

DFER-MASSACHUSETTS
2015-2016 LEGISLATIVE SCORECARD

DEMOCRATS
for EDUCATION REFORM



“Our debate seems stuck between those who want to dismantle the system and those who would defend an indefensible status quo, between those who say money makes no difference in education and those who want more money without any demonstration that it will be put to good use.”

President Barack Obama, 2010 State of the Union

WHAT IS A DFER?

A Democrat for Education Reform—a DFER—is a Democrat who advances policies that are good for kids, even when the politics are tough. We support courageous leaders in our party who champion kids and their educational needs, even when powerful special interests oppose change.

As progressive Democrats, we believe government can and must improve people’s lives. To do so, it must experiment, measure outcomes, and replicate what works. We fight for this progressive ideal, and we support education policies that better serve all children, especially those from historically underserved communities. In doing so, we stand alongside leaders in our party like Barack Obama, Hillary Clinton, Cory Booker and hundreds of others throughout the country.



“Education then, beyond all other devices of human origin, is the great equalizer of the conditions of men, the balance-wheel of the social machinery.”

Horace Mann

WHO BACKS PROGRESSIVE EDUCATION REFORM IN MASSACHUSETTS?

Massachusetts has been a pioneer in progressive education reform since 1993, when the Democratic-led state legislature passed the Education Reform Act, leading the Commonwealth to develop strong educational standards, measure educational outcomes for students, create innovative schools chartered by the state, and invest more resources in our schools.

In 2010, the legislature (again led by Democrats) built upon that successful formula as a direct result of President Obama’s Race to the Top competitive grant program, passing another education reform law that allowed the expansion of high-quality charter schools and empowered the state and districts to more effectively intervene in struggling schools. These two laws have turned Massachusetts into the nation’s leader in public education—but there is still much work to do, as our achievement gaps remain among the country’s widest and most persistent.



As demonstrated by its direct influence on the 2010 reform law, the Obama administration consistently pushed a vision of educational improvement that coupled reform—high quality public school choice and broad accountability—with additional revenue. DFER is committed to advancing this strategy for school improvement and preserving President Obama’s legacy of progressive education reform.



This is a pivotal time for public education in Massachusetts. The leadership of the Massachusetts Teachers Association has vowed to roll back the reforms that have yielded increased access to high-quality education in Massachusetts. President Trump, meanwhile, threatens to defund resources targeted at our most vulnerable students while dismantling the accountability programs that have measured educational outcomes to provide data we need to improve our schools.

During the 2015-2016 legislative session, Massachusetts legislators had several opportunities to stand up for progressive education reform—or oppose it. DFER rated Democrats in the state legislature based on their votes and public positions on several key issues and pieces of legislation, including charter school expansion, preservation of Massachusetts’ strong accountability program, support for the state’s proven school turnaround measures, expansion of high-quality pre-K, and the first of two votes to place the DFER-supported Fair Share Amendment on the ballot in 2018.

METHODOLOGY

To ascertain each legislator's level of support for progressive education reform, we looked at his or her votes and public positions.

The House did not vote on any major education reform bills in the 2015-2016 session, so the best benchmark of a Representative's stance remains his or her vote on a 2014 bill that included a moderate charter school cap-lift and increased flexibility in underperforming schools. We thus included this bill in our calculation, even though it was considered in the 2014-2015 session. The Senate voted on two versions of this 2014 bill: one was equivalent to the House bill and one was a weaker (though still positive) version drafted by the Senate Ways and Means Committee. Neither version passed.

In the 2015-2016 legislative session, the Senate passed the RISE Act, which included an amendment giving a local school committee approval authority over proposed charter school openings within the boundaries of its district. DFER opposes removing the state's ability to create or expand new options in districts that are not effectively serving vulnerable populations.

We assigned a percentage score to each legislator, basing the score on these votes and other relevant public positions (such as bill co-sponsorships). This score was derived using a point system. For example, we gave one point to each legislator for taking a DFER-supported position on a variety of bills and 2 points to legislators who supported either version of the 2014 bill, which included a moderate charter cap lift and broader flexibility for Level 3 and 4 schools. For 2016's Question 2, we gave one point to any legislator who did not publicly oppose Question 2, and 2 points to any legislator who publicly supported Question 2. We then derived each legislator's total points out of the number of points that legislator could have possibly received, reaching our percentage.



House of Representatives

Representative	District	Score
James Arciero	Second Middlesex	75%
Brian Ashe	Second Hampden	33%
Cory Atkins	Fourteenth Middlesex	83%
Bruce Ayers	First Norfolk	50%
Ruth Balsler	Twelfth Middlesex	67%
Christine Barber	Thirty-fourth Middlesex	70%
Jennifer Benson	Thirty-seventh Middlesex	42%
<i>Garrett Bradley</i>	<i>Third Plymouth</i>	60%
Paul Brodeur	Thirty-second Middlesex	67%
Antonio Cabral	Thirteenth Bristol	58%
Dan Cahill*	Tenth Essex	50%
Thomas Calter	Twelfth Plymouth	42%
Linda Dean Campbell	Fifteenth Essex	67%
James Cantwell	Fourth Plymouth	25%
Gailanne Cariddi	First Berkshire	42%
Evandro Carvalho	Fifth Suffolk	75%
Gerry Cassidy*	Ninth Plymouth	57%
Tackey Chan	Second Norfolk	50%
Nick Collins	Fourth Suffolk	83%
Edward Coppinger	Tenth Suffolk	58%
Brendan Crighton	Eleventh Essex	60%
Claire Cronin	Eleventh Plymouth	33%
Dan Cullinane	Twelfth Suffolk	25%
Mark Cusack	Fifth Norfolk	75%
Josh Cutler	Sixth Plymouth	25%
Michael Day	Thirty-first Middlesex	50%
Marjorie Decker	Twenty-fifth Middlesex	17%
Robert DeLeo	Nineteenth Suffolk	83%
Brian Dempsey	Third Essex	75%
Marcos Devers	Sixteenth Essex	75%
<i>Stephen DiNitalo</i>	<i>Third Worcester</i>	67%

Representative	District	Score
Diana DiZoglio	Fourteenth Essex	67%
Daniel Donahue	Sixteenth Worcester	58%
Paul Donato, Sr.	Thirty-fifth Middlesex	75%
Michelle DuBois	Tenth Plymouth	40%
James Dwyer	Thirtieth Middlesex	42%
Carolyn Dykema	Eighth Middlesex	67%
Lori Ehrlich	Eighth Essex	67%
Tricia Farley-Bouvier	Third Berkshire	67%
John Fernandes	Tenth Worcester	58%
Ann-Margaret Ferrante	Fifth Essex	50%
Michael Finn	Sixth Hampden	50%
Carole Fiola	Sixth Bristol	67%
Gloria Fox	Seventh Suffolk	50%
William Galvin	Sixth Norfolk	58%
Sean Garballey	Twenty-third Middlesex	42%
Denise Garlick	Thirteenth Norfolk	75%
Colleen Garry	Thirty-sixth Middlesex	0%
Carmine Gentile	Thirteenth Middlesex	30%
Thomas Golden, Jr.	Sixteenth Middlesex	58%
Carlos Gonzalez	Tenth Hampden	90%
Kenneth Gordon	Twenty-first Middlesex	58%
Danielle Gregoire	Fourth Middlesex	33%
Patricia Haddad	Fifth Bristol	100%
Stephan Hay*	Third Worcester	57%
Jonathan Hecht	Twenty-ninth Middlesex	58%
Paul Heroux	Second Bristol	42%
Kate Hogan	Third Middlesex	75%
Russell Holmes	Sixth Suffolk	75%
Kevin Honan	Seventeenth Suffolk	83%
Daniel Hunt	Thirteenth Suffolk	50%
Louis Kafka	Eighth Norfolk	67%
Jay Kaufman	Fifteenth Middlesex	67%
Mary Keefe	Fifteenth Worcester	17%
Kay Khan	Eleventh Middlesex	58%

Representative	District	Score
Peter Kocot	First Hampshire	58%
Robert Koczera	Eleventh Bristol	67%
Stephen Kulik	First Franklin	58%
John Lawn	Tenth Middlesex	50%
David Linsky	Fifth Middlesex	67%
Jay Livingstone	Eighth Suffolk	83%
Adrian Madaro*	First Suffolk	71%
Timothy Madden	Barnstable, Dukes, & Nantucket	83%
John Mahoney	Thirteenth Worcester	58%
Elizabeth Malia	Eleventh Suffolk	42%
Brian Mannel	Second Barnstable	75%
Ronald Mariano	Third Norfolk	67%
Paul Mark	Second Berkshire	25%
Christopher Markey	Ninth Bristol	67%
Joseph McGonagle, Jr.	Twenty-eighth Middlesex	70%
Paul McMurtry	Eleventh Norfolk	75%
James Miceli	Nineteenth Middlesex	8%
Aaron Michlewitz	Third Suffolk	75%
Rady Mom	Eighteenth Middlesex	60%
Frank Moran	Seventeenth Essex	92%
Michael Moran	Eighteenth Suffolk	83%
James Murphy	Fourth Norfolk	58%
David Nangle	Seventeenth Middlesex	75%
Harold Naughton, Jr.	Twelfth Worcester	58%
James O'Day	Fourteenth Worcester	58%
Jerry Parisella	Sixth Essex	58%
Sarah Peake	Fourth Barnstable	67%
Alice Peisch	Fourteenth Norfolk	92%
Thomas Petrolati	Seventh Hampden	58%
William Pignatelli	Fourth Berkshire	67%
Denise Provost	Twenty-seventh Middlesex	17%
Angelo Puppolo, Jr.	Twelfth Hampden	33%
David Rogers	Twenty-fourth Middlesex	50%
John Rogers	Twelfth Norfolk	58%

Representative	District	Score
Dennis Rosa	Fourth Worcester	50%
Jeffrey Roy	Tenth Norfolk	67%
Byron Rushing	Ninth Suffolk	75%
Daniel Ryan	Second Suffolk	50%
Jeffrey Sánchez	Fifteenth Suffolk	75%
Tom Sannicandro	Seventh Middlesex	67%
Angelo Scaccia	Fourteenth Suffolk	58%
Paul Schmid III	Eighth Bristol	75%
John Scibak	Second Hampshire	67%
Alan Silvia	Seventh Bristol	83%
Frank Smizik	Fifteenth Norfolk	8%
Theodore Speliotis	Thirteenth Essex	58%
Thomas Stanley	Ninth Middlesex	17%
Ellen Story	Third Hampshire	67%
William Straus	Tenth Bristol	75%
Benjamin Swan, Sr.	Eleventh Hampden	33%
Walter Timilty	Seventh Norfolk	50%
Timothy Toomey, Jr.	Twenty-sixth Middlesex	58%
Jose Tosado	Ninth Hampden	60%
Paul Tucker	Seventh Essex	50%
Steven Ultrino	Thirty-third Middlesex	50%
Aaron Vega	Fifth Hampden	50%
John Velis	Fourth Hampden	17%
RoseLee Vincent	Sixteenth Suffolk	67%
Joseph Wagner	Eighth Hampden	75%
Chris Walsh	Sixth Middlesex	67%
Thomas Walsh*	Twelfth Essex	57%
Jonathan Zlotnik	Second Worcester	67%

A legislator's name is *italicized* if he or she left the legislature before the end of the session. If a legislator's name is followed by an asterisk (*), he or she entered the legislature through a special election after the session started.

Senate

Senator	District	Score
Michael Barrett	Third Middlesex	93%
Joseph Boncore*	First Suffolk and Middlesex	50%
Michael Brady*	Second Plymouth and Bristol	8%
William Brownsberger	Second Suffolk and Middlesex	57%
Harriette Chandler	First Worcester	43%
Sonia Chang-Diaz	Second Suffolk	79%
Cynthia Stone Creem	First Middlesex and Norfolk	43%
Sal DiDomenico	Middlesex and Suffolk	21%
Kenneth Donnelly	Fourth Middlesex	29%
Eileen Donoghue	First Middlesex	43%
Benjamin Downing	Berkshire, Hampshire, Franklin, and Hampden	71%
James Eldridge	Middlesex and Worcester	21%
Jennifer Flanagan	Worcester and Middlesex	36%
Linda Dorcena Forry	First Suffolk	79%
Anne Gobi	Worcester, Hampden, Hampshire, and Middlesex	42%
Patricia Jehlen	Second Middlesex	7%
Brian Joyce	Norfolk, Bristol, and Plymouth	64%
John Keenan	Norfolk and Plymouth	36%
Eric Lesser	First Hampden and Hampshire	50%
Jason Lewis	Fifth Middlesex	29%
Barbara L'Italien	Second Essex and Middlesex	30%
Joan Lovely	Second Essex	36%
Thomas McGee	Third Essex	21%
Mark Montigny	Second Bristol and Plymouth	43%
Michael Moore	Second Worcester	36%
Kathleen O'Connor Ives	First Essex	36%
Marc Pacheco	First Plymouth and Bristol	14%
<i>Anthony Petruccelli</i>	<i>First Suffolk and Middlesex</i>	90%
Michael Rodrigues	First Bristol and Plymouth	93%
Stanley Rosenberg	Hampshire, Franklin, and Worcester	43%
Michael Rush	Norfolk and Suffolk	43%

Senator	District	Score
Karen Spilka	Second Middlesex and Norfolk	43%
James Timilty	Bristol and Norfolk	29%
James Welch	Hampden	21%
Daniel Wolf	Cape and Islands	43%

A legislator's name is *italicized* if he or she left the legislature before the end of the session. If a legislator's name is followed by an asterisk (*), he or she entered the legislature through a special election after the session started. Senator Michael Brady started the session in the House of Representatives and was elected to the Senate through a special election after the start of the session. We list him only in the Senate portion of this document, though we took into account his votes and positions in both the House and the Senate when deriving his score.

PHOTO CREDITS

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