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Executive Office of Health and Human Services
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July 27, 2018

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MARYLOU SUDDERS
Secretary

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Commissioner

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Dear Mr. Clerk,

Pursuant to Line Item 4512-0211 of Chapter 47 of the Acts of 2017, please find enclosed a report for the Recovery High Schools for FY18. As required by statute, the enclosed report includes: “(i) the number of youth served per high school; (ii) outcomes measured for youth; and (iii) recommendations for new recovery high schools in fiscal year 2019 and fiscal year 2020”.

Sincerely,

Monica Bharel, MD, MPH
Commissioner
Department of Public Health

Charles D. Baker
Governor

Karyn Polito
Lieutenant Governor



Marylou Sudders
Secretary

Monica Bharel, MD, MPH
Commissioner

Recovery High Schools Legislative Report

July 2018



Legislative Mandate

The following report is hereby issued pursuant to line-item 4512-0211 of Chapter 47 of the Acts of 2017:

Recovery High Schools

For the administrative and programmatic costs of recovery high schools; provided, that not less than \$500,000 shall be expended to open no fewer than 1 new high school in an underserved region of the commonwealth; and provided further, that the department of public health shall submit a report not later than April 16, 2018 to the house and senate committees on ways and means on: (i) the number of youth served per high school; (ii) outcomes measured for youth; and (iii) recommendations for new recovery high schools in fiscal year 2019 and fiscal year 2020.

Introduction

Recovery high schools are four-year high schools meant to educate youth in recovery from substance use or co-occurring disorders. Recovery high schools were created to provide educational environments suited to support youth recovering from substance use disorders.

The five (5) recovery high schools are located in Beverly, Boston, Brockton, Springfield, and Worcester. Residents outside these districts can attend. Each school has the capacity to serve thirty (30) – fifty (50) students and each uses a similar model while still reflecting the culture and needs of their local communities. The schools provide a comprehensive academic curriculum consistent with Massachusetts State Standards, MCAS testing protocols, and course requirements of the student’s school district. All of the schools can serve students who have Individualized Education Plans (IEP).

The schools actively support students in their recovery by providing smaller class sizes; individualized recovery plans; licensed counseling services; and daily group meetings where students are able to discuss and process issues related to their education and recovery. The schools strongly encourage and provide opportunities for caregiver involvement and are jointly funded by the Massachusetts Department of Public Health Bureau of Substance Addiction Services, local school districts, and educational collaborative/consortiums.

The Governor’s H.2 FY 19 budget proposed transferring the recovery high schools line item appropriation to line items 7010-0005 and 7061-9607. Both the House of Representatives and Senate final budgets include this transfer, and it is anticipated that the plan to move the recovery high schools to the Department of Education will be maintained in the FY19 Budget Conference Committee report.

Recovery High Schools Student Enrollment for FY18

The following table includes student enrollments for FY 2018 for the five (5) recovery high schools across the state. This includes William J. Ostiguy High School, Independence Academy, North Shore Recovery High School, Liberty Preparatory Academy, and Central Massachusetts Special Education Collaborative.

	FY 18
Recovery High School	Student Enrollments
William J. Ostiguy High School	32
Independence Academy	36
North Shore Recovery High School	49
Liberty Preparatory Academy	12
Central Massachusetts Special Education Collaborative	15

In FY2018, three of the five recovery high schools have maintained a daily census in line with expectations. Liberty Preparatory Academy and Central Massachusetts Special Education

Collaborative have both experienced transitions in leadership within the past year and as a result they have had lower than expected enrollment. The expectation is that these schools will reach the enrollment numbers of the other schools once their new leadership is acclimated with community resources and the Recovery High School recruitment process.

Recovery High School Outcome Measures

The Massachusetts Recovery High Schools serve a challenging population of students who have experienced significant disruption to their education due to addiction to a variety of substances, being in and out of treatment, as well as dealing with co-occurring mental health disorders and trauma. Even with these obstacles, as can be seen in the table below, the Massachusetts Recovery High Schools have similar graduation rates to all students statewide and higher graduation rates than similar student groups statewide such as high need students and students with disabilities.

Student Group	Percent Graduated in 2017
MA Recovery High School Students	86.3%
Students Statewide	88.3%
Students Statewide w/ disabilities	72.8%
High Needs Students Statewide	80%

Recommendations for new recovery high schools in fiscal year 2019 and fiscal year 2020

Future recommendations regarding additional recovery high schools will be made by the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) in consultation with Department of Public Health (DPH). DPH is currently actively engaging with DESE to facilitate a seamless transition of contract management and programmatic oversight for FY19 implementation.