

Massachusetts Innovation Schools Compared with Rhode Island Empowerment Schools

	How it works in MA	How it could work in RI	Examples of Empowerment in Action
Regulatory/ Statutory Flexibility	The Innovation Plans require state and local approval. If the Commissioner does not approve a waiver requested by the district it may be appealed to the State Board of Education.	The Empowerment Plan requires only local approval. The state will grant any flexibilities requested from law and regulation that are permitted by the Empowerment Act.	<p>A teacher with a secondary (gr. 6-12) science certification could teach a joint 5th-6th grade general science class to students in a multi-year model without needing additional certifications or endorsements.</p> <p>PE requirement can be waived for students participating in after-school sports.</p> <p>Students can earn core course credit from school-identified interdisciplinary courses</p>
School-Based Autonomy	<p>The Innovation Plans require local approval by the School Board, Superintendent, and 2/3rds of teachers at the Innovation School by secret ballot</p> <p>Principal established as instructional and administrative supervisor with responsibility for promoting participatory decision-making among all professional staff</p> <p>Includes curriculum, budgeting, school schedule, calendar, staffing policies and procedures (including waivers or modifications to contracts), district policies and procedures, and professional development</p>	<p>The Empowerment Plans require local approval by the School Board, Superintendent, and 2/3rds of the full-time professional staff at the Empowerment School</p> <p>Principal established as instructional and administrative supervisor with responsibility for promoting participatory decision-making among all professional staff</p> <p>Includes curriculum, budgeting, school schedule, calendar, staffing policies and procedures (including waivers or modifications to contracts), district policies and procedures, and professional development</p>	<p>A school plan could elect to contract for food services from a provider different from the district, consistent with the unique nutrition science program of the school</p> <p>A school's faculty could be exempt from required district PD in lieu of PD better aligned to the schools instructional program</p> <p>A school could adopt a comprehensive assessment system different from the district required assessment system</p> <p>School daily scheduling time requirements could be modified to maximize learning time and meet student needs</p>
Oversight	<p>5 year authorization period, annual review of performance completed by the district and submitted to the state based on the terms of the innovation plan, student achievement, and the health and welfare of students or staff.</p> <p>The state, based on findings, can limit Innovation School autonomies beginning in year 2. The state can revoke Innovation School status beginning in year 3.</p> <p>Schools are required to participate in the statewide assessment and accountability system</p>	<p>3 year authorization period, annual review of performance by the state based on the terms of the empowerment plan, student achievement, and the health and welfare of students or staff.</p> <p>In only extreme cases may the Commissioner recommend to the Council revocation of Empowerment or Open Enrollment designation with notice to the school and school committee.</p> <p>Schools are required to participate in the statewide assessment and accountability system</p>	<p>District and state collaboratively conduct bi-annual performance reviews of the Empowerment School's performance relating to its performance targets established in the Empowerment plan</p> <p>State publishes a state-wide report on all Empowerment schools</p>

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School-Based Contract Flexibility	<p>Variations from the district-union collective bargaining agreement are part of the Innovation Plan with the approval of School Committee, Superintendent, and 2/3rds of teachers at the Innovation School by secret ballot</p>	<p>Variations from the district-union collective bargaining agreement can be amended through the existing district-wide CBA, with the approval of the School Committee, Superintendent, and 2/3rds of district union membership. Amendments do not set precedents for future contract administration or negotiation.</p> <p>The school-based amendments to the CBA can only be denied if the changes to the CBA at the school level would negatively impact another school's or the districts' operations.</p> <p>Approval/Non-approval of school-based CBA amendments must be made within 30 days of the request with the opportunity to appeal non-approval to the Commissioner</p>	<p>Teachers could elect to take on mentor roles within the school with additional responsibilities not included within the collective bargaining agreement</p> <p>Schools could adopt a mutual consent based hiring policy</p> <p>Principal could budget for pay scale flexibility for hard-to-staff STEM positions commensurate with the school's programmatic focus</p>
Open Enrollment	<p>Any district can opt to receive non-resident students and does not need to be designated an Innovation school. Innovation schools can choose to participate (1.6% of all public school students participated in 2016)</p> <p>Regardless of whether Innovation Schools choose open enrollment, they may establish admissions criteria</p> <p>Innovation Statute explicitly allows multiple districts to collaborate on an Innovation School</p>	<p>Only Empowerment Schools can elect to receive non-resident students.</p> <p>Regardless of whether Empowerment Schools choose open enrollment, they may establish admissions criteria</p>	<p>An Empowerment School enrolls twenty students from three neighboring districts after filling all its resident student demand for seats beginning in 2018-19</p> <p>An Empowerment school establishes the criteria that all applicants must complete a summer enrichment preparatory program before enrollment</p>
Funding	<p>Tuition is calculated as 75% of the average per-pupil expenditure amount of the receiving district, with a \$5,000 cap unless the student is in special education.</p> <p>A School Choice Trust Fund further distributes for every non-resident student an amount matching the above tuition to each receiving school district</p>	<p>For resident students, the per-student allocation is determined by the funding formula. The superintendent and the Empowerment School principal can also agree to an alternative allocation.</p> <p>For open enrollment students, the tuition is calculated as 100% of the average per-pupil expenditure amount of the sending district.</p>	<p>A district of 100 resident students has an average total PPE of \$15,000 and a total budget of \$1.5 million. Of the 100 resident students, 2 attend an Empowerment School so the sending district pays the empowerment school \$30,000.</p>

Massachusetts reference documents:

Innovation Schools Statute: <https://malegislature.gov/Laws/GeneralLaws/PartI/TitleXII/Chapter71/Section92>

School Choice Statute: <https://malegislature.gov/Laws/GeneralLaws/PartI/TitleXII/Chapter76/Section12B>

Innovation School Regulations: <http://www.doe.mass.edu/lawsregs/603cmr48.html?section=all>

School Choice Regulations: <http://www.doe.mass.edu/lawsregs/603cmr10.html?section=all>

Innovation School FAQ: <http://www.doe.mass.edu/redesign/innovation/faq.docx>

School Choice Data: <http://www.doe.mass.edu/finance/schoolchoice/choice16.html>

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