



Press Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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29 Massachusetts School Districts Named Academic Outperformers by Standard & Poor's

NEW YORK—Standard & Poor's School Evaluation Services today recognized 29 Massachusetts school districts as academic "outperformers."

To be identified as an outperformer by Standard & Poor's, school districts had to report significantly higher percentages of students that scored proficient or above on state reading and math tests than other school districts with similar levels of student poverty in Massachusetts over two school years. Academic achievement levels were compared with the percentage of economically disadvantaged students because they are often correlated.

"We congratulate the students, teachers, administrators and, indeed, the entire communities that support public education in these districts," said William Cox, executive managing director of Standard & Poor's School Evaluation Services. "The data we analyzed show that these 29 school districts had truly noteworthy performances; each district deserves public recognition for its efforts."

Standard & Poor's developed the analysis used to identify outperforming school districts as a way to highlight outstanding academic performance, and to help educators in school districts with similar demographics identify appropriate benchmarks to guide their own improvements.

Achieving proficiency in reading and math for all students by 2014 is one of the goals of the federal No Child Left Behind law. Linking school districts in need of improvement with outperformers that have similar students so that effective practices may be replicated is one method that can help educators reach that target.

Standard & Poor's conducted its outperformer analysis using data provided by the state. The number of economically disadvantaged students in each school district is determined by the percentage of students receiving free or reduced price lunch. Academic performance was determined by using the aggregate percentages of students scoring proficient or better on the state's reading and math tests.

Massachusetts's outperforming districts are: Andover, Belmont, Brookline, Chelsea, Foxborough, Hamilton-Wenham, Harvard, Hingham, Lexington, Longmeadow, Lynn, Medfield, Nashoba, Nauset, Needham, Newton, North Reading, Norwell, Reading, Scituate, Sharon, Somerville, Wayland, Wellesley, Westborough, Westford, Weston, Westwood and Winchester.

The list of outperforming school districts and the analysis used to identify them can be found at www.schoolmatters.com, a service of Standard & Poor's and a project of the National Education Data Partnership. The National Education Data Partnership is a collaboration among the Council of Chief State School Officers, Standard & Poor's School Evaluation Services and the CELT Corp. It is funded by a \$45 million investment from The Broad Foundation and the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation.

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