school, grades PK-3, full inclusion model
- Dr. William Henderson K-12 Inclusion School-Upper: conversion school, grades 4-12, full inclusion model
- John F. Kennedy Elementary School: conversion school, grades K-5, STEM theme
- Margarita Muniz Academy: new school, grades 9-12, dual language
- Roger Clap Community Academy: grades K-5
- William Monroe Trotter School: conversion school, K-5

CAPE COD REGIONAL TECHNICAL HIGH SCHOOL

- Cape Cod Tech STEM Academy: academy model, grades 9-12

DENNIS-YARMOUTH

- Ezra H. Baker Innovation School: conversion school, grades PK-3
- Nathaniel H. Wixon Innovation School: conversion school, grades 4-8

FALL RIVER PUBLIC SCHOOLS

- Edmond Talbot Innovation School: conversion school, grades 6-8

FALMOUTH PUBLIC SCHOOLS

- Lawrence School: conversion school, grades 7-8

FITCHBURG PUBLIC SCHOOLS

- McKay Arts Academy: conversion school, grades PK-8

GLOUCESTER PUBLIC SCHOOLS

- O'Maley Innovation Middle School: conversion school, grades 6-8

GREENFIELD PUBLIC SCHOOLS

- Discovery School at Four Corners: conversion school, grades K-3

HAVERHILL PUBLIC SCHOOLS

- John C. Tilton Innovation School: conversion school, grades K-4

LEOMINSTER PUBLIC SCHOOLS

- Center for Technical Education Innovation School: conversion school, grades 9-12
- Leominster Center for Excellence: new school, grades 9-12

MAHAR PUBLIC SCHOOLS

- Pathways Early College High School: grades 11-12, collaboration with Mount Wachusett Community College

MALDEN PUBIC SCHOOLS

- Linden STEAM Innovation School: conversion school, grades K-8, STEAM focus
- International Day and Evening Academy (IDEA) at Malden High School: new academy, grades 9-12, focus on ELL and SLIFE students

NEW BEDFORD PUBLIC SCHOOLS

- Renaissance Community School for the Arts: conversion school, grades K-2, arts focus

PENTUCKET REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

- Design & Engineering Academy at the Dr. John C. Page School: conversion school, grades PK-6
- Design & Engineering Academy at the Dr. Elmer S. Bagnall School: conversion school, grades PK-6
- The Merrimac School (International Baccalaureate) at the Dr. Frederick N. Sweetsir School: conversion school, grades PK-2
- The Merrimac School (International Baccalaureate) at the Helen R. Donaghue School: conversion school, grades 3-6
- Pentucket Arts Academy at Pentucket Middle and High School: new academy, grades 7-12, focus on visual and fine arts
- Pentucket Academy of Business, Finance, & Entrepreneurship at Pentucket Middle and High School, new academy, grades 7-12
- Pentucket Academy of Movement Science & Athletics at Pentucket Middle and High School, new academy, grades 7-12, focus on sports science

- Pentucket Academy of Music Conservatory at Pentucket Middle and High School, new academy, grades 7-12
- Pentucket Safety and Public Service Academy at Pentucket Middle and High School, new academy, grades 7-12
- Pentucket STEM Academy at Pentucket Middle and High School: new academy, grades 7-12

QUABBIN REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

- International Baccalaureate School at Quabbin: grades 11-12

QUABOAG REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

- Quaboag Innovation Early College: early college academy, grades 11-12
- Quaboag Innovation Middle School: conversion school, grades 7-8
- West Brookfield Elementary Innovation School: conversion school, grades PK-6
- Warren Community Elementary Innovation School: conversion school, grades PK-6

REVERE PUBLIC SCHOOLS

- Paul Revere Innovation School: conversion school, grades K-5

SALEM PUBLIC SCHOOLS

- Carlton Elementary School: conversion school, grades K-5, trimester student transitions

SOMERVILLE PUBLIC SCHOOLS

- Winter Hill Community Innovation School: conversion school, grades K-8

SPRINGFIELD PUBLIC SCHOOLS

- Springfield Renaissance Innovation School: conversion school, grades 6-12, Expeditionary Learning

WAREHAM PUBLIC SCHOOLS

- Wareham Middle School STEAM Academy, grades 6-8, STEAM focus

WEST SPRINGFIELD PUBLIC SCHOOLS

- 21st Century Skills Academy: grades 9-12

WORCESTER PUBLIC SCHOOLS

- Chandler Magnet School: conversion school, grades PK-6
- Claremont Academy: conversion school, grades 7-12, early college model
- Goddard Scholars Academy at Sullivan Middle School: grades 6-8, accelerated magnet program
- Goddard School of Science and Technology: conversion school, grades PK-6, STEM focus
- Lincoln Street Early Literacy Innovation School: conversion school, grades PK-6, literacy focus
- University Park Campus School: conversion school, grades 7-12, early college model

- Woodland Academy: conversion school, grades PK-6
- Worcester East Middle School-Academy of Science, Health and Technology: academy model, grades 7-8
- Worcester Technical STEM Early Career & College High School: conversion school, grades 9-12, STEM focus