

# MASSACHUSETTS: STATE STRATEGY BRIEF

## Ed Trust-Midwest fact sheet about lessons from leading education states

**M**assachusetts is not only leading the U.S. in student learning. If it were its own country, it would be among the top 10 nations in the world for achievement. That's nothing less than remarkable, especially considering that Massachusetts is also a post-industrial

state. What's more, the state has continued to be on a steep trajectory for improvement, including for low-income students and students of color in many subjects. For more information, see ETM's 2014 State of Michigan Education report at [www.edtrustmidwest.org](http://www.edtrustmidwest.org)

### Education Numbers at a Glance, 2013-2014

	Massachusetts	Michigan
Total number of students in public schools (K-12 traditional public and charter)	927,550 <sup>i</sup>	1,519,065 <sup>ii</sup>
Estimated number of charter school students	35,353 (3.8% of student population) <sup>iii</sup>	141,204 (9.3% of student population) <sup>iv</sup>
Total number of public schools (K-12 traditional public and charter)	1,860 <sup>v</sup>	3,392 <sup>vi</sup>
Estimated number of charter schools	82 <sup>vii</sup>	370 <sup>viii</sup>
Percentage of students who qualify for free or reduced price lunch	38.3% <sup>ix</sup>	47.89% <sup>x</sup>
Demographic makeup of public schools	African American: 8.7%, Asian: 6.1% Hispanic: 17.0%, Native American: 0.2% Native Hawaiian, Pacific Islander: 0.1% Multi-Race: 2.9%, White: 64.9% <sup>x</sup>	African American: 18.25%, Asian: 2.92% Hispanic: 6.36%, Native American: 0.75% Native Hawaiian, Pacific Islander: 0.10% Multi-Race: 2.56%, White: 69.07% <sup>xii</sup>
Per Pupil Spending PreK-12, FY2012 <sup>xiii</sup>	\$14,142	\$10,855
Current Spending PreK-12 <sup>xiv</sup> , and Percentage Breakdown from Sources, FY2012 <sup>xv</sup>	\$13.91 billion Federal: 6.3%; State: 39.7%; Local: 54%	\$15.74 billion Federal: 10.6%; State: 55.4%; Local: 34%
Estimated Avg. Salaries of Classroom Teachers, 2013-14	\$73,736 (2nd nationwide) <sup>xvi</sup>	\$61,866 (10th nationwide) <sup>xvii</sup>

## MASSACHUSETTS – STRATEGIES FOR IMPROVEMENT

**M**assachusetts's blueprint for improving education was aligned across stakeholders: state-level advocacy groups, superintendents, the business community, and many K-12 groups all supported standards-based school reform and investment since the state began enacting its blueprint for improvement in the 1990s. It included:

### EFFECTIVE TEACHING AND SCHOOL LEADERSHIP

Massachusetts leaders understand that the key to improving teaching and learning is to promote effective teaching and school leadership. Over the last 20 years, they have made strides in ensuring that more students have access to strong teachers and principals.

- State leaders established teacher performance standards, including annual evaluations of teachers and administrators.<sup>xviii</sup> Educator evaluations are based on student learning growth and achievement scores, observations, and other evidence, such as student surveys.
- Massachusetts raised the expectations for teacher certification in the state.
- The state also holds teacher preparation programs accountable for the performance of teachers they graduate.<sup>xix</sup>

### CAREER- AND COLLEGE-READY EXPECTATIONS FOR ALL K-16 STUDENTS

Massachusetts was a national leader in holding all students to rigorous standards, which included a new comprehensive assessment system. And it didn't stop there.

- In 1993, Massachusetts developed statewide curriculum frameworks and learning standards for all students in core academic subjects.
- Massachusetts joined the Common Core State Standards Initiative in 2009. By 2011, all districts had implemented the standards.<sup>xx</sup> The state also fully aligned its curriculum frameworks to Common Core for pre-schools, districts and educator preparation programs.<sup>xxi</sup>

### SUPPORT FOR ALL TEACHERS

Accountability and high standards can only do so much; without support for teachers in the classroom, students are unlikely to learn at the high levels they need to be prepared for life after high school. Massachusetts invested in its teachers – and to build their capacities.

- The Bay State has been a leader in expanding learning time for students. More time for instruction means that teachers can spend the time necessary to teach deeper content and give students rich, real world

experiences that teach them the critical thinking skills so important in today's knowledge economy.

- Massachusetts also increased professional development for teachers and provided aligned instructional materials.<sup>xxii</sup> And the state implemented training for thousands of educators on the Common Core standards.<sup>xxiii</sup>
- Massachusetts joined other states to develop a rubric to help educators determine the quality, rigor, and alignment of their lessons and units to Common Core standards in ELA and math.<sup>xxiv</sup>

### ADEQUATE AND EQUITABLE FUNDING FOR COMMUNITIES

Massachusetts leaders invested more money into schools and children who most needed it.

- Massachusetts invested more in extended day programs for students, in transportation for special education students, and even in inflation and accounting for pension costs.
- The state also invested in the capacity of teachers and higher-quality teaching and learning.

### CHARTER SCHOOLS' GRAND BARGAIN

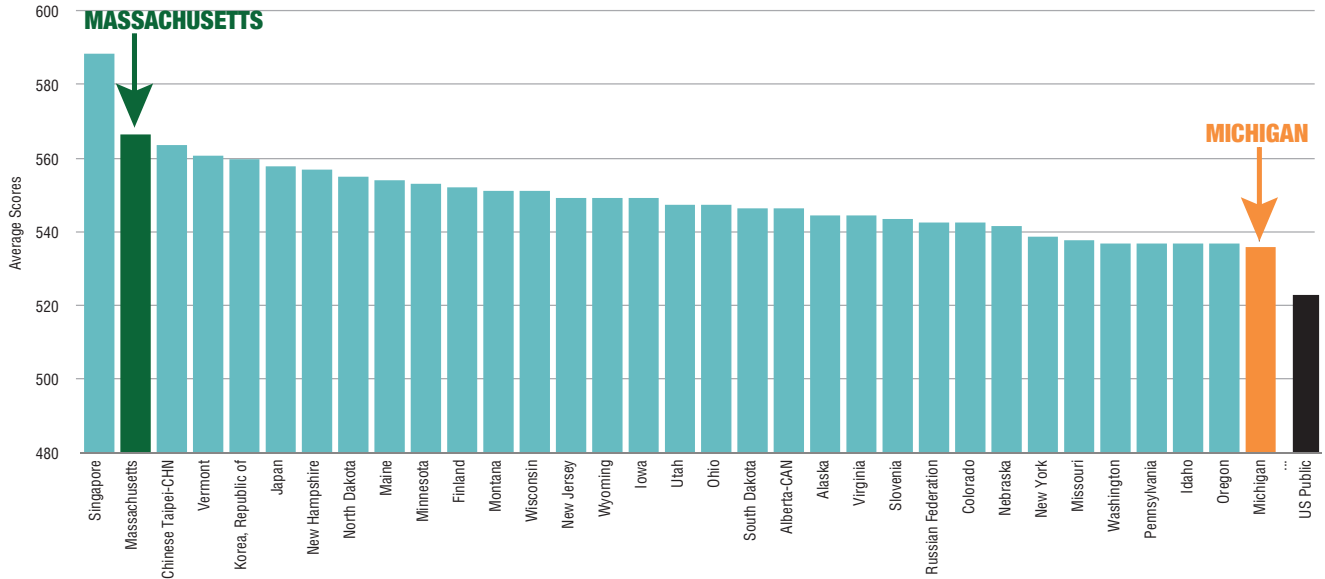
In the early 1990s, Massachusetts leaders decided to open the state's first charter schools – on a hugely important condition: accountability for both opening and for expansion would be strong. This included intentional, regulated high-quality charter school creation with high standards, strong accountability, and a state-guided quality authorizing process. Charter accountability standards include:

- Charter growth is capped at 120 schools<sup>xxv</sup>, with limitations on opening schools in communities with consistently low academic performance. In the lowest performing districts, charters must have a proven track record in order to open.<sup>xxvi</sup>
- The state board of education is the sole authorizer in the state.<sup>xxvii</sup> Charter contracts are in place for five years.
- Charter schools must submit to the state board of education and make available to every charter parent or potential charter parent copies of their annual report. The state department of education has the ability to send evaluation teams to visit each charter school on an annual basis.
- The state board of education gives preference for replication to schools with a record of academic success and financial viability.

Today many Massachusetts' state and charter school leaders argue this strong accountability and oversight has led to its charter sector's high performance.

## MASSACHUSETTS SECOND IN WORLD IN SCIENCE

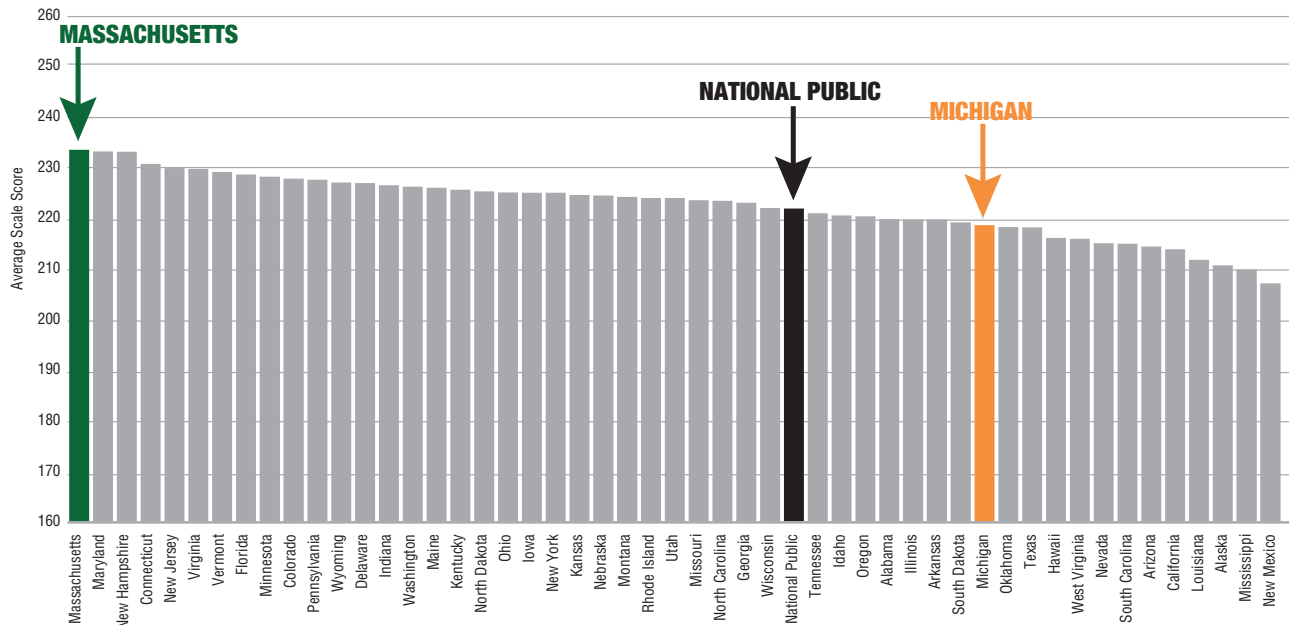
NAEP-TIMSS 2011, 8th grade Science



Note: The Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS) assessment is administered every four years to measure the eighth-grade and fourth-grade math and science achievement of U.S. students compared to those in other countries. In 2011, more than 60 countries and other education systems participated in TIMSS. The NAEP-TIMSS Linking Study predicts 2011 TIMSS mathematics and science scores in eighth-grade for all U.S. states based on their NAEP performance. This chart shows the top-performing countries and states in eighth-grade science, along with the U.S. Public average score.  
Source: U.S. States in a Global Context: NAEP-TIMSS Linking Study

## MASSACHUSETTS LEADS THE NATION IN READING

Average Scale Scores, Grade 4 – NAEP Reading – All Students (2013)



Source: NAEP Data Explorer, NCES (Proficient Scale Score = 238; Basic Scale Score = 208)

### ENDNOTES

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- ii [http://www.michigan.gov/cepi/0,4546,7-113-21423\\_30451--,00.html](http://www.michigan.gov/cepi/0,4546,7-113-21423_30451--,00.html)
- iii National Alliance for Public Charter Schools, Model Law Rankings – Massachusetts. <http://www.publiccharters.org/get-the-facts/law-database/states/MA/>
- iv National Alliance for Public Charter Schools, Model Law Rankings – Michigan. <http://www.publiccharters.org/get-the-facts/law-database/states/MI/>
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- xii United States Census Bureau, "Public Education Finances 2012." May 2014. <http://www2.census.gov/govs/school/12f33pub.pdf>
- xiii United States Census Bureau, "Public Education Finances 2012." May 2014. <http://www2.census.gov/govs/school/12f33pub.pdf>
- xiv United States Census Bureau, "Public Education Finances 2012." May 2014. <http://www2.census.gov/govs/school/12f33pub.pdf>
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- xvi National Education Association, "Rankings and Estimates." March 2014. <http://www.nea.org/assets/docs/NEA-Rankings-and-Estimates-2013-2014.pdf>
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- xviii Crosson, Patricia, "Massachusetts Education Reform Review Commission Report," University of Massachusetts Amherst School of Education, June 1999. <http://sites.donahue.umassp.edu/merrc/research/textreports/evaltext.htm>
- xix State of Massachusetts, Regulations for Educator Licensure and Preparation Program Approval. <http://www2.ed.gov/programs/racetothetop/performance/massachusetts-year-2.pdf>
- xx US Department of Education, "Race to the Top: Massachusetts Report Year 2: School Year 2011-2012." February 2013. <http://www2.ed.gov/programs/racetothetop/performance/massachusetts-year-2.pdf>
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- xxv National Alliance for Public Charter Schools, Model Law Rankings – No Caps. <http://www.publiccharters.org/law-database/caps/>
- xxvi Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, Charter School Accountability. <http://www.doe.mass.edu/charter/acct.html>
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