



Massachusetts Department of  
ELEMENTARY & SECONDARY  
EDUCATION

## **Report to the Legislature School Redesign: Expanded Learning Time to Support Student Success**

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Line Item 7061-9412  
August 2012

**Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education**  
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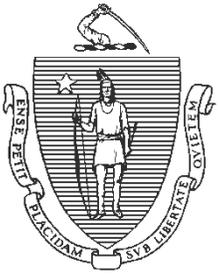
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# Massachusetts Department of Elementary & Secondary Education

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August 2012

Dear Members of the General Court:

I am pleased to submit this Report to the Legislature: *School Redesign: Expanding Learning Time to Support Student Success*, pursuant to Chapter 68 of the Acts of 2011, line item 7061-9412.

The *School Redesign: Expanded Learning Time Initiative (ELT)* began in FY06 when planning grants were first included in the state budget. The vision of this bold educational experiment is to reshape the school calendar to provide all students with a well-rounded education. The initiative requires the addition of at least 300 more hours to school schedules in order to:

- Provide students with more core instructional opportunity in math, literacy, science and other core subjects to support student achievement;
- Integrate enrichment and applied learning opportunities into the school day to motivate and engage students; and
- Provide educators with increased opportunity to plan together and to participate in professional development with other teachers and in collaboration with their partnering community-based organizations.

The FY12 state budget included a \$13.9 million appropriation for ELT, which allowed 19 schools to continue implementing ELT. Over 10,000 students attend ELT schools during the 2011–12 school year.

The Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (“the Department”) continues to contract with Abt Associates of Cambridge to conduct a comprehensive evaluation of implementation and outcomes of the ELT initiative. Findings are based on data collected through interviews and focus groups with staff from the state, districts, schools, and community partners, as well as with parents of students in ELT schools.

The evaluation has demonstrated that schools are meeting the core requirements of the program. In particular, they allocated significantly more time for core academics, non-core courses, and enrichment opportunities than would have been expected in the absence of ELT. Teachers in ELT schools report greater satisfaction with the length of the school day, and fewer ELT teachers report student academic performance and homework completion as a problem area.

That being said, the evaluation has also revealed substantial variation across schools in the implementation and the outcomes from the program. Combining various data sources into an index of overall implementation of the ELT model, Abt found that total implementation scores for ELT schools ranged from 5 to 22 points (out of 24 possible), while matched comparison schools ranged from 2 to 12. This suggests that the depth of implementation ranges widely, and in some cases matched comparison schools may be implementing many of the same initiatives.

Descriptive analyses show increases for many schools in both overall student proficiency relative to their last pre-ELT school year and student growth relative to other students who performed similarly on prior state tests. However, performance in matched comparison schools also improved, so on average most student outcomes look similar for ELT and comparison schools. Nonetheless, the academic gains in some ELT schools are substantial and merit further investigation. Indeed, the success of this program in some schools has led to an increased interest in expanding time through other grant programs, such as the federal School Improvement Grants, the funding cornerstone of our state's school turnaround efforts.

To better guide future investment in expanded learning time models, ESE staff members are focusing on developing a better understanding of the implications of this variation in ELT implementation. We believe that ELT can drive great success if we can identify the practices that distinguish strong from weak ELT schools. To this end, we continue to work with Abt Associates to generate more information on the variation in impact of ELT schools.

If you have questions, please feel free to contact me or Jeff Wulfson, Deputy Commissioner, at 781-338-6500.

Sincerely,

Mitchell D. Chester, Ed.D.  
Commissioner of Elementary and Secondary Education

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## Introduction

The Department of Elementary and Secondary Education respectfully submits this *Report to the Legislature: School Redesign: Expanding Learning Time to Support Student Success* pursuant to Chapter 68 of the Acts of 2011, line item 7061-9412 addressing the following:

*“provided further, that the department shall issue an annual report, not later than February 2, 2012, on the implementation of plans in all participating districts; provided further, that the report shall include, but not be limited to, the names of schools and school districts participating, the number of students attending these schools and the nature and type of changes made in participating schools as a result of this program; provided further, that the report shall also include an anticipated budget for this program for the next fiscal year and a breakdown of the distribution of the \$1,300 per student by school;”*

## Overview

The Commonwealth’s *School Redesign: Expanded Learning Time Initiative* (ELT) was launched in FY06 when an appropriation to support planning grants was first included in the state budget. Participating districts are expected to formulate a plan for innovative redesign of the use of student and teacher time so that all students enrolled in the school have more opportunities to engage in, and teachers have more time to prepare to deliver, challenging, research-based, and engaging learning experiences. Expanded Learning Time enables districts to expand the school day and/or school year schedule in selected schools by 300 or more hours per year in order to:

- Provide students with more time to engage in math, literacy, science, and other core subject learning, to support their acquisition of essential knowledge and skills;
- Integrate enrichment and applied learning opportunities into the school day to motivate and engage students; and
- Provide educators with dedicated time to work together to plan classroom instruction, evaluate student progress, participate in school-based professional development activities, communicate with parents, and collaborate with community-based organizational partners.

At the end of a one- or two-year planning period, districts submit ELT school redesign plans to the Department for approval. After review and approval of the school redesign plans, selected districts are eligible to apply for ELT implementation funding, \$1,300 per enrolled student at each ELT school. This allocation is intended to cover increased operating costs associated with the expanded school day or year.

Funded by a \$6.5 million legislative appropriation for the ELT initiative, the first ten ELT schools, located in five school districts, began implementing their redesigned school schedules in September 2006. The FY12 state budget included a \$13.9 million appropriation for ELT, enabling 19 schools in 9 districts, serving over 10,000 students, to operate redesigned schools with expanded learning time.

The districts, schools, and number of students currently participating in the ELT initiative are listed in the table below:

**Table 1: Schools Currently Implementing ELT, School Year 2011–2012**

District	School	Cohort	Grade span	Students served*
Boston	Boston Arts Academy	2007	9–12	382
	Clarence R. Edwards	2006	6–8	534
	James P. Timilty	2006	6–8	701
	Mario Umana Academy	2006	6–8**	514
Cambridge	Fletcher Maynard	2006	PK–8	240
	Martin Luther King Jr.	2006	PK–8	275
Chelsea	Joseph A. Browne Middle	2008	5–8	535
Fall River	Carlton M. Vivieros	2008	K–5	750
	Matthew J. Kuss	2006	6–8	639
	North End “Sylvia”	2007	K–5	596
Fitchburg	Arthur M. Longsjo	2008	5–8	553
Greenfield	Greenfield Middle	2007	5–8	444
	Newton	2007	K–4	200
Malden	Ferryway	2007	K–8	892
	Salemwood	2006	K–8	1,223
Revere	A.C. Whelan Elementary	2008	K–5	762
	Garfield Middle	2008	6–8	442
Worcester	City View	2007	K–6	579
	Jacob Hiatt Magnet	2006	K–6	420
<b>Totals</b>				<b>10,167</b>

\* *Students served is projected enrollment based on October 2010 and March 2011 SIMS data.*

\*\* *Umana is now a K–8 school. ESE funds the ELT program for grades 6–8; Boston funds it for K–5.*

*Source: ESE Office of Charter Schools and School Redesign.*

To date, most of the districts participating in the ELT initiative have elected to expand time in the participating school(s) by lengthening the school day, not the school year. In all cases, the participating schools have increased the amount of time in their schedules so that they are operating at least 300 more hours longer than is average for students in other schools within each district.

## FY12 Budget

Based on projected student enrollment, the following table demonstrates the FY12 grant distribution of the \$1,300 per student by school and district.

**Table 2: FY12 ELT Grant Distribution**

District	School	School allocation	District allocation
Boston	Boston Arts Academy	\$496,600	\$2,770,300
	Clarence R. Edwards	\$694,200	
	James P. Timilty	\$911,300	
	Mario Umana Academy	\$668,200	
Cambridge	Fletcher Maynard	\$312,000	\$669,500
	Martin Luther King Jr.	\$357,500	
Chelsea	Joseph A. Browne Middle	\$695,500	\$695,500
Fall River	Carlton M. Vivieros	\$975,000	\$2,580,500
	Matthew J. Kuss	\$830,700	
	North End "Sylvia"	\$774,800	
Fitchburg	Arthur M. Longsjo	\$718,900	\$718,900
Greenfield	Greenfield Middle	\$557,200	\$837,200
	Newton	\$260,000	
Malden	Ferryway	\$1,159,600	\$2,749,500
	Salemwood	\$1,589,900	
Revere	A.C. Whelan Elementary	\$990,600	\$1,565,200
	Garfield Middle	\$574,600	
Worcester	City View	\$752,700	\$1,298,700
	Jacob Hiatt Magnet	\$546,000	
<b>Total</b>			<b>\$13,885,300</b>

Source: ESE Office of Charter Schools and School Redesign.

## Monitoring of ELT Schools

Each year, the Department administers a reapplication process that requires each ELT school and district to submit information about its current ELT redesign and plans for improvements in the upcoming year. Beginning with the 2009–2010 school year, the Department implemented two additional structures designed to monitor the implementation and performance of individual ELT schools and districts. First, the Department began conducting full, one and a half day site visits to those ELT schools in their fourth year of redesign implementation. The purpose of these visits is to document the school's performance and progress over time, corroborating and augmenting the information reported in the school's reapplication. Second, the Department instituted an *ELT Performance Agreement* process requiring schools to set measurable objectives in the three areas

related to the use of expanded time: improved academic outcomes; improved teacher leadership and collaboration; and additional integrated enrichment opportunities. Each goal is further clarified by common objectives as well as measures set by the school for attainment within a specified timeframe. The goals set in the three areas are directly linked to the *ELT Expectations for Implementation* to deepen the implementation of the ELT Expectations and improve student achievement. Every ELT school has an ELT Performance Agreement, signed by both the school principal and the district superintendent.

As of December, 2011, the Department has further refined the Performance Agreement document in order to drive stronger focus and accountability in ELT implementation. Cohort I schools (2006) are currently the first group to begin implementation with the revised ELT Performance Agreement, with Cohort II (2007) scheduled to do the same in December, 2012, prior to the expiration of their current performance agreement. Cohort III (2008) will do the same in December, 2013.

In addition, the timeline to meet goals and objectives as reflected in performance agreements has been tightened in the revised template, giving schools three years rather than five to successfully meet their objectives. Site visits will now occur the year prior to performance agreement expiration dates. In the third year of implementation, a determination will be made regarding continued funding. This determination will be made based on site visit documentation and success in meeting the objectives stated and agreed upon by the school in the performance agreement. Should the Department determine that funding for a particular school(s) will be discontinued due to failure to meet the terms of the ELT Performance Agreement, notice will be given and year four will provide time for the district and school to inform all stakeholders of the determination and to plan accordingly.

In collaboration with Massachusetts 2020, the Department continues to learn about the implementation of ELT at the school level and its variation among participating schools. In several key ways, the implementation of ELT varies considerably across schools. For example, the amount of time added for core academics varies from 3 to 9 hours a week across participating elementary schools. Furthermore, the implementation of time for teachers to collaborate and receive professional development is challenging and done differently in participating schools. We have learned that additional enrichment opportunities are purposefully becoming deeper and more focused.

## **Evaluation of ELT Initiative**

The Department continues to contract with Abt Associates of Cambridge, MA, to conduct a six-year, comprehensive evaluation of the ELT initiative, funded by a research grant from the Institute of Education Sciences at the U.S. Department of Education. The evaluation is designed to answer the following questions:

- 1) How has ELT been implemented in schools that received ELT grants?
- 2) What are the outcomes of ELT for schools, teachers, and students?
- 3) What is the relationship between ELT implementation and outcomes?

The executive summary of the most recent evaluation report, covering school year 2010–2011, is included as an appendix to this legislative report. The full report is posted online at <http://abtassociates.com/Reports/2012/-ELT-Year-5-Final-Report.aspx>.

Key findings include:

*Implementation of core components of the ELT model*

- ELT schools spent more time on core academics, enrichment, and collaborative planning time than would have been expected in the absence of ELT.
- Most ELT schools had identified a core academic focus and school-wide instructional practices informed by data.
- Nearly all students participated in enrichment activities, though the amount of time allocated and the frequency varied.
- Over half of ELT schools relied on partner organizations to provide some enrichment.
- Two-thirds of ELT teachers participated in collaborative planning time weekly or more frequently, and very few reported never having participated.
- Combining the various aspects of ELT implementation into an overall index, total implementation scores for ELT schools ranged from 5 to 22 points (out of 24 possible), while matched comparison schools ranged from 2 to 12.
- Many comparison schools appeared to be implementing at least some of the core components of the ELT model.

*Student and teacher outcomes*

- A significantly higher proportion of teachers in ELT schools reported that the length of the day allowed them to accomplish their teaching goals and cover the amount of instructional material their students need to learn than would be expected in the absence of ELT.
- Similarly, a significantly higher proportion of teachers in ELT schools report that they are satisfied with the amount of time available for core academics, academic support, enrichment activities, and collaborative planning.
- Both students and teachers report greater fatigue in ELT schools than would be expected in the absence of ELT.
- Significantly fewer students in ELT schools reported that: they look forward to going to school; all of their classes are important to them; and they like the length of their school day, than would be expected in the absence of ELT.
- Descriptive analyses show increases for many schools in both overall student proficiency relative to their last pre-ELT school year and student growth relative to other students who performed similarly on prior state tests. However, performance in matched comparison schools also improved, so on average most student outcomes look similar for ELT and comparison schools.

- Using a quasi-experimental interrupted time series research design, MCAS grade 5 science scores were significantly higher in ELT than matched comparison schools.
- Exploratory descriptive analysis linking the level of implementation in ELT schools and student achievement outcomes indicated no clear patterns or relationships.

## **Conclusion**

With fiscal support from the Massachusetts state legislature, 19 schools in 9 school districts operate using a redesigned school day. In the 2011–2012 school year, over 10,000 students attend schools that expand their schedules at least 300 additional hours beyond the district average. The initiative provides for exposure to new learning and enrichment opportunities for students and professional collaboration, growth and development for teachers. Grant monies allow for schools to expand their day to improve student outcomes in core academic subjects, broaden enrichment opportunities, and improve teacher instruction. State resources support the ELT initiative. Without the \$1,300 per pupil allocation appropriated by the Legislature, schools operating ELT redesigned days could not be sustained by district support alone.

## Appendix A: Chapter 68 of the Acts of 2011

7061-9412... For grants to cities, towns and regional school districts for the purpose of planning for and implementing expanded learning time in the form of longer school days or school years at selected schools; provided, that implementation grants shall only be provided under this item to schools and districts which submitted qualifying applications which were approved by the department in fiscal year 2011 and which include a minimum of an additional 300 hours on a mandatory basis for all children attending that school; provided further, that in approving expanded learning time implementation grant applications, preference shall be given to districts with high poverty rates or a high percentage of students scoring in levels 1 or 2 on the Massachusetts comprehensive assessment system, those districts with proposals that have the greatest potential for district-wide impact, those districts that plan to utilize partnerships with community-based organizations and institutions of higher education and those districts with proposals that include a comprehensive restructuring of the entire school day or year to maximize the use of the additional learning time; provided further, that the department shall approve implementation proposals that include an appropriate mix of additional time spent on core academics, additional time spent on enrichment opportunities such as small group tutoring, homework help, music, arts, sports, physical activity, health and wellness programs, project-based experiential learning and additional time for teacher preparation or professional development; provided further, that the department shall only approve implementation proposals that assume not more than \$1,300 per pupil per year in future state appropriations of expanded learning time implementation funds; provided further, that in extraordinary cases the department may exceed the \$1,300 per pupil per year limit; provided further, that the department shall review all qualified proposals and award approved grants not later than August 16, 2011; provided further, that in carrying out the provisions of this item, funds may be expended by the department to support the impact and effectiveness of the program; provided further, that the department shall issue an annual report, not later than February 2, 2012, on the implementation of plans in all participating districts; provided further, that the report shall include, but not be limited to, the names of schools and school districts participating, the number of students attending these schools and the nature and type of changes made in participating schools as a result of this program; provided further, that the report shall also include an anticipated budget for this program for the next fiscal year and a breakdown of the distribution of the \$1,300 per student by school; provided further, that said report shall be provided to the secretary of administration and finance, the senate president, the speaker of the house, the chairs of the house and senate committees on ways and means and the house and senate chairs of the joint committee on education; provided further, that for this item, appropriated funds may be expended through August 31, 2012 to allow for planning and implementation during the summer months; provided further, that any grant funds distributed from this item to a city, town or regional school district shall be deposited with the treasurer of such city, town or regional school district and held in a separate account and shall be expended by the school committee of such city, town or regional school district without further appropriation, notwithstanding any general or special law to the contrary; and provided further, that no funds shall be expended for personnel costs at the department of elementary and secondary education..... \$13,918,030

## Appendix B: Executive summary of Abt Associates report



### **Evaluation of the Massachusetts Expanded Learning Time (ELT) Initiative**

**Year Five  
Final Report:  
2010-2011**

### **Executive Summary**

February 2, 2012

*Prepared for:*  
**Massachusetts Department of  
Elementary and Secondary  
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## Executive Summary

The Massachusetts Expanded Learning Time (ELT) initiative was established in 2005 with planning grants that allowed a limited number of schools to explore a redesign of their respective schedules and add time to their day or year. Participating schools are required to expand learning time by at least 300 hours per academic year to improve student outcomes in core academic subjects, broaden enrichment opportunities, and improve instruction by adding more planning and professional development time for teachers. Schools draw upon state resources as well as technical assistance and support from Massachusetts 2020 (Mass 2020) and Focus on Results to implement expanded learning time in their schools. The first cohort of ten ELT schools (Cohort 1) received implementation grants to begin operating their expanded days in the 2006–07 school year; in 2007-08, a second cohort of nine schools (Cohort 2) began to implement ELT; and a third cohort of nine schools began in 2008-09, resulting in an initial group of 26<sup>1</sup> ELT schools in the Commonwealth. There has not been additional funding for new ELT schools since then. In the most recently completed school year, 2010-11, 19<sup>2</sup> schools continued to implement the initiative.

Abt Associates Inc. is completing a multi-year evaluation of ELT that examines both the implementation of ELT in the funded schools, and the outcomes for schools, teachers, and students hypothesized to result from effective ELT implementation. This report describes current implementation and outcomes for an initiative that has been underway for five full academic years. The staggered nature of the ELT initiative means that as of the end of the 2010-11 school year, participating schools have completed five, four, and three years of implementation (Cohorts 1, 2, and 3, respectively).

## Study Design

The overall ELT evaluation is guided by three major evaluation questions:

1. How has ELT been implemented in schools that have received ELT grants?
2. What are the outcomes of ELT for schools, teachers, and students?
3. What is the relationship between ELT implementation and outcomes?

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<sup>1</sup> In 2007-08, one Cohort 1 ELT school closed due to restructuring. Also in 2007-08, an existing Cohort 1 ELT school merged with a non-ELT school to become a new ELT school; in 2008-09, this new school merged again, this time with multiple non-ELT schools, and became a new ELT school. Given the intensity of the restructuring this school underwent, ESE changed this school's cohort designation from Cohort 1 to Cohort 3.

<sup>2</sup> In 2009-10, two ELT schools, one a Cohort 2 and one a Cohort 3 school, in one district were merged; the combined school was designated a Cohort 3 school. During the 2009-10 and 2010-11 school years, six ELT schools left the initiative; in three cases the teachers' union and in two cases the district School Committee voted down the school's continued participation; in one case ESE did not renew the school's ELT funding due to underperformance and because the school's Level 4 status made it eligible for Federal SIG funding to aid with school turnaround. The total number of active ELT schools is as of the time of this report 19, 18 of which are included in this evaluation.

This report addresses all three of the evaluation questions. It focuses considerable attention on how the ELT initiative was implemented in the ELT schools during the 2010-11 school year, and also examines the effects of the ELT initiative on schools, teachers, and students in the three cohorts of ELT schools for three and four years of implementation.<sup>3</sup> Finally, the report addresses the third question through a variety of descriptive and exploratory analyses of variation in implementation and associated variation in outcomes.

Below, the key findings from the implementation and then outcomes components are summarized.

## ***Key Findings***

### **Implementation of Core Components**

In the fifth year of the ELT initiative, all funded schools continued efforts to create a school day that incorporated the major elements of ELT: increased core academic time, enrichment opportunities, and opportunity for teachers to engage in collaborative planning and professional development. Schools varied considerably in their respective efforts to implement the core components.

#### **Core Academics and Instruction**

- The ELT school day was just under eight hours, on average, in 2010-11.
- On average, almost five of the nearly eight hours of a typical school day were allocated to core academics (English Language Arts (ELA), math, science, and social studies). Twenty more minutes per day, on average, were allocated to core academics in 5<sup>th</sup> than in 8<sup>th</sup> grade.
- Overall, the plurality of time in an ELT school day was allocated to ELA, followed by math, then science and social studies. Specifically, of the five hours allocated to core academics:
  - The amount of time scheduled for English Language Arts (ELA) was 1 hour and 45 minutes, on average.
  - Nearly 90 minutes were allocated to math instruction, on average.
  - An average of nearly 1 hour was scheduled for science and 45 minutes to social studies per day.
- Time allocations for core subjects varied somewhat by grade. Specifically,
  - An average of about 45 minutes more each day was allocated to ELA in 5<sup>th</sup> than in 8<sup>th</sup> grade.
  - Slightly more time (12 minutes, on average) was allocated to math in 5<sup>th</sup> than in 8<sup>th</sup> grade.
  - About 20 fewer minutes were allocated to science and 15 minutes fewer to social studies in 5<sup>th</sup> than 8<sup>th</sup> grade, on average.

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<sup>3</sup> The report presents findings based on two or three cohorts of schools in the main body; findings based solely on one cohort (Cohort 1) are presented, where appropriate, in appendices.

- While there are broad core principles guiding ELT implementation, ELT schools have flexibility in how they implement core components. As in past years, schools varied considerably in how they allocated time to various instructional activities.

### School-Wide Academic Focus

- In the 2010-11 school year, most ELT schools had a school-wide academic focus, according to both principals and teachers. Teacher and principal reports of the focus were consistent at 11 of 16 schools.
- Both teachers and principals reported that the most common focus area was literacy, although writing, math, and higher order thinking skills were also common foci.
- Elementary school teachers reported a literacy-related focus more frequently than middle schools, and middle school teachers reported that higher order thinking skills was the focus more frequently than elementary schools.
- Students were most likely to report that the focus was math; however, student reports were rarely consistent with those of principals and teachers or internally consistent within a school.
- At most schools, the focus was posted publicly, often in hallways, teachers' classrooms, and the administrative offices.
- According to principals, most ELT schools had implemented school-wide instructional practices, and the vast majority of teachers reported that their instructional practice was influenced by the focus.
- A substantial majority of teachers reported that they used data specific to the focus area to monitor student progress and adjust instructional practices. Most also reported that dedicated academic support was influenced by the school-wide focus.

### Enrichment

- Most ELT schools have implemented separate enrichment classes. Nearly all students participated in enrichment classes/instruction, though the amount of time varied. Some schools also embedded enrichment activities within core classes.
- The amount of time a typical student spent in enrichment varied considerably, from daily to weekly. Similar to last year, middle school students appeared to spend more time in enrichment than elementary students.
- Approximately half of all ELT teachers reported that they taught at least one enrichment activity. Middle school teachers taught enrichment more often than elementary teachers.
- Regular teachers/staff taught some enrichment activities at most ELT schools, and over half the ELT schools relied on partner organizations to provide some enrichment; of those latter schools, regular meetings were scheduled for partner staff and teachers to collaborate, an increase over reported efforts to integrate partners from the previous year.
- Most teachers reported that they and their students had some choice about selecting enrichment activities. The vast majority of teachers reported that all students had access to enrichment activities, and enrichment activities were of high quality.

## Common Planning Time and Professional Development

- More than half of ELT teachers (65 percent) participated in collaborative planning time weekly or more often.
- Only a small proportion of teachers (16 percent) reported never having participated in collaborative planning.
- Teachers reported participating in multiple activities during collaborative planning time, including analyzing student data, strategizing about instructional practices, and/or reviewing student work. The majority of teachers who reported participating in an activity also reported that the activity was useful.
- Teacher perceptions of principal leadership varied across schools. Teachers were more consistently positive about principals' ELT-focused leadership than they were about principals' leadership in general.

## Implementation Index

The study team developed an index keyed to core principles of effective ELT implementation, as articulated by ESE and Mass 2020. The purpose of the index is two-fold: one, to integrate information from multiple data sources into one measure that could help to describe variation in schools' implementation efforts, both for individual schools and for the initiative as a whole; and two, to create a measure that could potentially be used to explore relationships between level of implementation and student achievement.

The index is based upon interview and survey data from staff and students in both ELT and matched comparison schools. Its structure and thresholds reflect contributions from ESE and Mass 2020 as well as the study team. The index includes separate scores for eight criteria related to six dimension of implementation<sup>4</sup>, and the dimension-specific scores are also combined into an overall index score. Each school received a score that ranged from zero (indicating no or very little evidence of implementation on a given criterion) to three (indicating consistent evidence of implementation on a given criterion) for each of the dimensions, some of which had more than one component.

Key findings about implementation based on application of the implementation index include:

- The range of total scores for ELT schools was from 5 to 22, and for comparison schools, the range was from 2 to 12 out of a total possible score of 24.
- The average total score for ELT schools was 11.4 and for comparison schools was 6.9.
- ELT schools, on average, scored higher than comparison schools on six of the eight criteria.
- Comparison schools scored notably lower on the enrichment-related criteria.

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<sup>4</sup> The implementation index dimensions include: school-wide academic focus, core academics in target grades (two subcomponents), enrichment activities (two subcomponents), teacher leadership and collaboration (two subcomponents), and school leadership, along with ELT-specific stakeholder support. Chapter 3 includes additional details about the index.

- On average, ELT schools' scores on individual criteria ranged from 1 to 2, and comparison schools' scores ranged from 0 to 1.
- Many comparison schools also appeared to be implementing at least some of the key components that are considered core expectations of the ELT initiative.
- For two of eight criteria, the average comparison school score was higher than the average ELT score.

## Assessment of Outcomes

The comparisons of outcomes for ELT and non-ELT schools, teachers and students are based on a comparative interrupted time series design that takes pre-ELT performance, school and student characteristics, and other trends into account when estimating the effect of ELT. This design is among the strongest quasi-experimental designs available, although its analyses are non-experimental. Since schools and their students were not randomly assigned to ELT participation, results cannot be attributed solely to ELT. The interrupted time series design, use of matched comparison schools and statistical controls, and different model specification, taken together, are capable of yielding credible and robust estimates of program impacts. This report also presents results from a number of descriptive and exploratory analyses to provide context for the comparative analyses; while informative, these findings do not support causal conclusions, as they are based upon less robust analyses.

The 2010-11 school year represented the third, fourth, or fifth year of ELT implementation for the three cohorts of funded schools. The current report presents outcomes findings in two different ways, reflecting differences in the continuity of measures over time. First, findings from study-developed surveys are based solely on responses from the 2010-11 school year, regardless of individual schools' implementation year, because the surveys were substantially revised to ensure more detailed information from school respondents on time use, teachers' participation in the extended day teaching schedule, and overall time allocations across the schools. Consequently, survey responses could not be aggregated with prior survey responses to examine responses as a function of implementation year.

It is also important to note that the study surveyed all teachers across all content areas, and all eligible 5<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade students in study schools, and only those schools with response rates above 70 percent for both student and teacher surveys are included in findings presented in the report. Teachers from 37 schools (18 ELT and 19 matched comparison schools) participated in teacher survey administration. The response rates across the schools ranged from 64 to 100 percent. Eighteen ELT schools and 17 of the matched comparison schools achieved response rates of at least 70 percent<sup>5</sup>

While teacher responses can be assumed to be representative of teachers in study schools, student responses cannot, as they represent perceptions of students in only one or two grades within schools that serve between three and nine grade levels. Second, findings based on extant

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<sup>5</sup> The two matched comparison schools that were excluded from analyses represent one Cohort 1 and one Cohort 3 school, and both are elementary schools.

data sources that have *not* changed over time *are* presented in terms of implementation year, as those data could be aggregated with prior years' data. For this latter group of outcomes, findings are presented in the main body of the report for all three cohorts, that is, for schools with two or more years of ELT implementation; selected findings based on four or five years of ELT implementation (Cohorts 1 and 2, or Cohort 1 only) are presented in the appendices. Finally, this report presents descriptive findings about variation in student achievement outcomes.

## Non-Academic Outcomes

### ***Comparing Time Allocations in ELT and Matched Comparison Schools***

- The length of the ELT school day was significantly longer for 5<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade students than would be expected in the absence of ELT.
- ELT schools allocated significantly more time for ELA, math, and science classes for 5<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> graders than would be expected in the absence of ELT.
- ELT schools allocated significantly more time for non-core classes and specials for 5<sup>th</sup> grade students than would be expected in the absence of ELT.
- ELT schools allocated significantly more time for enrichment activities for 5<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade students than would be expected in the absence of ELT.
- ELT schools allocated significantly more time for transitions, recess, snack, lunch, and homeroom for 5<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade students than would be expected in the absence of ELT.
- A statistically smaller proportion of students in ELT schools reported that they attend an academic club than would be reported in the absence of ELT.
- Significantly fewer students in ELT schools attended an after-school program than would be the expected in the absence of ELT.

## Teacher Outcomes

- A significantly higher proportion of teachers in ELT schools reported that the length of the day allows them to accomplish their teaching goals and cover the amount of instructional material their students need to learn than would be expected in the absence of ELT.
- A significantly higher proportion of teachers in ELT schools reported that they are satisfied with the amount of time available for instruction in ELA, math, and science than would be expected in the absence of ELT.
- A significantly higher proportion of teachers in ELT schools reported that they are satisfied with the amount of time available for academic support, enrichment activities and for students to pursue topics of interest than would be expected in the absence of ELT.
- Significantly more teachers in ELT schools reported that they are satisfied with the amount of time available for collaborative planning and that the length of the day allows for coordination of instruction than would be expected in the absence of ELT. Conversely, significantly fewer teachers in ELT schools than the counterfactual reported that the amount of collaborative planning time is a problem area.

## Student Outcomes

- A significantly higher proportion of teachers in ELT schools reported that teachers and students spend sufficient instructional time together than would be expected in the absence of ELT.
- Significantly more teachers in ELT schools reported that teacher and staff fatigue, as well as student fatigue, were problem areas than would be expected without ELT. Likewise, a significantly higher proportion of students in ELT schools reported that they were tired in school.
- Significantly fewer students in ELT schools reported that: they look forward to going to school; like being in school; that all of their classes are important to them; and that they like the length of their school day, than would be expected without ELT.
- A significantly smaller proportion of teachers in ELT schools reported that student academic performance and homework completion rates were problem areas.
- Students in ELT schools had statistically significantly higher suspension rates than would be expected in the absence of ELT; however, while statistically significant, the differences were extremely small in magnitude, and therefore are unlikely to have educational or practical significance.

## Student Achievement Outcomes

- In the first and second years of implementation, ELT schools served a statistically significantly greater proportion of minority students than estimated in the absence of ELT, although the estimated magnitude of the differences (3.7 and 4.0 percentage points, respectively) is unlikely to be practically meaningful, and there were no effects of ELT on schools' minority student population in the third or fourth year.
- In the third year of implementation, ELT schools had a statistically significantly smaller proportion of highly qualified core academic teachers compared to the estimated proportion in the absence of ELT (2.9 percentage points).
- In the fourth year of implementation, ELT schools had a statistically significantly lower number of FTE teachers (4.7 fewer), and statistically significantly higher student-teacher ratio (almost two more students per teacher) than estimated in the absence of ELT.
- Across all years of implementation, there were no significant differences in average student mobility rates between ELT and matched comparison schools.
- Descriptive analyses restricted to ELT schools indicated variation in student performance levels among schools both before implementation began and in the most recent school year (2010-11), and indicated no consistent patterns of results. Descriptive analyses indicated that some schools have substantially increased the percentage of students that reached proficient or advanced performance levels, while others have experienced little change or decreased percentage of students at these same levels.
- On average, there were no statistically significant effects of ELT after one, two, three, or four years of implementation on MCAS student achievement test outcomes for 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup>, or 7<sup>th</sup> grade ELA, 4<sup>th</sup>, 6<sup>th</sup>, or 8<sup>th</sup> grade math, or 8<sup>th</sup> grade science.
- There was a statistically significant positive effect of ELT after four years of implementation on the MCAS 5<sup>th</sup> grade science test.

- Exploratory analyses using data from non-ELT schools in ELT districts, and non-ELT schools statewide, rather than the study’s matched comparison schools, were generally consistent with the primary analysis, including the significant finding for 5<sup>th</sup> grade science noted above. In addition, there was a statistically significant negative effect of ELT on 3<sup>rd</sup> grade reading after two years of implementation, and there were statistically significant positive effects of ELT on 6<sup>th</sup> grade math and 8<sup>th</sup> grade science after four years of implementation in both the district-level and state-level analyses. The state-level analysis also found a statistically significant positive effect of ELT on 7<sup>th</sup> grade ELA after one year of implementation and on 6<sup>th</sup> grade math after three years of implementation.
- Exploratory descriptive analysis linking the level of implementation in ELT schools and student achievement outcomes indicated no clear patterns or meaningful relationships.
- Exploratory analysis investigating the difference of the effect of ELT in higher- versus lower-implementing schools indicates minimal heterogeneity in the effect by the level of ELT implementation. However, the effect of ELT on 8<sup>th</sup> grade math in higher-implementing schools is estimated to be statistically significantly greater than the effect of ELT in low- implementing schools after three and four years of implementation.

## ***Discussion***

Across findings from interviews, surveys, and achievement data, the following themes seem clear:

- There is strong evidence that the ELT schools have implemented many core ELT elements, both in terms of additional time available for instruction, academic support, and enrichment and supports for teachers’ use of that time.
- There continues to be substantial variation across ELT schools’ level and approach to implementation (as measured by interviews, surveys and an index).
- Measuring different aspects of time use is challenging: collecting information on a prototypical student in a given grade level may or may not reveal how students are supported by the ELT initiative and definitions of various activities/time uses are not consistent across schools.
- There are some, but not many, differences—even descriptively—between ELT and comparison schools.
- The school reform landscape is dynamic and more schools (outside of this ELT initiative) appear to be expanding the amount of time in their school year as well as implementing reforms consistent with the core ELT components with each successive year.
- This study was able to assess the quantity and allocation of time, but did not measure the quality of instruction, enrichment, and other activities made possible by the additional time, and clearly, the quality of such activities is also important.

## ***Future Steps for the ELT Initiative***

The ELT initiative has been underway for several years, and can now be considered a fairly mature intervention. Over that time period, as the schools’ implementation efforts have matured,

the contexts within which the schools operate have continued to change. Some of that change reflects increasingly explicit guidance from the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, some reflects the increasingly targeted nature of technical assistance and support from Mass 2020 and Focus on Results, and some reflects the heightened visibility of ELT more broadly, through other federal and state initiatives such as School Improvement Grant and Race to the Top funding. While the federal, state, and local contexts have changed, and the implementation of the initiative in the ELT study schools has also continued to evolve, the improved academic achievement outcomes for students have not materialized as expected across ELT schools as a whole.

This multi-year evaluation has described schools' ongoing implementation efforts in four prior interim reports. ELT schools clearly have made progress on implementing many of the core elements of ELT, and as measured by the study's implementation index, score higher than the matched comparison schools on average. Yet the patterns of implementation differ as much across the ELT schools and between the ELT and comparison schools, highlighting the variation in ELT across the initiative. The fact that such variation exists in the initiative fifth year illustrates both the complexity inherent in large-scale efforts to transform low-performing schools and the variation that inevitably results from flexible interventions that can be shared to fit individual schools' needs. It may also reflect the different motivation of schools to participate in ELT from the outset, as some schools opted in voluntarily while others were strongly encouraged to apply.

Variation in ongoing implementation is clearly a continuing theme for the Massachusetts ELT initiative. Prior years' impact analyses have found little evidence of effects on students' academic achievement, and the results from the fifth year indicate that students' academic achievement outcomes, on average, have largely remained unaffected. Descriptive and exploratory analyses provide limited suggestive evidence that student growth in ELT schools is greater than growth in non-ELT counterparts, yet such results are not generally statistically significant. Despite the demonstrable progress ELT schools made to implement core components of ELT, those implementation efforts have not yet consistently translated the additional time into the content, strategies, or support that in turn yield improved overall student performance.