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|  | Report to the Legislature  Implementation and Fiscal Impact of Innovation Schools |
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| 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  July 2022 |
| Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education  75 Pleasant Street, Malden, MA 02148-4906  Phone 781-338-3000 TTY: N.E.T. Relay 800-439-2370  www.doe.mass.edu |
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| Jeffrey C. Riley  *Commissioner* |  |

July 2022

Dear Members of the General Court:

I am pleased to submit the 2017-2022 Summary 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 meet the needs of their students. Through a collaborative, local approval process, schools may use any or all of the autonomies and flexibilities in the following areas: curriculum, budget, school schedule, staffing, school district policies, and professional development. In fiscal year (FY)2020, grant funding for innovation schools was removed from the state budget. The lack of planning and enhanced implementation grant funds impacted the interest of districts seeking and maintaining innovation school authorization. This event, coupled with staffing transition within districts and at the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (Department), made it difficult for the Department to identify schools and academies operating with innovation school status and ultimately delayed the release of this report to the legislature.

The number of innovation schools and academies in operation has fluctuated over the past 5 years, ranging from a high of 52 schools and academies in FY2018 to a recent low of 29 schools and academies in FY2022. The number of districts that approved a new innovation school or academy model has also fluctuated over time, ranging from a high of 29 districts in FY2018 to recent low of 16 districts in FY2022.

Within this report you will find an overview of the innovation school model; technical assistance support provided by the Department; grant recipients for FY2018 and for FY2019; a status update on grant availability for FY2020 and FY2021; and a current list of innovation schools and academies throughout the Commonwealth.

Sincerely,

Jeffrey C. Riley

Commissioner of Elementary and Secondary Education

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# Introduction

The Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (Department) 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 an overview of the innovation school model; technical assistance support provided by the Department; grant recipients for FY2018 and for FY2019; a status update on grant availability for FY2020 and FY2021; and a current list of innovation schools and academies throughout the Commonwealth.

# 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 the 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 goalsthat 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 pupilallocation 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 local 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 eleven 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.

1. 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.
2. 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.

# Grant Funding

In addition to providing technical assistance and fostering collaboration, the Department supported the innovation schools initiative through competitive FY2018 and FY2019 grant processes. While the innovation school model aspires to be cost-neutral with regard to the longer-term operation of an innovation school, the issuance of competitive grants supported the development and enhanced implementation of innovation schools and academies.

The innovation schools enhancement grant provided district and school support for the enhanced implementation of the autonomies and flexibilities identified in approved innovation plans. The innovation schools planning grant provided funding to support district planning processes needed to develop and establish a new or conversion innovation school.

## FY2018

For FY2018, the Department awarded a total of $100,000 to four districts.

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| **FY2018 Innovation Schools Enhancement Grant Recipients** | | | | |
| **District** | **School** | **Amount Awarded** | **Grade Span** | **Description of fund use** |
| Orange | Dexter Park Innovation School | $30,000 | 3-6 | Establishment of a comprehensive student data collection warehouse; development and training of data teams; and stipends for teachers to review and revise current protocols and practices related to the student study teams and Massachusetts Tiered System of Support framework. |
| Boston | Margarita Muniz Academy | $30,000 | 9-12 | Mathematics curriculum updates for grades 9 and 10; mathematics instruction professional development for teachers in grades 9 and 10; in-kind funding for Mass Promise Fellow, and instructional materials, including Chromebooks for grade 9. |
| Quabbin | International Baccalaureate School at Quabbin | $11,947 | 11-12 | Revisions to the IB course curriculum, assessments, and instructional practices and revisions to grades 9 and 10 science, mathematics, and social studies IB pre-requisite courses. |
| Revere | Paul Revere Innovation School | $28,053 | K-5 | Social and emotional learning professional development for teachers, staff, and building administrators; teacher stipends to develop social and emotional learning parent workshops; and expansion of the Science from Scientist student learning and teacher training hands-on program. |

## FY2019

For FY2019, the Department awarded a total of $200,000 to nine districts.

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| **FY2019 Innovation Schools Enhancement Grant Recipients** | | | | |
| **District** | **School** | **Amount Awarded** | **Grade Span** | **Description of fund use** |
| Boston | Margarita Muniz Academy | $30,000 | 9-12 | Curriculum and instructional materials; Technology access including additional hardware and on-line instructional applications such as Learning Ally; Visit to colleges in and outside of Boston for students in grades 9, 10 and 11 as part of their vision planning. |
| Fitchburg | McKay Arts Academy | $15,000 | PK-8 | Increase engagement for all learners via Universal Design for Learning (UDL) implementation; broaden all teacher knowledge through training from highly trained staff peers to plan innovative lessons by redesigning units following the UDL model. |
| Leominster | Leominster Center for Excellence | $20,298 | 9-12 | Establish an employer advisory committee to develop power standards for the internship component and to provide recommendations for learning targets to meet needs of workforce; Develop and implement a more formalized recruitment and training to enhance the teaching and learning through internships. |
| Lowell | The Career Academy | $19,200 | 9-12 | Fund a Work-based Learning Consultant and Employer Liaison in order to operationalize and scale existing efforts in career pathways programming. |
| Orange | Dexter Park Innovation School | $30,000 | 3-6 | Develop school-based data teams that regularly monitor student data, both behavioral and academic, to improve programming and outcomes for students; provide on-site professional development, consultation, and training to recess teachers. |
| Quaboag | Quaboag Regional Middle Innovation School | $29,740 | 7-8 | Professional development for two new Project Lead the Way science and engineering programs; start the two new Project Lead the Way Classes by purchasing the curriculum and non-consumable supplies for each unit; purchase a three dimensional science, technology, engineering, and mathematics modeling platform for the classroom teacher and 24 students to share; professional development in the senate hearing model. |
| Revere | Paul Revere Innovation School | $15,762 | K-5 | Fund 21 teachers to participate in a 3-day training on Project Based Learning led by the Buck Institute for Education for multiple classroom teachers from each grade, English as a Second Language teachers, specialists, and therapists. |
| Springfield | The Springfield Renaissance School | $30,000 | 6-12 | Provide targeted support to specific sub-group populations that have disproportionately higher rates of absenteeism and disciplinary days. |
| **FY2019 Innovation Schools Planning Grant Recipients** | | | | |
| **District** | **School** | **Amount Awarded** | **Grade Span** | **Description of fund use** |
| Barnstable | Barnstable Community Innovation School | $10,000 | K-3 | Convene a planning committee consisting of the Superintendent, one School Committee Member, one Principal, the Lead Applicant, Teachers, and Parents to develop an innovation school plan to convert a non-renewed Horace Mann charter school. |

## FY2020 to Present

For FY2020, the Innovation Schools line item (7061-9011) was removed as a state subsidy from the state budget. For FY2021, the Innovation Schools account was eliminated.

# Appendix A: Innovation Schools List as of School Year 2021-2022

Based on the number of years approved to operate with innovation status, correspondence with districts, and the submissions of Annual Evaluations over time, twenty-nine innovation schools and academies continue to operate in sixteen school districts across the Commonwealth. These include schools of varying grade levels (e.g., elementary, middle, and high school), school types (e.g., new or conversions schools or academy models), and are established in urban, suburban, and rural communities. Many of these schools are organized around specific themes like the arts, STEM, dual language instruction, alternative education opportunities (dropout prevention and dual enrollment at community colleges), and wraparound services.

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| **District** | **School Name** | **Status (New/Conversion)** | **Grade Span** |
| **Amesbury** | Amesbury Innovation High School | New | 9-12 |
| **Barnstable** | Barnstable Community Innovation School | Conversion | K-3 |
| **Boston** | Jeremiah E Burke High | Conversion | 9-12 |
| **Boston** | Winthrop Elementary School | Conversion | PK-5 |
| **Boston** | Margarita Muniz Academy | New | 9-12 |
| **Boston** | O W Holmes School | Conversion | PK-5 |
| **Fall River** | Edmond Talbot Innovation School | Conversion | 6-8 |
| **Gloucester** | O’Maley Innovation School | Conversion | 6-8 |
| **Greenfield** | Discovery School at Four Corners | Conversion | K-3 |
| **Greater Lawrence Regional Vocational-Technical** | Greater Lawrence Technical School | New | 9-12 |
| **Lowell** | Lowell High School Career Academy | Conversion | 9-12 |
| **New Bedford** | Renaissance Community School for the Arts | Conversion | K-5 |
| **Orange** | Dexter Park | Conversion | 3-6 |
| **Quaboag** | Quaboag Innovation Middle School | Conversion | 7-8 |
| **Quaboag** | Warren Community Elementary Innovation School | Conversion | PK-6 |
| **Quaboag** | West Brookfield Elementary Innovation School | Conversion | PK-6 |
| **Revere** | Paul Revere Innovation School | Conversion | K-5 |
| **Salem** | Bentley Academy Innovation School | Conversion | K-5 |
| **Salem** | Carlton Elementary School | Conversion | K-5 |
| **Salem** | New Liberty Innovation School | New | 9-12 |
| **Somerville** | Winter Hill Community Innovation School | Conversion | K-8 |
| **Springfield** | Springfield Renaissance Innovation School | Conversion | 6-12 |
| **Worcester** | Claremont Academy | Conversion | 7-12 |
| **Worcester** | Goddard Scholars Academy at Sullivan Middle School | Conversion | 6-8 |
| **Worcester** | Goddard School of Science and Technology | Conversion | PK-6 |
| **Worcester** | The Chandler Magnet School | Conversion | PK-6 |
| **Worcester** | University Park Campus School | Conversion | 7-12 |
| **Worcester** | Woodland Academy | Conversion | PK-6 |
| **Worcester** | Worcester Technical STEM Early Career & College High School | Conversion | 9-12 |