

PUBLIC OPINION OF EDUCATION

Massachusetts
2014



The Rennie Center conducted a public opinion poll in the six New England states in early 2014. The poll sought to gain information about views of public education and support for different learning approaches. Massachusetts data represents the responses of 380 individuals who live in the Commonwealth.*

How well do you think public schools in the state are working?



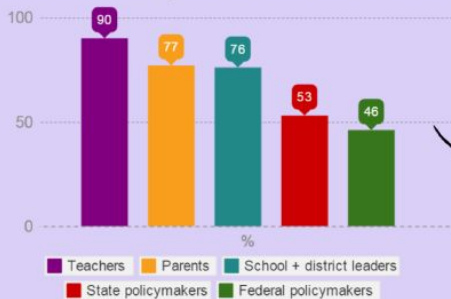
- Public schools work well now (9%)
- Some changes are needed (47%)
- Major changes are needed (34%)
- Complete overhaul is needed (11%)

Among those who think "major changes" or "a complete overhaul" is needed...

- 78% desire change in the way students receive their education (e.g. hands-on projects out of school)
- 68% want more effective teachers
- 65% seek changes in school funding
- 43% would like less testing for students

Confidence in decision-makers to improve public education

Those who have a "great deal" and "some" confidence:



Confidence in federal policymakers has increased since 2012...

...but confidence in parents and school + district leaders has decreased

Respondents 'strongly agree' with the following elements of learning environments



High school students should receive credit for taking courses at a local college

78%



77 percent

Schools should be structured so that students have the opportunity to advance to more challenging content at their own pace once they've demonstrated skills to do so



During school hours, students should be able to earn credit for real world experiences, such as internships

71 percent



Students are assessed on the skills they've acquired, not just on things they know

49 percent

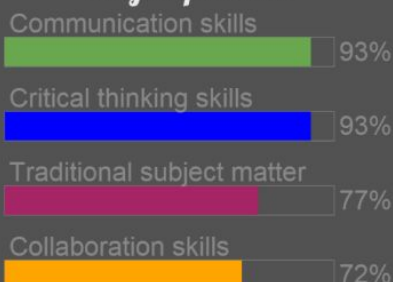


Students should be able to receive credit for state-approved courses over the internet

28 percent

How important is it for students to learn these skills in school?

"Very important"



Support for traditional subject matter has dropped from 89% in 2012...

...while support for collaboration skills has increased from 67%