Summary of Public Comments on Proposed Changes to the District and School Accountability System for 2022

**Source:** Correspondence received via email (6), July 1, 2022 – July 15, 2022

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| **Individuals Submitting Public Comment** | |
| * Shalimar Colon * Kristen Hughes * Amy Meehan | * Susan Sauve * Sunil Jagannath * Alec Wyeth |

| **Summary of Comments Received** | **Department’s Response** |
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| Chronic absenteeism should not be included as an accountability indicator during a pandemic. (Hughes, Meehan) | No change. The Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) requires states to include at least one indicator of school quality or student success, and the Department’s approved ESSA State Plan identifies chronic absenteeism as that indicator for all schools. However, to mitigate the impact of the pandemic on district, school, and student group chronic absenteeism rates in the 2022 accountability results, the Department is proposing to increase the threshold at which a student is considered chronically absent from 10 percent to 20 percent. |
| Measures of student attendance should not be included in the accountability system because attendance is outside of a school’s control. (Sauve) | No change. See above. |
| Given the challenges of the pandemic, there should be flexibility around the chronic absenteeism indicator. (Colon) | No change. See above. |
| Given the impact of the pandemic on students, both academically and social-emotionally, the two years of data in the accountability system should be weighted equally at 50 percent. (Wyeth) | No change. The Department is proposing to maintain the same weighting of years as was used in the 2019 accountability determinations (i.e., weighting 2019 data at 40 percent and the 2022 data at 60 percent). In doing so, districts, schools, stakeholders, and the Department can make comparisons between the 2022 and 2019 school accountability percentiles, which would be calculated using a consistent weighting formula. |
| The accountability system should give credit to students in grades 9 and 10 who complete advanced courses. (Jagannath) | No change. An historical analysis of Massachusetts course-taking data showed that the state’s advanced course completion rate was higher when considering only students in grades 11 and 12 than when including students in grades 10 through 12. While some individual district rates may vary, trends in district-level rates were consistent as well. As such, the Department elected to limit the calculation to students in grades 11 and 12 within our current accountability system but may consider adjustments to this indicator in the future if the data support a change. |