2025 District and School Accountability Reporting:

Setting Targets for Accountability Indicators

# Introduction

In 2018, the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) began reporting accountability results under its new framework for district and school accountability and assistance, which was approved by the U.S. Department of Education as part of Massachusetts’ Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) state plan.

The accountability system consists of two components. The first is a normative component, or accountability percentile, which provides information about how a school is doing compared to other schools in the state. The second component is criterion-referenced and provides information about each district, school, or student group’s progress toward improvement targets. The purpose of this document is to describe the process that DESE used to establish targets for each of the indicators within the criterion-referenced component of the accountability system for 2025 reporting.

# Summary of 2025 Target Setting

In winter 2024, DESE published targets for districts, schools, and groups for 2024 accountability reporting, as well as preliminary increments for 2025-2027. For 2025 reporting, targets for most districts, schools, and groups are based on those previously published increments. However, some districts, schools, and groups are assigned different increments for 2025 target-setting, as described later in this document.

# Achievement

The accountability system measures 2025 student achievement against targets set separately for the English language arts (ELA), mathematics, and science MCAS assessments. Student achievement is reported using the MCAS average scaled score for all grade levels and subjects for 2025 accountability reporting.

For 2025 reporting, most districts, schools, and groups were assigned 2025 achievement targets based on improvement increments previously established in 2024. However, some districts, schools, and groups received revised increments and 2025 achievement targets:

* *Schools or groups that were assigned to the recovery path for a given subject (ELA, mathematics, or science) in 2024 and demonstrated achievement in 2024 at or above their achievement in 2019.* These schools and groups are now on the path forward for that subject and are assigned a path forward increment based on their 2022 school percentile and related quartile.
* *Districts or district-level student groups that were assigned to the recovery path for a given subject in 2024 and demonstrated achievement in 2024 at or above their achievement in 2019.* These districts and groups are now on the path forward for that subject and are assigned a district-level path forward increment.
* *Districts, schools, or groups that were assigned to quartile 3 or 4 of the recovery path for a given subject in 2024 but did not reach their 2024 target.* These groups were given up to two years to return to their 2019 level of achievement but did not do so. They remain on the recovery path (denoted with an asterisk: Recovery\*) and have been assigned a 2025 target based on the same 2024 recovery path improvement increment.

Districts, schools, or groups that were assigned to quartiles 1 and 2 of the recovery path for a given subject in 2024 but did not meet their 2024 target remain on the recovery path and have been assigned a 2025 target based on their previously published recovery path improvement increment. Any district, school, or group that was assigned to the path forward in 2024 remains on the path forward in 2025. Additionally, any district, school, or group that is newly eligible for targets in 2025 has been assigned to the path forward and received improvement increments and 2025 targets according to the methodology described in the sections below. Newly eligible schools and groups that did not have 2022 percentile data have been assigned targets based on quartile 2 improvement increments.

## Grades 3-8 ELA and Mathematics

Due to the disruption of the COVID-19 pandemic to achievement results statewide, DESE’s traditional target-setting methodology, which looked at improvement demonstrated by schools with similar performance, could not be applied uniformly. Instead, to set achievement targets in 2024 and beyond, DESE assigned each student group, school, and district to a “path” in 2024 based on how their 2022 achievement compared to achievement in 2019:

* **Recovery Path:** The MCAS average scaled score for the given group and subject was higher in 2019 than in 2022. These groups experienced declines in student achievement and are expected to improve achievement in a specified number of years to return to (and ultimately surpass) 2019 achievement levels.
* **Path Forward:** The MCAS average scaled score for the given group and subject was higher in 2022 than in 2019, *or* the improvement increment calculated using the recovery path for the group and subject is less rigorous than that assigned in 2019. These groups experienced little to no decline in achievement from 2019 to 2022 and are expected to continue to improve achievement.

### Recovery Path

#### Schools

The Department measured school-level achievement declines from 2019 to 2022 for each student group and subject and established recovery quartiles based on ranges of loss. The largest declines in average scaled score were placed into recovery quartile 1 and the smallest declines were placed into quartile 4, as shown in the table below.

Table 1: School-Level MCAS Scaled Score Recovery Quartile Cutoffs for ELA and Mathematics Achievement Indicators (Change in Average Composite Scaled Score, 2022 to 2019), Grades 3-8

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Group** | **ELA Q1** | **ELA Q2** | **ELA Q3** | **ELA**  **Q4** | **MathQ1** | **Math Q2** | **Math Q3** | **Math Q4** |
| All Students | <-10.0 | <-7.3 | <-4.5 | ≥-4.5 | <-8.5 | <-5.4 | <-2.7 | ≥-2.7 |
| Lowest Performing[[1]](#footnote-2) | <-14.8 | <-11.1 | <-7.4 | ≥-7.4 | <-15.5 | <-10.6 | <-6.3 | ≥-6.3 |
| High Needs | <-9.2 | <-6.1 | <-3.1 | ≥-3.1 | <-8.1 | <-4.7 | <-1.2 | ≥-1.2 |
| English Learners and Former English Learners | <-12.3 | <-8.8 | <-4.7 | ≥-4.7 | <-10.6 | <-7.1 | <-3.3 | ≥-3.3 |
| Low Income | <-10.0 | <-6.9 | <-3.7 | ≥-3.7 | <-8.9 | <-5.4 | <-2.0 | ≥-2.0 |
| Students with Disabilities | <-9.4 | <-6.1 | <-3.0 | ≥-3.0 | <-8.4 | <-4.4 | <-1.0 | ≥-1.0 |
| American Indian or Alaska Native | <-10.0 | <-7.3 | <-4.5 | ≥-4.5 | <-8.5 | <-5.4 | <-2.7 | ≥-2.7 |
| Asian | <-10.3 | <-6.3 | <-2.8 | ≥-2.8 | <-7.9 | <-4.1 | <-0.4 | ≥-0.4 |
| Black or African American | <-10.0 | <-6.4 | <-2.9 | ≥-2.9 | <-10.0 | <-6.5 | <-2.8 | ≥-2.8 |
| Hispanic or Latino | <-11.9 | <-8.3 | <-4.3 | ≥-4.3 | <-11.0 | <-7.1 | <-3.4 | ≥-3.4 |
| Multi-Race, Not Hispanic or Latino | <-10.0 | <-7.3 | <-4.5 | ≥-4.5 | <-8.5 | <-5.4 | <-2.7 | ≥-2.7 |
| Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander | <-10.0 | <-7.3 | <-4.5 | ≥-4.5 | <-8.5 | <-5.4 | <-2.7 | ≥-2.7 |
| White | <-9.7 | <-6.9 | <-4.0 | ≥-4.0 | <-7.9 | <-4.9 | <-2.1 | ≥-2.1 |

For each recovery quartile, DESE assigned a maximum number of years to recover (i.e., to return to 2019 levels of achievement). Schools with the largest losses were provided the most years to recover.

Table 2: Recovery Quartiles and Years to Recovery

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Recovery Quartile** | **Number of Years to Recovery** |
| 1 | 4 |
| 2 | 3 |
| 3 | 2 |
| 4 | 1 |

Each school and group on the recovery path was assigned a recovery quartile and a number of years to recovery (i.e., to return to 2019 levels of achievement) based on their own decline (i.e., the difference in average scaled score between 2022 and 2019).

To calculate the individual targets for each student group on the recovery path, the difference in average scaled score between 2022 and 2019 was divided by the number of years allotted for recovery based on their assigned recovery quartile. This value, or annual improvement increment, was then added to their 2024 achievement baseline to determine the 2025 target. To receive a target, a school or student group must have 2024 achievement results for at least 20 students in both ELA and mathematics.

#### Districts

At the district level, the process was similar. Each district and its student groups were assigned a recovery quartile and number of years to recovery based on their own decline (i.e., the difference in average scaled score from 2019 to 2022). The largest declines in average scaled score were placed into recovery quartile 1 and the smallest declines were placed into quartile 4, as shown in the table below.

Table 3: District-Level MCAS Scaled Score Recovery Quartile Cutoffs for ELA and Mathematics Achievement Indicators (Change in Average Composite Scaled Score, 2022 to 2019), Grades 3-8

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Group** | **ELA**  **Q1** | **ELA Q2** | **ELA Q3** | **ELA**  **Q4** | **MathQ1** | **Math Q2** | **Math Q3** | **Math Q4** |
| All Students | <-8.7 | <-6.9 | <-4.9 | ≥-4.9 | <-7.5 | <-5.5 | <-3.4 | ≥-3.4 |
| Lowest Performing[[2]](#footnote-3) | <-12.2 | <-9.8 | <-7.6 | ≥-7.6 | <-12.1 | <-9.3 | <-6.9 | ≥-6.9 |
| High Needs | <-7.3 | <-5.3 | <-3.4 | ≥-3.4 | <-6.4 | <-4.1 | <-2.2 | ≥-2.2 |
| English Learners and Former English Learners | <-10.3 | <-7.7 | <-5.1 | ≥-5.1 | <-8.6 | <-6.3 | <-3.4 | ≥-3.4 |
| Low Income | <-8.4 | <-6.1 | <-4.2 | ≥-4.2 | <-6.9 | <-5.0 | <-3.1 | ≥-3.1 |
| Students with Disabilities | <-7.8 | <-5.7 | <-3.8 | ≥-3.8 | <-6.5 | <-4.1 | <-2.1 | ≥-2.1 |
| American Indian or Alaska Native | <-8.7 | <-6.9 | <-4.9 | ≥-4.9 | <-7.5 | <-5.5 | <-3.4 | ≥-3.4 |
| Asian | <-9.6 | <-6.4 | <-3.9 | ≥-3.9 | <-7.4 | <-4.3 | <-2.0 | ≥-2.0 |
| Black or African American | <-8.1 | <-6.0 | <-2.6 | ≥-2.6 | <-8.5 | <-5.7 | <-2.3 | ≥-2.3 |
| Hispanic or Latino | <-9.9 | <-7.4 | <-4.4 | ≥-4.4 | <-9.0 | <-6.5 | <-3.6 | ≥-3.6 |
| Multi-Race, Not Hispanic or Latino | <-8.7 | <-6.9 | <-4.9 | ≥-4.9 | <-7.5 | <-5.5 | <-3.4 | ≥-3.4 |
| Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander | <-8.7 | <-6.9 | <-4.9 | ≥-4.9 | <-7.5 | <-5.5 | <-3.4 | ≥-3.4 |
| White | <-8.3 | <-6.7 | <-4.9 | ≥-4.9 | <-6.9 | <-5.0 | <-3.2 | ≥-3.2 |

To calculate the individual targets for each district and student group on the recovery path, the difference in average scaled score from 2019 to 2022 was divided by the number of years allotted for recovery based on their assigned recovery quartile. This value, or annual improvement increment, was then added to their 2024 achievement baseline to determine the 2025 target. To receive a target, a district or student group must have 2024 achievement results for at least 20 students in both ELA and mathematics.

### Path Forward

#### Schools

The Department used a different process for setting targets for districts, schools, and student groups on the path forward. The Department first placed schools into quartiles according to their historical school percentiles and then looked at schools within each quartile that demonstrated improvement on the MCAS tests. In doing so, DESE could identify what change looked like across improvers only and apply the same expectation of improvement to the 2024 targets. By grouping schools according to their school percentiles, DESE was able to set targets based on change demonstrated by schools with similar historical accountability results.

To set targets, DESE determined that using the median improvement of all improvers allowed for rigorous, yet reasonable improvement increments to be set for each school and student group.[[3]](#footnote-4) School-level achievement improvement increments for grades 3-8 ELA and mathematics are included in the table below.

Table 4: School-Level MCAS Scaled Score Improvement Increments for ELA and Mathematics Achievement Indicators, Grades 3-8, Path Forward

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Group** | **ELA**  **Q1** | **ELA Q2** | **ELA Q3** | **ELA**  **Q4** | **Math**  **Q1** | **Math Q2** | **Math Q3** | **Math Q4** |
| All Students | 3.4 | 2.3 | 2.0 | 1.4 | 3.2 | 2.5 | 2.1 | 1.5 |
| Lowest Performing [[4]](#footnote-5) | 5.1 | 5.1 | 5.1 | 5.1 | 5.1 | 5.1 | 5.1 | 5.1 |
| High Needs | 3.5 | 2.9 | 2.8 | 2.3 | 3.3 | 2.7 | 2.6 | 2.5 |
| English Learners and Former English Learners | 3.7 | 2.5 | 2.4 | 2.4 | 3.5 | 3.5 | 3.6 | 3.0 |
| Low Income | 3.0 | 2.4 | 2.3 | 2.1 | 2.8 | 2.8 | 2.4 | 2.4 |
| Students with Disabilities | 4.1 | 3.3 | 2.9 | 2.4 | 3.7 | 3.4 | 3.3 | 3.2 |
| American Indian or Alaska Native | 3.4 | 2.3 | 2.0 | 1.4 | 3.2 | 2.5 | 2.1 | 1.5 |
| Asian | 3.2 | 3.1 | 2.6 | 2.1 | 3.9 | 4.0 | 3.7 | 3.0 |
| Black or African American | 3.3 | 3.3 | 2.7 | 2.2 | 3.5 | 3.3 | 3.0 | 3.0 |
| Hispanic or Latino | 3.3 | 2.5 | 1.9 | 2.6 | 3.1 | 2.6 | 2.8 | 2.9 |
| Multi-Race, Not Hispanic or Latino | 3.4 | 2.3 | 2.0 | 1.4 | 3.2 | 2.5 | 2.1 | 1.5 |
| Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander | 3.4 | 2.3 | 2.0 | 1.4 | 3.2 | 2.5 | 2.1 | 1.5 |
| White | 3.5 | 2.4 | 2.0 | 1.5 | 3.7 | 2.8 | 2.1 | 1.7 |

Schools were placed into quartiles based on 2022 accountability percentile data to assign improvement increments, which were added to each school and group’s 2024 baseline average scaled score to determine the 2025 target for that school or group. To receive a 2025 target, a school or group must have 2024 achievement results for at least 20 students in both ELA and mathematics.

#### Districts

At the district level, the process was similar, but because districts do not receive percentiles, all districts were compared to one another. Improvement increments were established by using the median improvement of improvers using district-level data.[[5]](#footnote-6) District-level achievement improvement increments for grades 3-8 ELA and mathematics are included in the table below.

Table 5: District-Level MCAS Scaled Score Improvement Increments for ELA and Mathematics Achievement Indicators, Grades 3-8, Path Forward

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Group** | **Gr. 3-8 ELA**  **Improvement Increment**  (Scaled Score Points) | **Gr. 3-8 Mathematics**  **Improvement Increment**  (Scaled Score Points) |
| All Students | 1.9 | 1.9 |
| Lowest Performing[[6]](#footnote-7) | 5.1 | 4.4 |
| High Needs | 1.9 | 1.9 |
| English Learners and Former English Learners | 2.1 | 2.5 |
| Low Income | 1.0 | 1.9 |
| Students with Disabilities | 2.1 | 2.2 |
| American Indian or Alaska Native | 1.9 | 1.9 |
| Asian | 2.4 | 2.9 |
| Black or African American | 2.4 | 2.3 |
| Hispanic or Latino | 2.5 | 2.4 |
| Multi-Race, Not Hispanic or Latino | 1.9 | 1.9 |
| Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander | 1.9 | 1.9 |
| White | 1.9 | 1.8 |

Improvement increments were added to each district and group’s 2024 baseline average scaled score to determine the 2025 target for that district or group.[[7]](#footnote-8) To receive a target, a district or group must have 2024 achievement results for at least 20 students in both ELA and mathematics.

## Grade 10 ELA and Mathematics

Like the processes described above, each district, school, and student group was assigned to either the recovery path or the path forward for grade 10 ELA and mathematics. However, because historical MCAS results for these grades and subjects were measured using the Legacy MCAS scale (Composite Performance Index, or CPI), DESE first needed to use an approach called *effect size modeling* to convert achievement results from CPI to the Next Generation MCAS scale.

### Recovery Path

#### Schools

The Department measured school-level achievement declines on the grade 10 ELA and mathematics MCAS assessments from 2019 to 2022 for each student group and established recovery quartiles based on ranges of loss. The largest declines in average scaled score were placed into recovery quartile 1 and the smallest declines were placed into quartile 4, as shown in the table below.

Table 6: School-Level MCAS Scaled Score Recovery Quartile Cutoffs for ELA and Mathematics Achievement Indicators (Change in Average Composite Scaled Score, 2022 to 2019), Grade 10

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Group** | **ELA**  **Q1** | **ELA Q2** | **ELA Q3** | **ELA**  **Q4** | **MathQ1** | **Math Q2** | **Math Q3** | **Math Q4** |
| All Students | <-6.8 | <-4.2 | <-1.4 | ≥-1.4 | <-6.8 | <-4.0 | <-1.7 | ≥-1.7 |
| Lowest Performing | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A |
| High Needs | <-3.5 | <-0.5 | <2.3 | ≥2.3 | <-5.3 | <-1.9 | <1.5 | ≥1.5 |
| English Learners and Former English Learners | <-4.0 | <0.1 | <4.0 | ≥4.0 | <-9.2 | <-4.4 | <0.2 | ≥0.2 |
| Low Income | <-4.6 | <-1.1 | <1.7 | ≥1.7 | <-6.8 | <-2.9 | <0.5 | ≥0.5 |
| Students with Disabilities | <-4.6 | <-1.4 | <1.6 | ≥1.6 | <-5.5 | <-1.9 | <1.5 | ≥1.5 |
| American Indian or Alaska Native | <-6.8 | <-4.2 | <-1.4 | ≥-1.4 | <-6.8 | <-4.0 | <-1.7 | ≥-1.7 |
| Asian | <-8.1 | <-3.7 | <-0.5 | ≥-0.5 | <-5.8 | <-1.8 | <2.1 | ≥2.1 |
| Black or African American | <-3.5 | <-0.7 | <3.1 | ≥3.1 | <-10.2 | <-4.7 | <-0.9 | ≥-0.9 |
| Hispanic or Latino | <-4.5 | <-0.8 | <3.0 | ≥3.0 | <-7.1 | <-3.6 | <0.1 | ≥0.1 |
| Multi-Race, Not Hispanic or Latino | <-6.8 | <-4.2 | <-1.4 | ≥-1.4 | <-6.8 | <-4.0 | <-1.7 | ≥-1.7 |
| Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander | <-6.8 | <-4.2 | <-1.4 | ≥-1.4 | <-6.8 | <-4.0 | <-1.7 | ≥-1.7 |
| White | <-7.2 | <-4.5 | <-1.9 | ≥-1.9 | <-6.2 | <-3.6 | <-1.1 | ≥-1.1 |

For each recovery quartile, DESE assigned a maximum number of years to recover (i.e., to return to 2019 levels of achievement). Improvement increments were calculated by dividing the amount of loss between 2019 and 2022 by the number of years to recovery, as determined by the recovery quartile. Targets for 2025 were then set by adding the improvement increment to the 2024 achievement baseline. To receive a target, a school or student group must have 2024 achievement results for at least 20 students in both ELA and mathematics.

#### Districts

At the district level, the process was similar. Each district and its student groups were assigned a recovery quartile and number of years to recovery based on their own decline (i.e., the difference in average scaled score from 2019 to 2022). The largest declines in average scaled score were placed into recovery quartile 1 and the smallest declines were placed into quartile 4, as shown in the table below.

Table 7: District-Level MCAS Scaled Score Recovery Quartile Cutoffs for ELA and Mathematics Achievement Indicators (Change in Average Composite Scaled Score, 2022 to 2019), Grade 10

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Group** | **ELA**  **Q1** | **ELA Q2** | **ELA Q3** | **ELA**  **Q4** | **MathQ1** | **Math Q2** | **Math Q3** | **Math Q4** |
| All Students | <-6.7 | <-4.1 | <-1.6 | ≥-1.6 | <-6.7 | <-3.8 | <-1.9 | ≥-1.9 |
| Lowest Performing | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A |
| High Needs | <-3.3 | <-0.4 | <2.0 | ≥2.0 | <-4.6 | <-1.6 | <1.6 | ≥1.6 |
| English Learners and Former English Learners | <-4.0 | <0.7 | <3.7 | ≥3.7 | <-7.6 | <-3.2 | <0.6 | ≥0.6 |
| Low Income | <-4.4 | <-1.1 | <1.8 | ≥1.8 | <-5.7 | <-2.3 | <0.8 | ≥0.8 |
| Students with Disabilities | <-4.1 | <-1.2 | <1.6 | ≥1.6 | <-4.9 | <-1.6 | <1.5 | ≥1.5 |
| American Indian or Alaska Native | <-6.7 | <-4.1 | <-1.6 | ≥-1.6 | <-6.7 | <-3.8 | <-1.9 | ≥-1.9 |
| Asian | <-8.5 | <-3.8 | <-1.1 | ≥-1.1 | <-6.1 | <-2.4 | <1.1 | ≥1.1 |
| Black or African American | <-5.2 | <-0.6 | <2.1 | ≥2.1 | <-10.5 | <-5.8 | <-2.3 | ≥-2.3 |
| Hispanic or Latino | <-4.4 | <-0.8 | <3.0 | ≥3.0 | <-6.5 | <-2.9 | <0.5 | ≥0.5 |
| Multi-Race, Not Hispanic or Latino | <-6.7 | <-4.1 | <-1.6 | ≥-1.6 | <-6.7 | <-3.8 | <-1.9 | ≥-1.9 |
| Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander | <-6.7 | <-4.1 | <-1.6 | ≥-1.6 | <-6.7 | <-3.8 | <-1.9 | ≥-1.9 |
| White | <-7.2 | <-4.8 | <-1.8 | ≥-1.8 | <-6.0 | <-3.5 | <-1.4 | ≥-1.4 |

For each recovery quartile, DESE assigned a specific number of years to recover (i.e., to return to 2019 levels of achievement). Improvement increments were added to each district and group’s 2024 baseline average scaled score to determine the 2025 target for that district or group. To receive a target, a district or group must have 2024 achievement results for at least 20 students in both ELA and mathematics.

### Path Forward

#### Schools

Like the process used in grades 3-8, DESE looked at the improvement demonstrated by schools with similar historical performance to establish the 2024 improvement increments for schools and groups on the path forward for grade 10 ELA and mathematics. The Department determined that using the median improvement of all improvers allowed for ambitious, yet reasonable improvement increments to be set for each school and student group.[[8]](#footnote-9) School-level achievement improvement increments for grade 10 ELA and mathematics are included in the table below.

Table 8: School-Level MCAS Scaled Score Improvement Increments for ELA and Mathematics Achievement Indicators, Grade 10, Path Forward

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Group** | **ELA**  **Q1** | **ELA Q2** | **ELA Q3** | **ELA**  **Q4** | **Math**  **Q1** | **Math Q2** | **Math Q3** | **Math Q4** |
| All Students | 3.5 | 2.1 | 1.5 | 1.0 | 4.1 | 2.8 | 1.9 | 1.1 |
| Lowest Performing | 5.1 | 5.1 | 5.1 | 3.6 | 5.1 | 5.1 | 5.1 | 3.3 |
| High Needs | 4.3 | 3.3 | 2.6 | 1.9 | 4.2 | 4.1 | 3.8 | 2.7 |
| English Learners and Former English Learners | 3.5 | 2.9 | 2.9 | 2.9 | 5.1 | 5.1 | 5.1 | 5.1 |
| Low Income | 4.9 | 2.8 | 2.5 | 3.6 | 3.8 | 4.0 | 3.6 | 4.5 |
| Students with Disabilities | 3.2 | 2.6 | 2.1 | 1.9 | 4.1 | 4.4 | 2.7 | 2.5 |
| American Indian or Alaska Native | 3.5 | 2.1 | 1.5 | 1.0 | 4.1 | 2.8 | 1.9 | 1.1 |
| Asian | 5.1 | 3.7 | 3.7 | 3.4 | 5.1 | 4.1 | 4.1 | 3.4 |
| Black or African American | 5.1 | 4.6 | 4.0 | 4.0 | 5.1 | 4.7 | 5.1 | 5.1 |
| Hispanic or Latino | 3.7 | 2.0 | 2.7 | 2.7 | 3.8 | 5.1 | 3.5 | 4.2 |
| Multi-Race, Not Hispanic or Latino | 3.5 | 2.1 | 1.5 | 1.0 | 4.1 | 2.8 | 1.9 | 1.1 |
| Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander | 3.5 | 2.1 | 1.5 | 1.0 | 4.1 | 2.8 | 1.9 | 1.1 |
| White | 5.1 | 3.0 | 2.1 | 1.3 | 4.0 | 2.9 | 2.6 | 1.1 |

Targets were set by adding the improvement increment to the 2024 achievement baseline for that student group, based on their quartile from the school’s 2022 school percentile. To receive a 2025 target, a school or student group must have 2024 achievement results for at least 20 students in both ELA and mathematics.

#### Districts

At the district level, the process was similar, but because districts did not receive percentiles under the previous accountability system, all districts were compared to one another. Improvement increments were established by using the median improvement of improvers using district-level data.[[9]](#footnote-10) District-level achievement improvement increments for grade 10 ELA and mathematics are included in the table below.

Table 9: District-Level MCAS Scaled Score Improvement Increments for ELA and Mathematics Achievement Indicators, Grade 10, Path Forward

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Group** | **Gr. 10 ELA**  **Improvement Increment**  (Scaled Score Points) | **Gr. 10 Mathematics**  **Improvement Increment**  (Scaled Score Points) |
| All Students | 2.6 | 2.5 |
| Lowest Performing | 5.1 | 5.1 |
| High Needs | 3.3 | 3.8 |
| English Learners and Former English Learners | 3.2 | 5.1 |
| Low Income | 3.9 | 4.5 |
| Students with Disabilities | 2.7 | 3.4 |
| American Indian or Alaska Native | 2.6 | 2.5 |
| Asian | 5.0 | 4.2 |
| Black or African American | 2.4 | 3.9 |
| Hispanic or Latino | 3.2 | 4.0 |
| Multi-Race, Not Hispanic or Latino | 2.6 | 2.5 |
| Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander | 2.6 | 2.5 |
| White | 2.6 | 2.6 |

Improvement increments were added to each district and group’s 2024 baseline average scaled score to determine the 2025 target for that district or group.[[10]](#footnote-11) To receive a target, a district or group must have 2024 achievement results for at least 20 students in both ELA and mathematics.

## Grades 5, 8, and 10 Science

Using the same processes as above, each district, school, and student group was assigned to either the recovery path or the path forward for grades 5, 8, and 10 science. Because historical MCAS results for these grades and subjects were measured using the Legacy MCAS scale (Composite Performance Index, or CPI), DESE used an approach called *effect size modelling* to convert achievement results from CPI to the Next Generation MCAS scale.

### Recovery Path

#### Schools

The Department measured school-level achievement declines from 2019 to 2022 for each student group and subject and established recovery quartiles based on ranges of loss. The largest declines in average scaled score were placed into recovery quartile 1, and the smallest declines were placed into quartile 4, as shown in the table below.

Table 10: School-Level MCAS Scaled Score Recovery Quartile Cutoffs for Science Achievement Indicators (Change in Average Composite Scaled Score, 2022 to 2019), Grades 5, 8, and 10

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Group** | **Gr. 5&8**  **Q1** | **Gr. 5&8**  **Q2** | **Gr. 5&8**  **Q3** | **Gr. 5&8**  **Q4** | **Gr. 10 Q1** | **Gr. 10 Q2** | **Gr. 10 Q3** | **Gr. 10 Q4** |
| All Students | <-7.0 | <-3.8 | <-0.5 | ≥-0.5 | <-11.3 | <-7.4 | <-3.6 | ≥-3.6 |
| Lowest Performing | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A |
| High Needs | <-6.8 | <-3.4 | <0.2 | ≥0.2 | <-10.5 | <-6.0 | <-2.5 | ≥-2.5 |
| English Learners and Former English Learners | <-8.9 | <-4.7 | <-0.8 | ≥-0.8 | <-15.3 | <-9.8 | <-4.3 | ≥-4.3 |
| Low Income | <-7.8 | <-4.1 | <-0.6 | ≥-0.6 | <-12.6 | <-7.4 | <-3.6 | ≥-3.6 |
| Students with Disabilities | <-7.8 | <-4.4 | <-0.2 | ≥-0.2 | <-10.8 | <-7.0 | <-2.8 | ≥-2.8 |
| American Indian or Alaska Native | <-7.0 | <-3.8 | <-0.5 | ≥-0.5 | <-11.3 | <-7.4 | <-3.6 | ≥-3.6 |
| Asian | <-3.7 | <-0.1 | <2.2 | ≥2.2 | <-11.4 | <-5.3 | <-1.3 | ≥-1.3 |
| Black or African American | <-7.5 | <-3.7 | <0.2 | ≥0.2 | <-14.3 | <-9.7 | <-5.7 | ≥-5.7 |
| Hispanic or Latino | <-9.1 | <-5.1 | <-1.3 | ≥-1.3 | <-13.4 | <-8.7 | <-4.1 | ≥-4.1 |
| Multi-Race, Not Hispanic or Latino | <-7.0 | <-3.8 | <-0.5 | ≥-0.5 | <-11.3 | <-7.4 | <-3.6 | ≥-3.6 |
| Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander | <-7.0 | <-3.8 | <-0.5 | ≥-0.5 | <-11.3 | <-7.4 | <-3.6 | ≥-3.6 |
| White | <-6.4 | <-3.2 | <0.0 | ≥0.0 | <-10.1 | <-6.1 | <-3.1 | ≥-3.1 |

For each recovery quartile, DESE assigned a maximum number of years to recover (i.e., to return to 2019 levels of achievement). Improvement increments were calculated by dividing the amount of loss between 2019 and 2022 by the number of years to recovery, as determined by the recovery quartile. Targets for 2025 were then set by adding the improvement increment to the 2024 achievement baseline. To receive a target, a school or student group must have 2024 achievement results for at least 20 students in both ELA and mathematics.

#### Districts

At the district level, the process was similar. Each district and its student groups were assigned a recovery quartile and number of years to recovery based on their own decline (i.e., the difference in average scaled score from 2019 to 2022). The largest declines in average scaled score were placed into recovery quartile 1 and the smallest declines were placed into quartile 4, as shown in the table below.

Table 11: District-Level MCAS Scaled Score Recovery Quartile Cutoffs for Science Achievement Indicators (Change in Average Composite Scaled Score, 2022 to 2019), Grades 5, 8, and 10

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Group** | **Gr. 5&8**  **Q1** | **Gr. 5&8**  **Q2** | **Gr. 5&8**  **Q3** | **Gr. 5&8**  **Q4** | **Gr.10Q1** | **Gr.10 Q2** | **Gr.10 Q3** | **Gr.10 Q4** |
| All Students | <-6.0 | <-3.7 | <-1.9 | ≥-1.9 | <-10.7 | <-6.8 | <-3.4 | ≥-3.4 |
| Lowest Performing | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A |
| High Needs | <-4.9 | <-2.7 | <-0.1 | ≥-0.1 | <-10.0 | <-5.7 | <-2.0 | ≥-2.0 |
| English Learners and Former English Learners | <-7.3 | <-4.7 | <-1.4 | ≥-1.4 | <-13.8 | <-8.9 | <-3.4 | ≥-3.4 |
| Low Income | <-6.2 | <-3.3 | <-0.9 | ≥-0.9 | <-11.8 | <-6.7 | <-3.2 | ≥-3.2 |
| Students with Disabilities | <-6.5 | <-3.8 | <-1.6 | ≥-1.6 | <-11.5 | <-6.7 | <-1.8 | ≥-1.8 |
| American Indian or Alaska Native | <-6.0 | <-3.7 | <-1.9 | ≥-1.9 | <-10.7 | <-6.8 | <-3.4 | ≥-3.4 |
| Asian | <-4.9 | <-2.5 | <-0.2 | ≥-0.2 | <-9.9 | <-4.6 | <-0.7 | ≥-0.7 |
| Black or African American | <-6.3 | <-4.0 | <-0.3 | ≥-0.3 | <-13.0 | <-8.6 | <-5.7 | ≥-5.7 |
| Hispanic or Latino | <-6.9 | <-4.7 | <-2.1 | ≥-2.1 | <-14.0 | <-8.1 | <-3.7 | ≥-3.7 |
| Multi-Race, Not Hispanic or Latino | <-6.0 | <-3.7 | <-1.9 | ≥-1.9 | <-10.7 | <-6.8 | <-3.4 | ≥-3.4 |
| Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander | <-6.0 | <-3.7 | <-1.9 | ≥-1.9 | <-10.7 | <-6.8 | <-3.4 | ≥-3.4 |
| White | <-5.3 | <-3.5 | <-1.5 | ≥-1.5 | <-9.7 | <-6.1 | <-3.0 | ≥-3.0 |

For each recovery quartile, DESE assigned a maximum number of years to recover (i.e., to return to 2019 levels of achievement). Improvement increments were added to each district and group’s 2024 baseline average scaled score to determine the 2025 target for that district or group. To receive a target, a district or group must have 2024 achievement results for at least 20 students in both ELA and mathematics.

### Path Forward

#### Schools

Like the process used in grades 3-8, DESE looked at the improvement demonstrated by schools with similar historical performance to establish the 2024 improvement increments for schools and groups on the path forward for grades 5, 8, and 10 science. The Department determined that using the median improvement of all improvers allowed for rigorous, yet reasonable improvement increments to be set for each school and student group.[[11]](#footnote-12) School-level achievement improvement increments for grades 5, 8, and 10 science are included in the table below.

Table 12: School-Level MCAS Scaled Score Improvement Increments for Science Achievement Indicators, Grades 5, 8, and 10, Path Forward

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Group** | **Gr. 5&8**  **Q1** | **Gr. 5&8**  **Q2** | **Gr. 5&8**  **Q3** | **Gr. 5&8**  **Q4** | **Gr. 10 Q1** | **Gr. 10 Q2** | **Gr. 10 Q3** | **Gr. 10 Q4** |
| All Students | 4.3 | 3.6 | 2.7 | 2.2 | 3.1 | 2.0 | 1.6 | 1.0 |
| Lowest Performing | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A | 3.9 | 4.7 | 3.2 | 2.6 |
| High Needs | 4.3 | 3.8 | 3.4 | 3.5 | 3.3 | 2.8 | 3.8 | 2.3 |
| English Learners and Former English Learners | 4.2 | 4.1 | 3.6 | 4.2 | 4.0 | 4.3 | 4.3 | 4.3 |
| Low Income | 4.1 | 4.0 | 3.4 | 4.4 | 3.2 | 2.8 | 3.3 | 2.0 |
| Students with Disabilities | 4.0 | 3.8 | 4.5 | 4.2 | 3.0 | 3.1 | 2.9 | 2.5 |
| American Indian or Alaska Native | 4.3 | 3.6 | 2.7 | 2.2 | 3.1 | 2.0 | 1.6 | 1.0 |
| Asian | 5.1 | 3.6 | 4.0 | 2.2 | 2.9 | 2.9 | 2.9 | 2.1 |
| Black or African American | 4.1 | 5.1 | 2.6 | 4.0 | 3.1 | 3.0 | 3.0 | 3.0 |
| Hispanic or Latino | 3.9 | 3.6 | 5.1 | 4.6 | 3.5 | 2.7 | 2.7 | 3.2 |
| Multi-Race, Not Hispanic or Latino | 4.3 | 3.6 | 2.7 | 2.2 | 3.1 | 2.0 | 1.6 | 1.0 |
| Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander | 4.3 | 3.6 | 2.7 | 2.2 | 3.1 | 2.0 | 1.6 | 1.0 |
| White | 4.9 | 3.7 | 3.0 | 2.2 | 3.8 | 2.3 | 1.7 | 1.3 |

Targets were set by adding the improvement increment to the 2024 achievement baseline for that student group, based on their quartile from the school’s 2022 school percentile. To receive a target, a school or student group must have 2024 achievement results for at least 20 students in both ELA and mathematics.

#### Districts

At the district level, the process was similar, but because districts did not receive percentiles under the previous accountability system, all districts were compared to one another. Improvement increments were established by using the median improvement of improvers using district-level data. District-level achievement improvement increments for grades 5, 8, and 10 science are included in the table below.

Table 13: District-Level MCAS Scaled Score Improvement Increments for Science Achievement Indicators, Grades 5, 8, and 10, Path Forward

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Group** | **Gr. 5 & 8 Science**  **Improvement Increment**  (Scaled Score Points) | **Gr. 10 Science**  **Improvement Increment**  (Scaled Score Points) |
| All Students | 2.7 | 2.0 |
| Lowest Performing | N/A | N/A |
| High Needs | 3.0 | 2.9 |
| English Learners and Former English Learners | 3.2 | 2.4 |
| Low Income | 3.3 | 3.1 |
| Students with Disabilities | 3.4 | 3.1 |
| American Indian or Alaska Native | 2.7 | 2.0 |
| Asian | 3.7 | 2.8 |
| Black or African American | 3.5 | 2.8 |
| Hispanic or Latino | 2.7 | 3.1 |
| Multi-Race, Not Hispanic or Latino | 2.7 | 2.0 |
| Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander | 2.7 | 2.0 |
| White | 2.6 | 1.9 |

Improvement increments were added to each district and group’s 2022 baseline average scaled score to determine the 2025 target for that district or group.[[12]](#footnote-13) [[13]](#footnote-14) To receive a target, a district or group must have 2024 achievement results for at least 20 students in both ELA and mathematics.

# Growth

Targets for the ELA and mathematics student growth indicators are set differently than for the achievement indicators. The goal for all districts, schools, and student groups is to achieve or exceed an SGP of 50. Groups with a mean SGP of 50.0 or higher receive full credit for this indicator.

# Progress Toward English Proficiency

The accountability system measures performance against targets for the English Learner (EL) Progress indicator. This indicator is reported as the percentage of EL students that are making progress toward becoming proficient in English. Progress is determined by comparing each student’s performance on the ACCESS for ELL assessment to their annual student-level ACCESS targets. These targets are set individually for each student based on their initial ACCESS performance, grade, and years in Massachusetts, and reflect the annual improvement needed to reach English proficiency in 6 years. Students who meet or exceed their annual ACCESS targets are considered to have made progress.

For 2025 target-setting, DESE used the improvement increments that were calculated and published in 2024, as described below. In 2019, the Department placed schools and districts into quartiles according to their 2017 average difficulty index (DI), and then looked at schools and districts within each quartile that demonstrated an increase in the percentage of students making progress toward English language proficiency between 2017 and 2018. Targets for this indicator are based on the 25th percentile improvement within each difficulty index quartile and are differentiated by non-high school (grades 1-8) and high school (grades 9-12) gradespans. Incorporating the gradespan and difficulty index ensures that EL progress targets are equitable, as schools and districts are compared only to others that serve students of similar ages and similar levels of difficulty in achieving English language proficiency.

This analysis was conducted at the school and district level to identify the EL progress improvement increments included in the table below.

Table 14: School- and District-Level EL Progress Improvement Increments by Difficulty Index (DI) Quartile

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Type** | **Gr. 1-8 DI Q1** | **Gr. 1-8 DI Q2** | **Gr. 1-8 DI Q3** | **Gr. 1-8 DI Q4** | **Gr. 9-12 DI Q1** | **Gr. 9-12 DI Q2** | **Gr. 9-12 DI Q3** | **Gr. 9-12 DI Q4** |
| School | 2.2 | 4.0 | 5.4 | 5.2 | 6.0 | 5.5 | 1.5 | 1.5 |
| District | 1.0 | 4.9 | 2.7 | 1.6 | 2.1 | 7.0 | 1.2 | 1.3 |

Schools and districts were placed into quartiles based on their 2022 average difficulty index to assign improvement increments, which were added to each school or district’s 2024 baseline progress rate to determine the 2025 target.[[14]](#footnote-15) [[15]](#footnote-16) Newly eligible schools and districts (i.e., those with insufficient data for the EL progress indicator in 2022 and sufficient data in 2024) were assigned an improvement increment based on their 2022 Difficulty Index quartile; those without a 2022 difficulty index were assigned an improvement increment for quartile 2. To receive a 2025 target, a school or district must have 2024 results for at least 20 students for both the EL progress indicator and the ELA and mathematics achievement indicators.

# Four-Year Cohort Graduation Rate, Extended Engagement Rate, and Advanced Coursework Completion

The accountability system measures 2025 student performance against targets for the following high school indicators:

* **Four-year cohort graduation rate**, which measures the percentage of students in a graduation cohort that graduate from high school in four years or less (schools and districts serving grade 12);
* **Extended engagement rate**, which measures the percentage of students in a graduation cohort that either graduate in five years or less or remain enrolled in school after five years (schools and districts serving grade 12);
* **Annual dropout rate**, which measures the percentage of students in grades 9 through 12 that drop out of school in a given year (schools and districts serving grades 9 through 12); and
* **Advanced coursework completion**, which measures the percentage of students enrolled in grades 11 and 12 who complete at least one advanced course. Advanced courses include Advanced Placement, International Baccalaureate, dual enrollment for credit, Project Lead the Way, Chapter 74-approved vocational/technical secondary cooperative education programs, courses that meet the requirements of Chapter 74-approved articulation agreements, and other selected rigorous courses (schools and districts serving grades 11 and 12).[[16]](#footnote-17)

For accountability determinations in any given year, data for the four-year cohort graduation rate, extended engagement rate, and annual dropout rate are lagged. For example, 2025 accountability determinations use the 2024 four-year graduation and annual dropout rates, and the 2022 extended engagement rate. Change is measured by comparing these rates to the rates from the previous year (e.g., the 2022 four-year graduation and annual dropout rates, and the 2021 extended engagement rate). Using lagged data allows DESE to use a data that have been thoroughly reviewed by district and DESE staff.

For 2025 target-setting, DESE used the improvement increments that were calculated and published in 2024, as described below.

The Department placed schools into quartiles according to their school percentiles from 2019 to 2021, and then looked at schools within each quartile that demonstrated improvement in each of the four-year cohort graduation rate, extended engagement rate, and advanced coursework completion rate indicators separately. In doing so, DESE could identify what change looked like across improvers only. By grouping schools according to their school percentiles, DESE was able to set targets based on change demonstrated by schools with similar historical accountability results.

The Department determined that setting targets for these indicators based on the median improvement over three years within each quartile allowed for ambitious, yet reasonable improvement increments to be set for each school and student group.[[17]](#footnote-18) School-level improvement increments for the four-year cohort graduation rate, extended engagement rate, and advanced coursework completion rate indicators are included in the tables below.

Table 15: School-Level Four-Year Cohort Graduation Rate Improvement Increments

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Group** | **Q1** | **Q2** | **Q3** | **Q4** |
| All Students | 4.5 | 2.5 | 2.0 | 1.1 |
| Lowest Performing | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A |
| High Needs | 5.1 | 4.4 | 3.5 | 3.1 |
| English Learners and Former English Learners | 5.6 | 7.9 | 2.0 | 1.1 |
| Low Income | 5.3 | 4.1 | 4.0 | 4.1 |
| Students with Disabilities | 9.1 | 7.3 | 4.9 | 4.0 |
| American Indian or Alaska Native | 4.5 | 2.5 | 2.0 | 1.1 |
| Asian | 5.9 | 2.5 | 2.0 | 2.5 |
| Black or African American | 5.9 | 7.2 | 2.0 | 1.1 |
| Hispanic or Latino | 6.4 | 4.5 | 4.1 | 2.6 |
| Multi-Race, Not Hispanic or Latino | 4.5 | 2.5 | 2.0 | 1.1 |
| Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander | 4.5 | 2.5 | 2.0 | 1.1 |
| White | 3.9 | 2.3 | 1.8 | 1.1 |

Table 16: School-Level Extended Engagement Rate Improvement Increments

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Group** | **Q1** | **Q2** | **Q3** | **Q4** |
| All Students | 2.7 | 2.1 | 1.5 | 1.0 |
| Lowest Performing | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A |
| High Needs | 3.6 | 3.7 | 3.1 | 2.6 |
| English Learners and Former English Learners | 7.0 | 6.7 | 1.5 | 1.0 |
| Low Income | 4.3 | 3.7 | 3.6 | 3.2 |
| Students with Disabilities | 7.0 | 5.1 | 3.0 | 3.6 |
| American Indian or Alaska Native | 2.7 | 2.1 | 1.5 | 1.0 |
| Asian | 4.2 | 2.1 | 1.5 | 1.8 |
| Black or African American | 4.9 | 3.7 | 1.5 | 1.0 |
| Hispanic or Latino | 4.1 | 4.8 | 3.7 | 1.0 |
| Multi-Race, Not Hispanic or Latino | 2.7 | 2.1 | 1.5 | 1.0 |
| Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander | 2.7 | 2.1 | 1.5 | 1.0 |
| White | 2.8 | 2.1 | 1.4 | 1.0 |

Table 17: School-Level Advanced Coursework Completion Improvement Increments

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Group** | **Q1** | **Q2** | **Q3** | **Q4** |
| All Students | 4.8 | 4.1 | 3.3 | 2.1 |
| Lowest Performing | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A |
| High Needs | 5.1 | 6.1 | 5.3 | 6.0 |
| English Learners and Former English Learners | 7.6 | 6.7 | 11.2 | 5.2 |
| Low Income | 5.3 | 6.8 | 6.7 | 5.8 |
| Students with Disabilities | 5.5 | 8.1 | 8.3 | 7.7 |
| American Indian or Alaska Native | 4.8 | 4.1 | 3.3 | 2.1 |
| Asian | 5.0 | 5.3 | 5.1 | 2.6 |
| Black or African American | 6.7 | 9.0 | 5.5 | 7.2 |
| Hispanic or Latino | 6.5 | 7.4 | 10.3 | 6.4 |
| Multi-Race, Not Hispanic or Latino | 4.8 | 4.1 | 3.3 | 2.1 |
| Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander | 4.8 | 4.1 | 3.3 | 2.1 |
| White | 4.8 | 4.1 | 3.5 | 2.5 |

Schools were placed into quartiles based on 2022 accountability percentile data to assign improvement increments, which were added to each school and student group’s baseline to determine the 2025 target for that school or group. Newly eligible schools and groups (i.e., those with insufficient data in 2022 and sufficient data in 2024) were assigned an improvement increment based on the quartile of the school’s 2022 accountability percentile; if none available, they were assigned the quartile 2 improvement increment. To receive a 2025 target for a particular indicator, a school or student group must have baseline results for at least 20 students for both the indicator in question and the ELA and mathematics achievement indicators.

At the district level, the process was similar, but because districts do not receive percentiles, all districts were compared to one another. District-level improvement increments for the four-year cohort graduation rate, extended engagement rate, and advanced coursework completion rate indicators are included in the table below.

Table 18: District-Level Graduation Rate, Extended Engagement Rate, and Advanced Coursework Completion Improvement Increments

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Group** | **Four-Year Cohort Graduation Rate Improvement Increment**  (percentage points) | **Extended Engagement Rate Improvement Increment**  (percentage points) | **Advanced Coursework Completion Improvement Increment**  (percentage points) |
| All Students | 2.0 | 1.6 | 3.4 |
| Lowest Performing | N/A | N/A | N/A |
| High Needs | 4.3 | 3.4 | 5.7 |
| English Learners and Former English Learners | 5.7 | 5.5 | 6.7 |
| Low Income | 4.6 | 3.8 | 6.2 |
| Students with Disabilities | 6.1 | 4.6 | 7.1 |
| American Indian or Alaska Native | 2.0 | 1.6 | 3.4 |
| Asian | 3.1 | 1.8 | 3.7 |
| Black or African American | 4.9 | 4.5 | 6.5 |
| Hispanic or Latino | 4.7 | 4.1 | 6.8 |
| Multi-Race, Not Hispanic or Latino | 2.0 | 1.6 | 3.4 |
| Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander | 2.0 | 1.6 | 3.4 |
| White | 2.0 | 1.6 | 3.6 |

To receive a 2025 target for a particular indicator, a district or student group must have baseline results for at least 20 students for both the indicator in question and the ELA and mathematics achievement indicators.[[18]](#footnote-19) [[19]](#footnote-20)

# Annual Dropout Rate

Because dropout rates in Massachusetts’ districts and school are generally low, DESE uses a slightly different approach to setting targets and assigning points for the annual dropout rate indicator than for the other high school indicators. Points are assigned based on change in the dropout rate *by a percentage of the previous year’s rate*, not by a certain number of percentage points. For example, if a school has a dropout rate of 2.0 percent, it can earn full credit by reducing its rate to 1.8 percent (a 10 percent reduction, equivalent to 0.2 percentage points). The same school could exceed its target by reducing its dropout rate to 1.6 percent (a 20 percent reduction, equivalent to 0.4 percentage points). Annual targets are assigned with the goal of reducing the annual dropout rate by 10 percent for each individual district, school, and student group.[[20]](#footnote-21)

# Chronic Absenteeism

The accountability system measures performance against targets for the chronic absenteeism indicator. A student is considered chronically absent if they miss 10 percent or more of their days in membership. In a typical 180-day school year, that is equivalent to missing 18 or more days of school. The chronic absenteeism rate is the percentage of students who are chronically absent.

The Department calculates the chronic absenteeism rate for each district, school, and student group of at least 20 students. The rate includes students enrolled in grades 1 through 12 who have been enrolled in a school or district for 20 or more days at any time during the year. Students in preschool, kindergarten, or grades beyond 12 are not included in district or school rates. Additionally, students who are enrolled in multiple schools in the same district within a given school year are included in district-level chronic absenteeism rates but are not included in any school-level rates.

For 2025 target-setting, DESE used the improvement increments that were calculated and published in 2024, as described below.

In 2019, DESE placed schools into quartiles according to their school percentiles from 2015 to 2017, and then looked at schools within each quartile that demonstrated annual improvement in the chronic absenteeism rate. In doing so, DESE could identify what change looked like across improvers only. By grouping schools according to their school percentiles, DESE was able to set targets based on change demonstrated by schools with similar historical accountability results. At the time, DESE determined that setting targets for the chronic absenteeism indicator based on the median improvement over three years within each quartile allowed for ambitious, yet reasonable improvement increments to be set for each school and group. School-level improvement increments for the chronic absenteeism rate indicator are included in the table below.

Table 19: School-Level Chronic Absenteeism Rate Improvement Increments

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Group** | **Gr. 1-8**  **Q1** | **Gr. 1-8**  **Q2** | **Gr. 1-8**  **Q3** | **Gr. 1-8**  **Q4** | **Gr. 9-12**  **Q1** | **Gr. 9-12**  **Q2** | **Gr. 9-12**  **Q3** | **Gr. 9-12**  **Q4** |
| All Students | -2.2 | -1.5 | -1.3 | -1.1 | -3.0 | -2.3 | -1.3 | -1.1 |
| Lowest Performing[[21]](#footnote-22) | -4.9 | -4.6 | -3.5 | -3.3 | -6.9 | -5.8 | -4.8 | -4.0 |
| High Needs | -2.5 | -2.4 | -2.6 | -2.1 | -3.6 | -3.8 | -2.3 | -3.1 |
| English Learners and Former English Learners | -3.3 | -3.5 | -3.0 | -3.0 | -4.4 | -4.2 | -3.8 | -4.5 |
| Low Income | -2.7 | -3.2 | -3.7 | -4.3 | -4.0 | -5.1 | -4.6 | -4.2 |
| Students with Disabilities | -4.3 | -3.6 | -3.3 | -2.5 | -3.8 | -4.4 | -3.6 | -3.9 |
| American Indian or Alaska Native | -2.2 | -1.5 | -1.3 | -1.1 | -3.0 | -2.3 | -1.3 | -1.1 |
| Asian | -3.2 | -3.3 | -2.9 | -2.1 | -4.4 | -2.6 | -3.1 | -1.9 |
| Black or African American | -3.6 | -3.6 | -3.5 | -3.0 | -3.7 | -3.1 | -3.0 | -3.3 |
| Hispanic or Latino | -3.8 | -4.2 | -3.7 | -4.2 | -3.9 | -4.0 | -3.8 | -4.0 |
| Multi-Race, Not Hispanic or Latino | -2.2 | -1.5 | -1.3 | -1.1 | -3.0 | -2.3 | -1.3 | -1.1 |
| Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander | -2.2 | -1.5 | -1.3 | -1.1 | -3.0 | -2.3 | -1.3 | -1.1 |
| White | -2.9 | -1.8 | -1.4 | -1.2 | -3.6 | -2.5 | -1.4 | -1.4 |

Schools were placed into quartiles based on 2022 accountability percentile data to assign improvement increments, which were added to each school and group’s baseline chronic absenteeism rate to determine the 2025 target for that school or group.[[22]](#footnote-23) Newly eligible schools and groups (i.e., those with insufficient data in 2022 and sufficient data in 2024) were assigned an improvement increment based on the quartile of the school’s 2022 accountability percentile; if none available, they were assigned the quartile 2 improvement increment. To receive a 2025 target, a school or student group must have baseline results for at least 20 students for both the chronic absenteeism indicator and the ELA and mathematics achievement indicators.

At the district level, the process was similar, but because districts do not receive percentiles, all districts were compared to one another. District-level chronic absenteeism rate improvement increments are included in the table below.

Table 20: District-Level Chronic Absenteeism Rate Improvement Increments

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Group** | **Gr. 1-8 Chronic Absenteeism Rate Improvement Increment**  (percentage points) | **Gr. 9-12 Chronic Absenteeism Rate Improvement Increment**  (percentage points) |
| All Students | -1.0 | -1.6 |
| Lowest Performing[[23]](#footnote-24) | -2.1 | -5.3 |
| High Needs | -1.8 | -2.9 |
| English Learners and Former English Learners | -2.5 | -4.1 |
| Low Income | -2.4 | -4.5 |
| Students with Disabilities | -2.4 | -3.5 |
| American Indian or Alaska Native | -1.0 | -1.6 |
| Asian | -2.1 | -2.8 |
| Black or African American | -2.5 | -3.7 |
| Hispanic or Latino | -2.9 | -4.4 |
| Multi-Race, Not Hispanic or Latino | -1.0 | -1.6 |
| Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander | -1.0 | -1.6 |
| White | -1.2 | -1.8 |

To receive a 2025 target, a district or student group must have baseline results for at least 20 students for both the chronic absenteeism indicator and the ELA and mathematics achievement indicators.[[24]](#footnote-25)

1. Targets are not calculated for the Lowest Performing student group in schools ending in grade 3. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
2. Targets are not calculated for the Lowest Performing student group in schools ending in grade 3. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
3. The largest improvement increment assigned to any district, school, or group on the path forward in 2025 is 5.1 scaled score points. This represents the highest increment assigned to any group during the 2019 accountability reporting cycle. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
4. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
5. The largest improvement increment assigned to any district, school, or group on the path forward in 2025 is 5.1 scaled score points. This represents the highest increment assigned to any group during the 2019 accountability reporting cycle. [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
6. Targets are not calculated for the Lowest Performing student group in schools ending in grade 3. [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
7. Targets for single-school districts are set using the school-level increment. [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
8. The largest improvement increment assigned to any district, school, or group on the path forward in 2025 is 5.1 scaled score points. This represents the highest increment assigned to any group during the 2019 accountability reporting cycle. [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
9. The largest improvement increment assigned to any district, school, or group on the path forward in 2025 is 5.1 scaled score points. This represents the highest increment assigned to any group during the 2019 accountability reporting cycle. [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
10. Targets for single-school districts are set using the school-level increment. [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
11. The largest improvement increment assigned to any district, school, or group on the path forward in 2025 is 5.1 scaled score points. This represents the highest increment assigned to any group during the 2019 accountability reporting cycle. [↑](#footnote-ref-12)
12. Targets for single-school districts are set using the school-level increment. [↑](#footnote-ref-13)
13. The largest improvement increment assigned to any district, school, or group on the path forward in 2025 is 5.1 scaled score points. This represents the highest increment assigned to any group during the 2019 accountability reporting cycle. [↑](#footnote-ref-14)
14. Targets for single-school districts are set using the school-level increment. [↑](#footnote-ref-15)
15. The highest target any district, school, or group will receive for the EL progress indicator in 2025 is 95.0 percent. [↑](#footnote-ref-16)
16. A list of courses considered “advanced” for the purposes of accountability reporting is available at <http://www.doe.mass.edu/accountability/lists-tools.html>. [↑](#footnote-ref-17)
17. The highest target any district, school, or group will receive for the four-year cohort graduation rate, extended engagement rate, and advanced coursework completion rate indicators in 2025 is 95.0 percent. [↑](#footnote-ref-18)
18. Targets for single-school districts are set using the school-level increment. [↑](#footnote-ref-19)
19. The highest target any district, school, or group will receive for the four-year cohort graduation rate, extended engagement rate, and advanced coursework completion rate indicators in 2025 is 95.0 percent. [↑](#footnote-ref-20)
20. The lowest target any district, school, or group will receive for the annual dropout rate indicator in 2025 is 1.0 percent. [↑](#footnote-ref-21)
21. [↑](#footnote-ref-22)
22. The lowest target any district, school, or group will receive for the chronic absenteeism rate indicator in 2025 is 1.0 percent. [↑](#footnote-ref-23)
23. Targets are not calculated for the Lowest Performing student group in schools ending in grade 3. [↑](#footnote-ref-24)
24. Targets for single-school districts are set using the school-level increment. [↑](#footnote-ref-25)