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| Report to the Legislature: Commonwealth Virtual Schools – Fiscal Year 2021 |
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| This report provides information on the implementation and impact of virtual schools pursuant to G.L. c. 71 §94(p).November 2022Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education75 Pleasant Street, Malden, MA 02148-4906Phone 781-338-3000 TTY: N.E.T. Relay 800-439-2370www.doe.mass.edu |
| ESE logoThis document was prepared by the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary EducationJeffrey C. RileyCommissioner **Board of Elementary and Secondary Education Members**Ms. Katherine Craven, Chair, Brookline Ms. Tricia Canavan, South HadleyMr. Matt Hills, Newton Ms. Darlene Lombos, Boston Ms. Farzana Mohamed, Newton Mr. Michael Moriarty, Holyoke Mr. Eric Plankey, Westford, Student Member Mr. James Peyser, Secretary of Education, Milton Mr. Paymon Rouhanifard, Brookline Ms. Mary Ann Stewart, Lexington Dr. Martin West, Newton  Jeffrey C. Riley, Commissioner Secretary to the Board The Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, an affirmative action employer, is committed to ensuring that all of its programs and facilities are accessible to all members of the public. We do not discriminate on the basis of age, color, disability, national origin, race, religion, sex, gender identity, or sexual orientation.  Inquiries regarding the Department’s compliance with Title IX and other civil rights laws may be directed to the Human Resources Director, 75 Pleasant St., Malden, MA 02148-4906. Phone: 781-338-6105.© 2022 Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary EducationPermission is hereby granted to copy any or all parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes. Please credit the “Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education.”This document printed on recycled paperMassachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education75 Pleasant Street, Malden, MA 02148-4906Phone 781-338-3000 TTY: N.E.T. Relay 800-439-2370www.doe.mass.eduState Seal of Massachusetts |

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| Jeffrey C. Riley*Commissioner* |  |

November 8, 2022

Dear Members of the General Court:

I am pleased to submit this Report to the Legislature: *Commonwealth Virtual Schools*, pursuant to G.L. c. 71, § 94(p).

A Commonwealth Virtual School (CMVS) is a public school operated by a board of trustees whose teachers primarily teach from a remote location using the Internet or other computer-based methods and whose students are not required to be located at the physical premises of the school. Like a charter school, a virtual school is an autonomous, single-school district that operates independently of any existing school district.

The Board of Elementary and Secondary Education (Board) grants a certificate to the board of trustees of a virtual school for not less than three years and not more than five years, as determined by the Board. The school and its board then become a state entity, directly accountable to the Board and the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (Department). A virtual school may not discriminate in the enrollment of students based on race, color, national origin, creed, sex, gender identity, ethnicity, sexual orientation, mental or physical disability, age, ancestry, athletic performance, special need, English language proficiency, or academic achievement.

The Board has granted two virtual school certificates, one to the Greenfield Commonwealth Virtual School (GCVS) and one to the TEC Connections Academy Commonwealth Virtual School (TECCA). Both schools enroll students statewide. These schools enrolled a total of 3,457 students as of October 1, 2020 (FY2021 is the period addressed in this report).

If you have any questions about this report, please contact Director Alison Bagg at 781-338-3218.

Sincerely,

Jeffrey C. Riley

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: Commonwealth Virtual Schools pursuant to G.L. c. 71 § 94(p):

*“On or before September 1, the commissioner shall prepare a report on the implementation and impact of this section, including, but not limited to:(1) the fiscal impact on sending districts; (2) any necessary adjustments to tuition rates, including whether the amount should vary based on grade or type of school and the appropriate mechanism for funding virtual schools; (3) information on course completion and student attendance and participation rates; (4) the academic achievement of students attending commonwealth virtual schools; (5) the level of supervision or support needed for students in elementary and middle school; (6) the support necessary or helpful to ensure that students successfully complete online courses; (7) the professional development virtual school teachers require; (8) the appropriate enrollment limit for a virtual school, if any, including information about wait lists; and (9) the need for any changes to the commonwealth virtual school program.”*

A Commonwealth Virtual School (CMVS) is a public school operated by a board of trustees where Massachusetts licensed teachers primarily teach from a remote location using the Internet or other computer-based methods, and where students are not required to be located at the physical premises of the school. The statute permits up to ten virtual schools to operate in the Commonwealth at any time: three virtual schools were allowed to operate during the 2013-2016 school years; three additional certificates were available from 2016-2019; and four additional certificates were available starting in 2020.

As of this writing, the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education (Board) has granted two virtual school certificates, one to the Greenfield Commonwealth Virtual School (GCVS) and one to the TEC Connections Academy Commonwealth Virtual School (TECCA).[[1]](#footnote-2) Both schools enroll students statewide. As of October 1, 2020, these schools enrolled a total of 3,457 students including 943 from GCVS and 2,514 from TECCA (FY21), the period addressed in this report.

# Greenfield Commonwealth Virtual School

The Greenfield Commonwealth Virtual School (GCVS), formerly known as Massachusetts Virtual Academy of Greenfield (MAVA), opened in 2010 under the innovation school law (G.L. c. 71, § 92) as a Greenfield public school. On June 25, 2013, the Board granted a three-year certificate to operate the re-named Massachusetts Virtual Academy at Greenfield Commonwealth Virtual School to a Board of Trustees (GCVS Board) formed to assume governance of MAVA from the Greenfield Public Schools. Educational courses and teaching services, including management software, learning materials, and technical support services were initially provided by K12, Inc. (K12) – a virtual school provider based in Herndon, Virginia.

On June 5, 2014, the Department conducted an accountability review of GCVS in accordance with CMR 52.08. The report documented concerns about the school’s faithfulness to its certificate, the quality of the academic program, the quality and amount of supports for diverse learners, and the school's lack of compliance with regulatory requirements and the Department’s guidance. Due to these concerns, on October 20, 2014, pursuant to the virtual school regulations with 603 CMR 52.12(2) and on the recommendation of the late Commissioner, Mitchell D. Chester, the Board placed GCVS on probation for the remainder of its certificate term, which expired on June 30, 2016.

The Department conducted a second review of GCVS on March 2, 2015. The report indicated that GCVS made progress toward meeting the terms of its probation and noted that the GCVS Board and school leadership took affirmative steps to improve instruction and professional learning. However, the review identified a dependency on teacher-developed materials to ensure curriculum alignment, the lack of a formal curriculum for English learner (EL) students, the lack of a formal inclusion model for students with disabilities, variation in the execution of the school’s expectations for teaching higher order thinking skills, and uneven instruction. In a June 29, 2015 response to the review, GCVS described the additional steps it planned to take to address these concerns, including researching EL curricula for the fall of 2015 and how, in the estimation of school leadership, online interventions presented a clear picture of the performance of students who were experiencing academic difficulties.

Pursuant to CMR 52.11, and in accordance with the Department’s guidelines, on June 28, 2015, GCVS applied to renew its certificate. The Department conducted a renewal inspection in November 2015; the report from this inspection was issued to the school on December 14, 2015. At its February 23, 2016 meeting, in accordance with G.L. c. 71, §94, and 603 CMR 52.00, the Board renewed the certificate of GCVS for an additional three-year period from July 1, 2016 through June 30, 2019 with a maximum enrollment of 750 students. Further, pursuant to 603 CMR 52.12(2), the Board extended the school’s probationary status and directed it to meet specified terms of probation, as recommended by former Commissioner Mitchell Chester in his memorandum to the Board dated February 12, 2016.

Since it opened, the school’s educational courses and teaching services, including management software, learning materials, and technical support services, were provided by K12. At its May 22, 2017 meeting, the GCVS Board of Trustees voted to formally terminate the school’s contract with K12, effective June 30, 2017. The reasons given for the change were concerns about the affordability of K12’s products and services, and the opportunity for GCVS to provide more flexible learning options for students through new software and curriculum. In addition, the cost savings would enable the school to hire additional teachers.

GCVS submitted a formal request to amend its certificate on June 8, 2017. After careful review by Department staff, the Commissioner approved these amendments on October 19, 2017. The request included the following key changes to the school’s education program and operations: use of a new learning management system (Canvas by Instructure, Inc.) that enabled teachers, parents/guardians, and students to access the curriculum from any computer, tablet, or mobile device; EngageNY as the core curriculum for grades K-5 English Language Arts (ELA) and mathematics and use of EngageNY, National Geographic, PBS for the social studies and science curriculum; Florida Virtual School Global (FLVS) as the core curriculum for all subjects in grades 6-12; provision of school technical support by GCVS employees.

In March 2018, the Board extended the school’s probationary status, maintained the prior probationary conditions, and added a new condition related to the provision of services for English learners. The Acting Commissioner, Jeff Wulfson, recommended this action in his [memorandum to the Board dated March 16, 2018,](http://www.doe.mass.edu/bese/docs/fy2018/2018-03/item7.html) based on evidence collected during accountability reviews in February and December 2017.

Pursuant to CMR 52.11, and in accordance with the Department’s guidelines, on June 27, 2018, GCVS applied to renew its certificate. The Department conducted a renewal inspection in October 2018; the report from this inspection was issued to the school in December 2018 and the Summary of Review was presented to Commissioner Jeffrey C. Riley and Board in February 2019. Pursuant to the regulations for Commonwealth of Massachusetts Virtual Schools at 603 CMR 52.12(2), the Board renewed the certificate for GCVS for an additional three-year period from July 1, 2019, through June 30, 2022, with a maximum enrollment of 750 students in grades K through 12. Further, pursuant to 603 CMR 52.12, the Board removed probation from the school’s certificate, but imposed conditions that the school is required to meet, as recommended by the Commissioner of Elementary and Secondary Education, Jeffrey C. Riley, in his memorandum to the Board dated [March 15, 2019](https://www.doe.mass.edu/bese/docs/fy2019/2019-03/).

GCVS submitted a formal request to amend its certificate on July 23, 2019. After careful review by Department staff, the Commissioner approved these amendments on September 8, 2019. The request included the following key changes to the school’s education program by adding an in-person support center for students, adopting two new curricula (Accelerate Education for K-5; Edgenuity for 9-12), and offering students dual enrollment at Greenfield Community College (GCC).

On July 6, 2020, GCVS submitted a formal request to amend its certificate to increase its maximum enrollment and to change the school’s curriculum for grades K-5 from Accelerate Education to the newly released curriculum from FLVS, for all subjects for synchronous programs. This change allowed the school to implement the FLVS curriculum across all grades. The Commissioner approved these amendments on July 31, 2020. Additionally, the Commissioner approved the school’s request to increase its maximum enrollment by an additional 250 seats, for a new maximum enrollment of 1,000 in order to meet elevated demand for virtual programming due to the COVID-19 pandemic. After a second request from GCVS, the maximum enrollment was amended again, in September 2020, with an increase of 50 seats, for a new maximum enrollment of 1,050 until the end of the current certificate.

On December 18, 2020, GCVS formally requested that its certificate be amended so that it could report on a new accountability plan. On January 14, 2021, the Commissioner gave his approval to this amendment. The Greenfield Commonwealth Virtual School (GCVS) requested a certificate amendment on August 23, 2021, changing the name to the Greater Commonwealth Virtual School and switching the Learning Management System (LMS) from Canvas to Schoology. Both requests were granted by the Commissioner on September 29, 2021.

# TEC Connections Academy Commonwealth Virtual School

The Education Cooperative (TEC) as “founder entity” submitted an application for a virtual certificate to the Department in the spring of 2013; on February 25, 2014, the Board approved a 3-year operating certificate for TEC Connections Academy Commonwealth Virtual School (TECCA) under the state's virtual school legislation. TECCA opened in 2014 as a virtual public-school serving students in grades K-12; with Connections Education providing the school’s curriculum, learning management system, and many operational functions as outlined by a contract between the two entities.

The school has made various amendments since its founding. In November 2015, the school amended its financial and operational contract between TECCA and Connections Education. On April 18, 2016, the school amended its bylaws. On September 28, 2016, the school amended its contract with Connections Education in regard to human resources management.

The Department conducted an accountability review of TECCA on February 24, 2016 and a renewal inspection review on November 3, 2016. While both reports found that TECCA delivered an instructional program consistent with its certificate, the renewal inspection noted that TECCA had been classified into Level 3 of the state's accountability and assistance system for very low Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System (MCAS) participation (less than 90 percent) in the aggregate and for multiple subgroups. The review also found that TECCA lacked an English language education curriculum to support its growing English learner (EL) population.

On February 17, 2017, the Board voted to renew the certificate for TECCA for an additional five years (until June 2022), and place conditions on the school’s certificate to address the concerns related to student participation in MCAS tests and supports for ELs. In recommending that the Board renew the certificate for TECCA for an additional five years, rather than the minimum of three years, then Commissioner Chester gave the school the opportunity to build on its early gains and demonstrate a solid track record of performance.

During the 2017-2018 school year, the district leadership was comprised of the superintendent (formerly known as the lead school administrator, in his fourth year in the role); K-12 principal; director of pupil services; director and assistant directors of special education; ELL coordinator; and chief administrative officer. The school leadership was comprised of the principal; four core subject department heads; dean of students; assistant principal (grades K-5); K12 curriculum director; and K12 Response-to-Intervention (RTI) Director.

TECCA submitted a formal request to amend its certificate on April 5, 2018, as well as additional evidence and materials submitted by the school on July 30, 2018. After careful review by Department staff, the Commissioner, approved the following: an increase in the school’s maximum enrollment of 300 seats (from 2,000 to 2,300); a change to the school’s education program by adding "accelerated" and "extended " program options for students.

On November 27, 2018, the Department conducted an accountability review of TECCA in accordance with CMR 52.08. The report was issued in January 2019 and documented concerns about the school’s faithfulness to its certificate, the quality of the academic program, and specifically, the quality and amount of supports for diverse learners.

In December 2019, TECCA submitted a request to amend its contract with Connections Education. As a result of some procedural delays, and necessary clarifications, the Commissioner approved this amendment in June, effective retrospectively.

On July 3, 2020, TECCA submitted a request to increase the maximum enrollment from 2,300 to 3,300. On August 5, 2020, the Commissioner approved the school’s request to increase its maximum enrollment by an additional 400 seats, for a new maximum of 2,700 until the end of the current certificate, in order to meet elevated demand for virtual programming due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

On August 17, 2020, TECCA requested another contract amendment with Connections Education. The Commissioner approved this amendment on October 6, 2020. On February 9, 2021, TECCA also requested an amendment to the school’s enrollment plan, and accountability plan. On February 22, 2021, the Commissioner approved these two amendment requests.

# Fiscal Impact on Sending Districts

The virtual school statute, at G.L. c. 71, § 94(k), funds a CMVS based upon the funding for school choice under G.L. c. 76, § 12B: the school district of residence of each student enrolled in the CMVS is charged a set tuition, and the Department transfers the funds from the district to the CMVS. Tuition is based on full year enrollment and is prorated if a student is enrolled in the CMVS for only a portion of the school year.

The default tuition rate for a student enrolled in a CVMS is the school choice tuition rate of $5,000.[[2]](#footnote-3) The Board, in consultation with the Operational Services Division (OSD), may approve a rate higher than $5,000 in CMVS certificates provided the rate does not exceed the state average per pupil foundation budget for students of the same classification and grade level. G.L. c. 71, § 94(k); 603 CMR 52.07(1). At its December 7, 2017 meeting, the Board voted to amend the certificates of GCVS and TECCA to specify a tuition rate[[3]](#footnote-4) of $8,265 per pupil, effective for FY19, with $75 per pupil retained by the Department for program administration. Additionally, the Board voted to delegate to the Commissioner authority to adjust this rate annually for inflation for the remainder of the schools' current certificates and amend their certificates accordingly. The Board-approved CMVS tuition rate does not change over the course of a fiscal year.

In FY21, the state average per pupil foundation budget was $12,394. In FY21, districts were charged $8,666 per full-time pupil enrolled in a CMVS. In FY21, GCVS and TECCA received a per pupil tuition amount of $8,591, which equals the district per-pupil tuition amount, less $75 per pupil retained by the Department for program administration, as permitted by statute.

In FY21, the virtual schools received $32,763,647 in tuition payments from 251 districts of residence. While enrollment varies from district to district, the following six districts accounted for approximately 19 percent of virtual school tuition and enrollment: Springfield (6 percent), Boston (4 percent), Worcester (4 percent), New Bedford (2 percent), Fall River (2 percent), and Wachusett (1 percent). A summary of FY21 tuition payments is provided in Appendix B.

# Course Completion and Student Attendance and Participation Rates

GCVS and TECCA provide 425 instructional hours in kindergarten, 900 hours in grades 1-8, and 990 hours in grades 9-12 in accordance with state regulations.

Both schools offer flexibility in terms of the time of day when students participate. Teachers and “learning coaches” (students’ parents/guardians) take attendance and monitor the hours of schoolwork completed. In FY21, GCVS reported an attendance rate of 86.7 percent and TECCA reported an attendance rate of 90.2 percent.

While each school’s calendar provides for holidays and vacations during which teachers are not available, students may continue to do schoolwork and access the online learning management system at any time during the school year. Attendance is based on courses completion and not “seat time” – while each school expects all students to complete their coursework by the end of a typical semester or school year, students may proceed through the curriculum at their own pace.

Course completion data for GCVS and TECCA are provided in Tables 1 and 2. Because many students arrive in school after the beginning of the school year or transferred out of the school prior to the end of the school year, course completion data are only reported for students enrolled in the schools for a full academic year, as defined in Table 1 on next page.

**Table 1: FY21 Course Completion Data, GCVS**

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| ***FY21 Course Completion Data******Greater Commonwealth Virtual School (GCVS)*** |
| **Grade** | **A.** | **B.** | **C.** | **D.** | **E.** | **F.** | **G.** |
| **Enrollment** | **Courses Attempted** | **Courses Incomplete** | **Courses Completed** | **Courses Completed (%)** | **Courses Passed** | **Courses Passed (%)** |
| **K** | 31 | 124 | 44 |  80 | 65% |  73 | 91% |
| **1** | 43 |  172 | 76 | 96 | 56% | 92 | 96% |
| **2** | 46 | 184 | 52 | 132 | 74% | 132 | 100% |
| **3** | 38 | 152 | 24 | 124 | 82% | 120 | 97% |
| **4** | 45 |  180 | 56 | 124 | 68% | 124 | 100% |
| **5** | 39 |  156 | 24 | 132 | 85% | 132 | 100% |
| **6** | 44 | 176 | 44 | 132 | 75 | 72 | 56% |
| **7** | 81 | 324 | 28 | 296 | 91% |  237 | 80% |
| **8** | 100 |  400 | 36 |  356 | 89% |  305 |  87% |
| **9** | 167 | 668 | 104 |  533 | 80% |  299 |  56% |
| **10** | 126 |  508 | 100 |  408 | 80% |  256 |  63% |
| **11** | 114 |  456 | 76 |  368 | 81% |  332 |  90% |
| **12** | 85 |  340 | 56 |  284 | 84% |  236 |  83% |
| **Totals** | **779** | **3116** | **131** | **3048** | **95%** | **2425** | **86%** |
| **Legend** |
| **A** | Enrollment | Students enrolled in the CMVS as of October 1 of the prior school year, excluding transfers out and transfers in after October 1. |
| **B** | Courses Attempted | Courses in which the students in Column A were enrolled during the school year (full-year and semester-based courses). |
| **C** | Courses Incomplete | Courses from which students withdrew, regardless of the grade they earned in the course at the time of course withdrawal. |
| **D** | Courses Completed | Courses completed by students, regardless of the grade they earned in the course. |
| **E** | Courses Completed (%) | Column D (Courses Completed) ÷ Column B (Courses Attempted) |
| **F** | Courses Passed | Courses completed by students in which they earned a passing grade. |
| **G** | Courses Passed (%) | Column F (Courses passed) ÷ Column D (Courses Completed) |

**Table 2: FY21 Course Completion Data, TECCA**

|  |
| --- |
| ***FY21 Course Completion Data******TEC Connections Academy Commonwealth Virtual School (TECCA)*** |
| **Grade** | **A.** | **B.** | **C.** | **D.** | **E.** | **F.** | **G.** |
| **Enrollment** | **Courses Attempted** | **Courses Incomplete** | **Courses Completed** | **Courses Completed (%)** | **Courses Passed** | **Courses Passed (%)** |
| **K** | 30 | 300 | 0 | 300 | 100.00% | 273 | 91% |
| **1** | 40 | 401 | 1 | 400 | 99.75% | 389 | 97.25% |
| **2** | 45 | 451 | 2 | 449 | 99.56% | 433 | 96.44% |
| **3** | 41 | 412 | 2 | 410 | 99.51% | 384 | 93.66% |
| **4** | 58 | 577 | 0 | 577 | 100% | 550 | 95.32% |
| **5** | 56 | 568 | 2 | 566 | 99.65% | 543 | 95.94% |
| **6** | 106 | 1161 | 0 | 1161 | 100.00% | 1064 | 91.65% |
| **7** | 145 | 1549 | 11 | 1538 | 99.29% | 1381 | 89.79% |
| **8** | 214 | 2306 | 4 | 2302 | 99.83% | 2023 | 87.88% |
| **9** | 306 | 3590 | 258 | 3332 | 92.81% | 2345 | 70.38% |
| **10** | 262 | 3409 | 283 | 3126 | 91.70% | 2504 | 80.10% |
| **11** | 209 | 2618 | 162 | 2456 | 93.81% | 2120 | 86.32% |
| **12** | 266 | 3006 | 118 | 2888 | 96.07% | 2613 | 90.48% |
| **Totals** | **1778** | **20348** | **843** | **19505** | **95.86%** | **16622** | **85.22%** |
| **Legend** |
| **A** | Enrollment | Students enrolled in the CMVS as of October 1 of the prior school year, excluding transfers out and transfers in after October 1. |
| **B** | Courses Attempted | Courses in which the students in Column A were enrolled during the school year (full-year and semester-based courses). |
| **C** | Courses Incomplete | Courses from which students withdrew, regardless of the grade they earned in the course at the time of course wit­­­­­hdrawal. |
| **D** | Courses Completed | Courses completed by students, regardless of the grade they earned in the course. |
| **E** | Courses Completed (%) | Column D (Courses Completed) ÷ Column B (Courses Attempted) |
| **F** | Courses Passed | Courses completed by students in which they earned a passing grade. |
| **G** | Courses Passed (%) | Column F (Courses passed) ÷ Column D (Courses Completed) |

# Enrollment Trends, Limits and Waitlists

The statute caps the total number of full-time students attending virtual schools at two percent of the total number of students attending all public schools in the Commonwealth. In FY21, 911,465students attended public schools in the Commonwealth, of which 0.38 percent, or 3,457 students, were enrolled in a CMVS.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **School Year** | **Statewide Enrollment** | **CMVS Enrollment[[4]](#footnote-5)** |
| **#** | **%** |
| 2013-14 | 955,739 | 454 | 0.05 |
| 2014-15 | 955,844 | 1,087 | 0.11 |
| 2015-16 | 953,429 | 1,429 | 0.15 |
| 2016-17 | 953,748 | 1,786 | 0.19 |
| 2017-18 | 954,034 | 2,123 | 0.22 |
| 2018-19 | 941,411 | 2,806 | 0.30 |
| 2019-20 | 948,828 | 2,846 | 0.30 |
| 2020-21 | 911,465 | 3.457 | 0.38 |

As shown in the graph below, GCVS and TECCA enroll higher percentages of economically disadvantaged students, high need students, comparable percentages of students with disabilities, and lower percentages of English language learners, and non-native English speakers than statewide averages.[[5]](#footnote-6)



According to the enrollment policies of both schools, eligibility for enrollment in a specific grade requires a student to have successfully completed the preceding grade. Each school reviews academic documentation to ensure accurate grade level assignments and course placements.

Both TECCA and GCVS reported having greater demand than in past years. Since the emergence of COVID-19 and the subsequent closures of brick-and-mortar schools statewide, families have sought admission to both CMVSs in unprecedented numbers. During the FY21 school year the waitlists for GCVS and TECCA each included over 1000 students.

# Academic Achievement

The purpose of the statewide accountability system is to provide clear, actionable information about school and district performance. The Department did not issue school, district, or state accountability determinations for the 2019-2020 school year due to the cancellation of state assessments and school closures related to COVID-19. Additionally, the Department did not issue school, district, or state accountability determinations in 2021; spring 2021 MCAS administration included a partial test for grades 3-8 and some grade 3-8 students took the assessment remotely. Due to the disruption caused by COVID-19 and permitted by federal and state waivers, the Department published and held constant the accountability determinations for FY19. A summary of performance data from 2019, the most recently available data, for both schools is provided in Appendix C. More detailed information related to student performance is included in the Department’s Profiles, GCVS can be found at [2022 Accountability Data - Greater Commonwealth Virtual District (39010000) (mass.edu)](https://profiles.doe.mass.edu/accountability/report/district.aspx?linkid=30&orgcode=39010000&orgtypecode=5&) and TECCA can be found at [2022 Accountability Data - TEC Connections Academy Commonwealth Virtual School District (39020000) (mass.edu)](https://profiles.doe.mass.edu/accountability/report/district.aspx?linkid=30&orgcode=39020000&orgtypecode=5&).

| CMVS  | 2019 |
| --- | --- |
| **GCVS** | * **Requiring assistance or intervention:**
	+ Reason for classification: In need of focused/target support for:
	+ Low graduation rate
	+ Low participation rate: Students w/disabilities
* **Cumulative Progress Toward Improvement Targets**:
	+ 37% - Moderate progress toward targets
 |
| **TECCA** | * **Requiring assistance or intervention**:
	+ Reason for classification: In need of focused/targeted support for:
	+ Low graduation rate
	+ Low participation rate: Afr. Amer./Black -White -Students w/disabilities -Economically disadvantaged -Hispanic/Latino -EL and former EL -Multi-race, Non-Hisp./Lat. -High needs -All students
* **Cumulative Progress Toward Improvement Targets**:
	+ 45% - Moderate progress toward targets
 |

# Supervision and Support for Students in Elementary and Middle School

# Much of the responsibility for student learning is placed on the “learning coach,” typically the student’s parent/guardian, particularly in the early grades. Learning coaches facilitate their student’s progress through daily lessons and help manage the student’s schedule and pacing through the online program. Both schools have systems in place for closely monitoring student progress on a course-by-course basis.

At GCVS and TECCA, guidance counselors and family engagement coordinators help learning coaches and students adjust to the virtual environment, support students’ nonacademic needs, and create a sense of community through face-to-face and virtual activities.

GCVS reports that at the elementary level (K-5) students receive daily full class and small group live instruction in core academic subjects. At the middle school level (6-8) student receive 5 live lessons a week in each core academic subject. Art, Music, Physical Education, and Computer electives rotate each quarter and meet live once per week. GCVS employs Family Engagement Liaisons (FELs) who provide support and assistance in addition to the support provided by the classroom teachers. Teachers alert the FELs to any individual family concerns who, in turn, work with those families on an individual basis to ensure proper support for students at home. As part of the school structure, GCVS also uses the following supports: Title I and English as a Second Language (ESL) services; Family Engagement; contracts for students with particular needs; Special Education supports, in person meet-ups, extra help from teachers, dual enrollment with Greenfield Community College, use of GCVS Chromebooks with added security measures.

# TECCA reports that students in the elementary, middle, and high school are supported by their homeroom teachers and subject teachers, in addition to the supervision provided by the learning coach. Homeroom teachers are responsible for biweekly contact with each of their students, and during these calls, teachers review the student’s overall progress in lessons and assignments, often with the learning coach present as well, depending on the grade level of the student. Subject teachers monitor student progress on a regular basis to analyze student performance on assessments so they can differentiate instruction, provide support to students in a small group or 1:1, as well as provide resources to support struggling students. In addition, the learning coach, who is often the student’s parent/guardian, facilitates their student’s progress and helps manage the student’s schedule, attendance, pacing through the online program, and provides outreach to teachers when help is needed. TECCA has additional support staff who also work to support all students to adjust to the virtual environment, support students’ both academic and non-academic needs, and assist in creating a sense of community through other face-to-face and virtual interactions and activities.

# Support for Online Course Completion

# As indicated above, both GCVS and TECCA, a “learning coach,” typically the student’s parent/guardian, facilitates student progress through daily lessons, with flexibility in terms of pace and scheduling. The schools expect learning coaches to spend three to five hours daily supporting students and students to spend five to six hours daily on schoolwork and homework. Teachers are expected to manage all facets of the student’s instructional experience and engage in regular communication with learning coaches and students via email, telephone, and online meetings. Further, both schools arrange face-to-face activities, such as field trips, throughout the school year.

At GCVS, all live sessions take place in a synchronous virtual classroom. All class sessions are recorded so that students can access them at any time. Teachers also schedule small group and individual intervention sessions as needed throughout the week. These sessions may also be recorded. Throughout the class, teachers constantly monitor a chat area, virtual whiteboard area where both students and teachers can post items, and verbal interaction via microphones or headsets. Break-out rooms can be created for individual or small groups of students during the live session to allow for differentiated instruction/assignments as needed. In terms of the GCVS “flex” (asynchronous) courses there are staff dedicated to supporting students in the asynchronous program, ESL staff work to monitor and shelter material, and the school provides a summer extension time.

In FY21, GCVS employed three full-time Title I teachers, two for reading and one for mathematics. These teachers provided supports to students who performed below grade level. GCVS special education teachers support students with IEPs. As stated above, three English Learner (EL) teachers provided supports to students whose first language is not English. All general and special education teachers are either Sheltered English Immersion (SEI) endorsed or in the process of obtaining it, which enables them to support ELs in the regular classroom. Students who require accommodation under Section 504 have their assignments and curriculum modified by classroom teachers, as necessary. Students are identified for interventions and/or services are referred to the Response to Intervention (RtI) process, monitored by the two assistant principals and the Family Engagement Team.

The Family Engagement Team reaches out to families when a student’s attendance becomes a problem. GCVS added several liaisons to the team in FY21, to better monitor student performance. In this way, GCVS separated the issues of engagement (attendance) and academic performance.

TECCA reports that staff work to ensure families/students are aware of all expectations for high-quality online learning outcomes. Once enrolled, all students/families receive a welcome call typically within 5 school days by a homeroom teacher to ensure students/families begin the year with personal connection to a teacher, set up regular bi-weekly supportive contact for the student, and to begin establishing an understanding of the expectations both students and families will need to meet as the year progresses.

TECCA also reports that it has a technical support system available to students and families who may be experiencing technical difficulties impeding their access to the school and course materials. Students, caretakers, and learning coaches have access to technical (hardware, software, and Connexus) support services from both Connections Education (TECCA’s contracted partner) personnel and by TECCA faculty and staff. Students, caretakers, and learning coaches have access to our extensive technical support services via webmail and email 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, and can call into the helpdesk.

Additionally, TECCA has the role of student success coach in the middle and high schools to monitor a variety of student metrics, including academic performance, attendance, and course completion status. Student success coaches work directly with a group of homeroom students and complete a biweekly academic check in calls/meetings. In addition to student success coaches, general education teachers, guidance counselors, social workers, special education teachers, and virtual counselors, also monitor and support students who may require an additional layer of support and/or service. At the elementary level, grade level teachers or special education case managers act as homeroom teachers and perform these same responsibilities.

TECCA also has a family engagement coordinator for students who are struggling to meet engagement and attendance expectations. The staff work with both the student and the learning coach to create an academic plan in which the student/family sets goals and tracks progress toward meeting those goals.

In order to support teachers and help to identify any gaps in completion or engagement, the District Leadership Team (DLT) met biweekly to review and discuss at-risk students. School leaders then used this information in their biweekly touch bases with their individual staff members to ensure that all students were receiving the support they needed. The DLT uses metrics to plan for upcoming professional development and ensure teachers had the resources and tools they needed to best engage students in learning.

# Professional Development

According to GCVS, teachers met on a regular basis throughout the 2020-2021 school year. In FY21, with the shortening of the school year to 170 days and the sudden addition of more K-5 classes, GCVS encouraged teachers to collaborate and spend time onboarding newer teachers. During FY21, GCVS continued to hold full faculty meetings and/or team meetings by grade cluster to discuss data (such as the newly implemented Star 360 assessments) and share instructional strategies. GCVS created Professional Learning Communities (PLSs) to map the core curriculum. GCVS’s instructional leadership team met every other week. GCVS created time for special education teachers and general education teachers to collaborate multiple times a week.

During the 2020-2021 school year, GCVS provided the following professional development opportunities and trainings:

* Professional Learning communities regarding curriculum development
* Identifying priority standards using MCAS performance data, mapping the curriculum around priority standards
* Curriculum training specific to Florida Virtual School (FLVS) Elementary
* Improving Instructional Practices for Student Learning
* Teaching Students “At-risk”
* Aurora Institute’s Competency-Based grading workshop (High School)
* Grading for Equity (High School)
* Sheltered English Immersion (Middle School)
* Responsive Classroom (Elementary)
* Response to Intervention procedures
* EDWIN training
* Improving Student Literacy (High School and Middle School)
* Star 360 Assessment Training
* Professional Development for the Transition to Schoology

TECCA reports that once per week, all faculty members attended professional development, training, and collaboration activities on a district and/or school/department levels. During the 2020-2021 school year, TECCA implemented the following mandatory districtwide, department, and school based professional development opportunities and trainings:

* Professional Learning Communities
* Instructional Best Practices to Support Diverse Learners
* Renaissance Star 360: Implementation and Using Benchmark Data to support instruction
* Using Virtual Manipulatives to enhance Math Instruction and Student Achievement
* Curriculum Alignment in High School Social Studies and ELA
* The Virtual Classroom and Virtual Instruction Best Practices
* Training related to the school year cycle and tasks
* MCAS Proctor and Test Administrator Training
* TECCA Special Education, 504, and ELL Program Models and Expectations
* Best Practices in Co-Teaching

TECCA’s grade level teams, content teams, and schools/departments all met regularly to collaborate using MCAS, STAR, and grade-level, course, and/or student achievement data. During these meeting times, teachers reviewed student progress, specifically those who are demonstrating struggle, to determine how to provide individualized support which helped to promote mastery.

# Beyond the regularly scheduled meetings and collaboration opportunities in FY21, TECCA provided opportunities for teachers at both the elementary and middle school level to spend several days throughout the year reviewing prior and current year school data. These “data dive days” focused on using the data to identify gaps in curriculum and to plan instruction for underperforming focus areas. Teachers met both with their grade level peers and participated in vertical alignment activities to ensure that the curriculum is aligned through grade levels.

# Recommended Changes to the Commonwealth Virtual School Program

In FY20, the Department engaged consultants to help update the Commonwealth Virtual School Performance Criteria (Criteria). The Criteria were first developed in 2014 and required updates. During the fall of 2019, the Department began a substantial review and revision process to update these Criteria to incorporate national best practices and standards for virtual school performance. During FY21, the Department worked to revise and refine the Criteria. The Criteria will be finalized in such a time to align with the beginning of each of the CMVS’ next certificate term (July 2022).

Given the mixed performance of virtual schools in Massachusetts as well as nationally, the Department continues to encourage GCVS and TECCA to refine their programs and use autonomies granted by the Commonwealth Virtual School statute to create innovations to increase the effectiveness of their virtual educational programs.

In addition, the Department is collaborating with others on a regional and national level to identify the best ways to support high-quality virtual educational programs, curriculum, and instructional practices.

# Appendix A: CMVS (G.L. c. 71 §94)

Section 94. (a) As used in this section the following words shall, unless the context clearly requires otherwise, have the following meanings: —

“Board,” the board of elementary and secondary education.

“Commissioner”, the commissioner of elementary and secondary education.

“Commonwealth virtual school”, a public school operated by a board of trustees whose teachers primarily teach from a remote location using the internet or other computer-based methods and whose students are not required to be located at the physical premises of the school.

“Certificate”, a certificate of organization issued by the board to a commonwealth virtual school’s board of trustees which governs the operations of the commonwealth virtual school.

“Department”, the department of elementary and secondary education.

“District” or “school district”, the school department of a city, town, regional school district or county agricultural school.

“Education collaborative,” an association of 2 or more school committees or boards of trustees of charter schools established pursuant to section 4E of chapter 40.

(b) On or before October 1, the board shall issue a request for proposals to establish 1 or more commonwealth virtual schools; provided, however, that the board shall not be required to issue a request for proposals for any school year for which a certificate is not available to be awarded. The request for proposals shall be published on the department’s website. Persons or entities eligible to submit a proposal to establish a commonwealth virtual school shall include, but not be limited to: (i) a school district; (ii) 2 or more school districts; (iii) an education collaborative; (iv) an institution of higher education; (v) a non-profit entity; (vi) 2 or more certified teachers; or (vii) parents. Private and parochial schools and for-profit entities shall not be eligible to submit a proposal. A proposal shall be selected from the responses to the request for proposals and an applicant awarded a certificate under the procedures adopted by the board. The request for proposals shall include, but not be limited to, the following terms and conditions that shall be addressed in each response to the request for proposals and, upon selection by the board, shall be incorporated into the certificate to operate a commonwealth virtual school:

(1) the mission, purpose and specialized focus, if any, of the proposed commonwealth virtual school;

(2) the educational program, instructional methodology and services to be offered to students;

(3) the organization of the school by ages of students or grades to be taught and an estimate of the total enrollment of the commonwealth virtual school;

(4) the method for and timetable of admission to the commonwealth virtual school;

(5) the commonwealth virtual school governance and by-laws;

(6) the proposed school year;

(7) how the commonwealth virtual school shall administer state required assessment tests;

(8) a statement of equal educational opportunity which shall state that the commonwealth virtual school shall be open to all students, on a space available basis, and shall not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, religion, sex, gender identity or sexual orientation;

(9) a description of any preferences the school shall give for enrollment and how the school shall conduct a lottery for admission if applications exceed enrollment capacity;

(10) the identity of any third party software or curriculum vendors that the school intends to use;

(11) a proposed arrangement or contract with an organization that shall manage or operate the school, including any proposed or agreed upon payments to such organization;

(12) a demonstration of the applicant’s capacity to support and store all critical student, program and staff data for expedient retrieval and analysis in compliance with federal and state laws;

(13) provisions for cyber safety;

(14) how the school shall notify each school district in writing of the number and grade levels of students who shall be attending the commonwealth virtual school from that district within 10 days of the student registering for enrollment in the commonwealth virtual school;

(15) whether the commonwealth virtual school will offer online courses to students attending other schools;

(16) the financial plan for the operation of the school;

(17) the number and qualifications of teachers and administrators to be employed;

(18) the procedures for evaluation and professional development for teachers and administrators, including what training, if any, shall be provided to teachers who have not previously taught online;

(19) the school’s capacity to address the particular needs of English language learners to learn English and learn content matter;

(20) the school’s plan to conduct outreach to prospective students;

(21) what supports shall be provided to students to help them complete courses, including the school’s strategies for ensuring that an enrolled student shall complete the program and goals regarding course completion and student achievement;

(22) how the school will monitor student progress in order to identify areas of difficulty and assist students who need additional attention;

(23) where relevant, what supports will be provided to help students prepare for college and careers;

(24) the school’s capacity to support students’ social and emotional growth;

(25) how the school shall create a community for students who are enrolled in the commonwealth virtual school;

(26) how the commonwealth virtual school applicant shall include activities to engage students;

(27) what, if any, in person activities, learning or interaction will be provided or offered, including extra-curricular activities;

(28) expectations for age appropriate supervision of students under the age of 14, if applicable;

(29) a description of where students will access the school’s courses, including whether it is in the home or in a location provided and overseen by the commonwealth virtual school applicant;

(30) methods to assure that all students shall have access to necessary technology and materials;

(31) what technical support shall be available to students, including whether the commonwealth virtual school applicant shall offer an orientation for taking an online course before starting the coursework;

(32) how the school shall define and monitor student attendance, including how it shall verify that each student is participating in classes, how truancy shall be addressed and goals regarding student attendance;

(33) expectations and goals for communication between teachers and students and how such interaction shall be documented;

(34) how the school shall involve parents and guardians as partners in the education of the children and goals for parental and family engagement;

(35) the school’s capacity to implement the proposal and provide high quality instructional services;

(36) the school’s capacity to instruct students in the following categories, if the school intends to serve any such students: (i) students with physical or other challenges that make it difficult for them to physically attend a school; (ii) students with medical needs requiring a home or hospital setting; (iii) students with unusual needs requiring a flexible schedule; (iv) students who are over-age for their grade; (v) students who have been expelled; (vi) students who have dropped out or are at risk of dropping out; (vii) students who are pregnant or have a child; (viii) students with social and emotional challenges that make it difficult for them to physically attend a school; (ix) students who feel bullied or cannot attend school because their safety is at risk; (x) gifted and talented students; (xi) students who seek academic work not available in their school; (xii) students in rural communities; and (xiii) students in institutionalized settings;

(37) whether the school proposes a mechanism to provide meals to students eligible for free and reduced price lunch;

(38) the student to teacher ratio; and

(39) whether the school will establish a personalized learning plan for each student, in conjunction with the student’s school district of residence.

(c) The board shall make the final determination on selecting proposals; provided, however, that the board shall only grant a certificate to a qualified applicant as determined by the board; provided further, that the board shall hold a public hearing on the proposals which shall be attended by at least 1 member of the board. Not more than 10 commonwealth virtual schools shall be allowed to operate in the commonwealth at any time; provided, however, that a commonwealth virtual school operated by a single school district, under an agreement entered into by more than 1 school district or by an education collaborative shall not be counted towards this limit if the commonwealth virtual school only enrolls students who reside in the school district, in the school districts that signed the agreement or in the school districts that are members of an education collaborative. The board may authorize a single board of trustees to manage more than 1 commonwealth virtual school; provided, however, that each school is issued its own certificate. Under no circumstances shall the total number of full-time students attending commonwealth virtual schools exceed 2 per cent of the total number of students attending public schools in the commonwealth. In the case of a commonwealth virtual school that is established by a school district, not less than 5 per cent of the students enrolled in the commonwealth virtual school shall be from the school district that established the school. In the case of a commonwealth virtual school that is established by more than 1 school district or by an education collaborative, not less than 5 per cent of the students enrolled in the school shall be from the combined enrollment of the districts that established the school or the districts that are members of the education collaborative.

The board shall give preference to proposals that include an educational program or specialized focus that appropriately addresses 1 or more of the following: students with physical or other challenges that make it difficult for them to physically attend a school; students with medical needs requiring a home or hospital setting; students with unusual needs requiring a flexible schedule; students who are over-age for their grade; students who have been expelled; students who have dropped out; students at risk of dropping out; students who are pregnant or have a child; students with social and emotional challenges that make it difficult for them to physically attend a school; students who feel bullied or cannot attend school because the students’ safety is at risk; gifted and talented students; students who seek academic work not available in their school; students in rural communities; and students in institutionalized settings. The board shall also consider whether proposed schools will create or enhance the opportunity for students to attend virtual schools in all grades from kindergarten through grade 12.

(d) A commonwealth virtual school shall operate under a certificate issued by the board and be governed by a board of trustees. If a district or education collaborative operates the commonwealth virtual school, then the board of trustees shall be appointed by the member school committees of the district or the collaborative board. The board of trustees of a commonwealth virtual school, upon being granted a certificate, shall be deemed to be a public agent authorized by the commonwealth to supervise and control the commonwealth virtual school. A commonwealth virtual school shall be deemed to be a state agency under chapter 268A and members of the board of trustees shall be deemed to be public employees under chapter 268B.

(e) The board of trustees of a commonwealth virtual school shall have all powers necessary or desirable for carrying out its virtual program, including, but not limited to, the power to:

(1) adopt a name and corporate seal; provided, that any name selected shall include the words “commonwealth virtual school”;

(2) acquire real property, from public or private sources, by lease, lease with an option to purchase or by gift, for use as a school facility;

(3) receive and disburse funds for school purposes;

(4) incur temporary debt in anticipation of receipt of funds; provided that, notwithstanding any general or special law to the contrary, the terms of repayment of any commonwealth virtual school’s debt shall not exceed the duration of the school’s certificate without the approval of the board;

(5) solicit and accept grants or gifts for school purposes; and

(6) determine the school’s curriculum and develop the school’s annual budget.

(f) A commonwealth virtual school may provide access to its courses in an existing public school building or any other suitable location; provided, however, that a commonwealth virtual school shall comply with all applicable state and federal health and safety laws and regulations.

(g) The board may waive requirements that students who attend a commonwealth virtual school, attend school for a minimum number of hours or days each school year and may permit students to earn credits by demonstrating competency in a grade or subject matter. Students in commonwealth virtual schools shall be required to meet the same academic standards, testing and portfolio requirements set by the board for students in other public schools.

To ensure that students are learning and demonstrating their knowledge, each commonwealth virtual school shall ensure that students are provided, in each credit-bearing course, multiple synchronous learning opportunities with their teachers in which students are required to participate and share their knowledge.

(h) Commonwealth virtual schools shall comply with chapter 71B; provided, however, that the fiscal responsibility for a student with a disability enrolled in or determined to require a private day or residential school shall remain with the school district where the student resides. If a commonwealth virtual school expects that a student with a disability enrolled in the commonwealth virtual school may be in need of the services of a private day or residential school, it shall convene an individualized education program team meeting for the student. Notice of the team meeting shall be provided to the special education department of the school district in which the child resides at least 5 days in advance. Personnel from the school district in which the child resides shall participate in the team meeting concerning future placement of and services for the child and shall agree on the needed services for the child.

(i) No teacher shall be hired by a commonwealth virtual school who is not certified pursuant to section 38G. Nothing herein shall preclude such teacher from using digital content which may include, but not be limited to, guest lecturers.

(j) A certificate to operate a commonwealth virtual school granted by the board shall be for not less than 3 years and not more than 5 years, as determined by the board. The board shall develop procedures and guidelines for amending, revoking and renewing a virtual school’s certificate. When deciding on certificate renewal, the board shall consider progress made in student academic achievement and whether the school has met its obligations and commitments under the certificate.

(k) The amount of tuition per pupil a school district shall pay for a student residing in the district who is enrolled in a commonwealth virtual school shall be the school choice tuition amount, which shall be paid through the school choice mechanism; provided, that the department may, in consultation with the operational services division, approve alternative tuition amounts proposed by applicants that shall not exceed the state average per pupil foundation budget for students of the same classification and grade level; provided, further, that the department may authorize additional tuition assessments for services required by an individualized education program established pursuant to chapter 71B. If a commonwealth virtual school offers online courses to students attending other schools, the commonwealth virtual school shall work with the student’s district or school to determine whether the online courses meet said district’s or school’s standards and requirements and what the commonwealth virtual school will charge the student’s district or school for such online courses.

The department may retain not more than $75 per pupil for the administration of the commonwealth virtual school program.

The department, in consultation with the department of youth services, shall determine the appropriate tuition responsibility for students who are in the custody of the department of corrections, a sheriff or the department of youth services.

Students enrolled in a commonwealth virtual school shall be counted in the foundation enrollment of the school district where the student resides.

(l) The department shall promulgate rules and regulations creating a reporting requirement for a commonwealth virtual school’s net asset balance at the end of each fiscal year; provided, however, that the report shall include, but not be limited to: (1) the revenue and expenditures for the prior fiscal year with a specific accounting of the uses of public and private dollars; (2) compensation and benefits for teachers, staff, administrators, executives and members of the board of trustees; (3) the amount of funds paid to a management company; (4) the sources of surplus funds, specifically whether the funds are private or public; (5) how surplus funds were used in the previous fiscal year; and (6) the planned use of surplus funds in the upcoming fiscal year and in future fiscal years. The board may establish limits for excess funds that may be retained by commonwealth virtual schools and may require commonwealth virtual schools to return excess funds to school districts.

(m) Each commonwealth virtual school shall submit an annual report, on or before January 1, to the board. The school shall make its report available to the public on its website. The annual report shall be in such form as may be prescribed by the board and shall include, but not be limited to: (1) a discussion of progress made toward the achievement of the goals set forth in the certificate; (2) a list of the programs and courses offered; (3) a description and number of the students enrolled in the commonwealth virtual school by grade level, the number of students eligible for free and reduced price lunch and the number of students who applied and were not admitted; (4) a financial statement describing by appropriate categories the revenue and expenditures for the prior fiscal year and a balance sheet describing the commonwealth virtual school’s assets, liabilities and fund balances or equities; (5) information regarding and a discussion of student attendance and participation; (6) information regarding and a discussion of student-teacher interaction; (7) information regarding and a discussion of student performance in the commonwealth virtual school, including data from state assessments and a comparison of students’ achievement against the achievement of the students in the sending district; (8) a discussion of how many courses were completed and not completed; (9) a discussion of how the school created a community for students; (10) what activities were included to engage students and how students participated in those activities; (11) a discussion of parental involvement; and (12) a discussion of the school’s outreach and recruitment efforts; provided, however, that said report shall include input from teachers and administrators at the virtual school and input from administrators in a district that has established a virtual school or districts that are members of an education collaborative that has established a virtual school.

(n) Each commonwealth virtual school shall maintain an accurate account of all its activities and all its receipts and expenditures and shall annually conduct an independent audit of its accounts. Such audit shall be filed annually, on or before January 1 with the department and the state auditor and shall be in a form prescribed by the state auditor. The state auditor may investigate the budget and finances of commonwealth virtual schools and their financial dealings, transactions and relationships and shall have the power to examine the records of commonwealth virtual schools and to prescribe methods of accounting and the rendering of periodic reports.

(o) On or before September 1, the commissioner shall furnish a supplemental report on the Massachusetts comprehensive assessment system performance results of students served by each commonwealth virtual school and on the racial, ethnic and socio-economic make-up of the students served by each commonwealth virtual school. The commissioner shall also provide information on the number of students enrolled in each commonwealth virtual school who have individualized education programs pursuant to chapter 71B. The department shall make such report available to the public on the department’s website.

(p) On or before September 1, the commissioner shall prepare a report on the implementation and impact of this section, including, but not limited to:

(1) the fiscal impact on sending districts;

(2) any necessary adjustments to tuition rates, including whether the amount should vary based on grade or type of school and the appropriate mechanism for funding virtual schools;

(3) information on course completion and student attendance and participation rates;

(4) the academic achievement of students attending commonwealth virtual schools;

(5) the level of supervision or support needed for students in elementary and middle school;

(6) the support necessary or helpful to ensure that students successfully complete online courses;

(7) the professional development virtual school teachers require;

(8) the appropriate enrollment limit for a virtual school, if any, including information about wait lists; and

(9) the need for any changes to the commonwealth virtual school program.

The report shall be based partially on information in each commonwealth virtual school’s annual report and financial audits. This report shall include input from virtual schoolteachers and administrators. The commissioner shall consult with the digital learning advisory council to prepare this report. The commissioner shall file the report with the clerks of the house and senate, who shall forward the report to the joint committee on education. The department shall make the report available to the public on the department’s website.

(q) The commissioner shall identify and offer information on online courses which are aligned with state academic standards that districts may use and shall publish that list on the department’s website. At least 1 of the online courses listed shall be available at no cost to school districts, provided that such no cost online course is aligned with state academic standards. The list shall be reviewed and updated annually. Nothing in this subsection shall preclude school districts from using other courses not identified by the commissioner.

(r) The board may promulgate regulations for implementation and enforcement of this section, provided that the regulations may include, but shall not be limited to, a provision indicating the appropriate percentage of online academic instruction provided for a school to be considered a commonwealth virtual school pursuant to this section. Upon release of the proposed regulations, the board shall file a copy of the regulations with the clerks of the house of representatives and the senate, who shall forward the regulations to the joint committee on education. Within 30 days of the filing, the committee may hold a public hearing and issue a report on the regulations and file the report with the board. The board, pursuant to applicable law, may adopt final regulations making revisions to the proposed regulations as it deems appropriate after consideration of the report and shall file a copy of the regulations with the chairpersons of the joint committee on education and, not earlier than 30 days after the filing, the board shall file the final regulations with the state secretary.

(s) Nothing in this section shall preclude a student from taking some or all of the student’s classes online when such classes are offered or approved by the school the student attends or by an education collaborative in which the student’s school district participates.

This section shall not apply to a virtual school operated by a single school district if the school enrolls only students residing in the school district; provided, however, that such district shall submit a summary description of the proposed virtual school to the commissioner for review and comment at least 4 months in advance of the opening of the virtual school. The commissioner shall then provide written comments on the proposal to each district’s school committee.

(t) A school committee may, by vote, restrict enrollment of its students in commonwealth virtual schools if the total enrollment of its students in commonwealth virtual schools exceeds 1 per cent of the total enrollment in its district; provided, however, that no student enrolled in a commonwealth virtual school shall be compelled to withdraw as a result of that vote.

# Appendix B: CMVS Tuition by Sending District, FY21[[6]](#footnote-7)

*Sorted by FY21 FTE CMVS enrollment.*

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Sending District** | **FY21 Full Time Equivalent Students** | **FY21 Tuition** |
| Springfield | 216.7 | $2,058,337 |
| Boston | 139.3 | $1,286,662 |
| Worcester | 138.8 | $1,275,653 |
| New Bedford | 77.1 | $716,950 |
| Fall River | 60.8 | $567,040 |
| Wachusett | 51.1 | $465,390 |
| Lynn | 48.5 | $457,584 |
| Chicopee | 46.5 | $432,734 |
| Taunton | 48.0 | $430,262 |
| Lowell | 46.8 | $427,858 |
| Westfield | 44.5 | $411,123 |
| Fitchburg | 43.6 | $402,453 |
| Pittsfield | 43.4 | $389,837 |
| Framingham | 42.0 | $385,497 |
| Barnstable | 41.2 | $370,037 |
| Lawrence | 40.0 | $361,464 |
| Haverhill | 36.1 | $329,650 |
| Bridgewater-Raynham | 35.5 | $314,087 |
| Brockton | 35.6 | $312,728 |
| Holyoke | 31.4 | $298,104 |
| North Attleborough | 31.8 | $293,957 |
| Quabbin | 25.0 | $257,212 |
| Methuen | 28.4 | $255,251 |
| Leominster | 26.8 | $250,843 |
| Greenfield | 25.5 | $244,227 |
| Tantasqua | 22.0 | $243,743 |
| Revere | 26.8 | $238,525 |
| Plymouth | 24.4 | $231,764 |
| Hampden-Wilbraham | 24.7 | $231,012 |
| Wareham | 24.4 | $228,484 |
| Attleboro | 25.7 | $227,149 |
| Agawam | 21.2 | $217,949 |
| Tewksbury | 23.0 | $217,641 |
| Winchendon | 23.5 | $217,185 |
| Dighton-Rehoboth | 24.4 | $214,234 |
| Belchertown | 23.5 | $213,843 |
| Southbridge | 21.5 | $209,969 |
| Watertown | 22.7 | $209,420 |
| Ashburnham-Westminster | 22.0 | $205,691 |
| Freetown-Lakeville | 23.1 | $205,242 |
| Newton | 22.3 | $201,678 |
| Randolph | 21.5 | $199,163 |
| Shrewsbury | 22.8 | $198,990 |
| Everett | 22.3 | $198,458 |
| Gardner | 20.8 | $196,545 |
| Saugus | 21.9 | $193,877 |
| Middleborough | 21.6 | $192,726 |
| Waltham | 21.8 | $188,659 |
| Grafton | 20.1 | $188,120 |
| Franklin | 20.5 | $187,791 |
| Weymouth | 20.5 | $185,441 |
| Dudley-Charlton | 19.9 | $185,032 |
| Ludlow | 20.0 | $179,297 |
| South Hadley | 17.6 | $176,283 |
| Central Berkshire | 17.5 | $175,824 |
| West Springfield | 18.7 | $168,575 |
| Falmouth | 18.8 | $167,082 |
| Medford | 18.2 | $167,013 |
| Westport | 18.5 | $166,220 |
| Dennis-Yarmouth | 17.6 | $159,724 |
| Walpole | 16.3 | $156,053 |
| Amesbury | 17.2 | $153,040 |
| Peabody | 17.0 | $150,966 |
| East Bridgewater | 16.4 | $150,722 |
| Billerica | 17.0 | $147,062 |
| Northampton | 15.3 | $146,708 |
| Marlborough | 15.7 | $143,463 |
| Abington | 15.9 | $142,179 |
| Westford | 15.2 | $139,433 |
| Monomoy | 14.6 | $138,220 |
| Webster | 14.0 | $136,067 |
| Braintree | 15.4 | $135,405 |
| Ayer Shirley | 15.5 | $135,306 |
| Uxbridge | 14.2 | $134,980 |
| Rockland | 15.3 | $134,252 |
| Arlington | 14.3 | $133,234 |
| Quincy | 14.3 | $132,698 |
| Millbury | 14.4 | $127,493 |
| Whitman-Hanson | 12.9 | $126,118 |
| Salem | 14.1 | $125,236 |
| Athol-Royalston | 13.7 | $124,692 |
| Burlington | 13.3 | $120,885 |
| Andover | 13.2 | $119,605 |
| Dartmouth | 13.1 | $118,182 |
| Norton | 13.0 | $117,957 |
| Spencer-East Brookfield | 13.0 | $117,605 |
| Milford | 12.5 | $116,403 |
| Northbridge | 12.3 | $116,400 |
| Douglas | 12.1 | $115,111 |
| Malden | 12.2 | $114,453 |
| Lunenburg | 12.9 | $114,301 |
| Ware | 10.1 | $112,875 |
| Fairhaven | 12.5 | $112,838 |
| Woburn | 12.6 | $112,562 |
| Auburn | 12.9 | $111,359 |
| Nashoba | 11.9 | $108,450 |
| Stoughton | 11.5 | $108,178 |
| Maynard | 10.5 | $107,960 |
| Cambridge | 12.0 | $107,944 |
| Beverly | 11.8 | $107,919 |
| Somerville | 11.9 | $105,023 |
| Natick | 11.6 | $104,961 |
| Sharon | 11.9 | $104,799 |
| Berlin-Boylston | 11.4 | $104,467 |
| Norwood | 11.9 | $103,842 |
| Gateway | 10.1 | $99,254 |
| Danvers | 10.1 | $98,360 |
| North Adams | 10.9 | $96,851 |
| North Brookfield | 10.4 | $96,799 |
| Chelmsford | 10.9 | $96,619 |
| North Andover | 10.1 | $95,957 |
| Gloucester | 10.2 | $95,319 |
| Dracut | 9.6 | $94,714 |
| Narragansett | 10.8 | $93,939 |
| North Middlesex | 10.0 | $93,702 |
| Holliston | 10.2 | $93,503 |
| Bellingham | 10.3 | $92,109 |
| Blackstone-Millville | 10.2 | $92,001 |
| Chelsea | 9.5 | $89,844 |
| Mashpee | 9.5 | $89,370 |
| Palmer | 10.0 | $89,259 |
| Sandwich | 9.8 | $88,338 |
| Easton | 9.8 | $88,087 |
| Hampshire | 9.9 | $87,871 |
| Quaboag Regional | 9.6 | $84,440 |
| Easthampton | 9.4 | $83,693 |
| Masconomet | 8.7 | $83,358 |
| Amherst-Pelham | 8.7 | $82,500 |
| Pentucket | 8.6 | $81,686 |
| Marblehead | 8.3 | $81,123 |
| Belmont | 9.0 | $80,520 |
| Groton-Dunstable | 9.1 | $80,282 |
| Oxford | 8.7 | $80,083 |
| Melrose | 9.0 | $78,864 |
| Westborough | 8.0 | $78,669 |
| Clinton | 9.0 | $77,648 |
| Triton | 8.1 | $77,513 |
| Mansfield | 8.3 | $77,485 |
| Southwick-Tolland-Granville | 7.7 | $74,052 |
| King Philip | 8.0 | $73,731 |
| Reading | 8.2 | $72,912 |
| Nantucket | 8.0 | $72,840 |
| Canton | 7.8 | $72,130 |
| Hudson | 8.3 | $72,086 |
| Marshfield | 7.0 | $71,709 |
| Georgetown | 8.3 | $71,581 |
| Ralph C Mahar | 7.6 | $71,119 |
| Lexington | 7.2 | $70,957 |
| Needham | 8.0 | $70,653 |
| Somerset Berkley | 7.3 | $69,911 |
| Swansea | 7.9 | $69,485 |
| Nauset | 7.8 | $69,244 |
| Holbrook | 7.5 | $65,744 |
| Swampscott | 7.3 | $65,254 |
| Littleton | 7.5 | $64,973 |
| Longmeadow | 7.0 | $63,800 |
| Gill-Montague | 7.1 | $63,223 |
| Newburyport | 7.3 | $62,915 |
| Winthrop | 7.1 | $62,592 |
| Northboro-Southboro | 7.0 | $62,567 |
| Mohawk Trail | 6.2 | $62,500 |
| Wilmington | 7.0 | $61,822 |
| Mendon-Upton | 7.1 | $61,529 |
| Brookline | 6.4 | $61,185 |
| East Longmeadow | 6.8 | $61,093 |
| Tyngsborough | 7.0 | $60,662 |
| Ipswich | 6.6 | $60,520 |
| Hoosac Valley | 6.1 | $59,304 |
| Hamilton-Wenham | 6.8 | $59,103 |
| Mount Greylock | 5.8 | $58,507 |
| Foxborough | 6.1 | $58,403 |
| Duxbury | 6.0 | $58,253 |
| Pembroke | 6.3 | $57,497 |
| Acton-Boxborough | 6.2 | $57,350 |
| Bourne | 6.1 | $56,450 |
| West Boylston | 6.4 | $55,202 |
| Silver Lake | 6.2 | $53,469 |
| Sturbridge | 6.0 | $52,257 |
| Stoneham | 5.6 | $49,841 |
| Berkshire Hills | 5.6 | $48,703 |
| Hopedale | 5.4 | $46,883 |
| Leicester | 5.0 | $46,636 |
| Martha's Vineyard | 5.3 | $46,016 |
| Dedham | 4.8 | $45,817 |
| Southborough | 4.5 | $45,765 |
| Granby | 4.6 | $45,332 |
| Cohasset | 4.4 | $44,689 |
| Pioneer Valley | 5.1 | $44,023 |
| Hadley | 3.2 | $43,385 |
| Orange | 5.0 | $43,330 |
| Southern Berkshire | 4.6 | $42,932 |
| Frontier | 4.5 | $40,969 |
| Old Rochester | 4.4 | $40,592 |
| Sutton | 4.1 | $38,306 |
| Hull | 4.0 | $37,729 |
| West Bridgewater | 4.4 | $37,697 |
| Wakefield | 4.0 | $36,550 |
| Lincoln-Sudbury | 4.0 | $36,145 |
| Seekonk | 4.0 | $35,679 |
| Lee | 4.1 | $35,617 |
| Bedford | 4.0 | $35,088 |
| Hingham | 4.0 | $34,231 |
| Manchester Essex | 3.0 | $33,987 |
| Norwell | 3.8 | $33,753 |
| Ashland | 3.0 | $29,178 |
| Weston | 3.0 | $27,903 |
| Erving | 3.0 | $25,998 |
| Kingston | 3.0 | $25,998 |
| Richmond | 3.0 | $25,998 |
| Winchester | 3.0 | $25,998 |
| Medway | 3.0 | $25,652 |
| Milton | 2.5 | $25,649 |
| Amherst | 2.9 | $24,958 |
| Monson | 2.7 | $23,485 |
| Hatfield | 2.0 | $19,840 |
| Wellesley | 2.0 | $19,798 |
| Millis | 2.0 | $19,527 |
| Lynnfield | 2.1 | $17,939 |
| New Salem-Wendell | 1.9 | $17,523 |
| North Reading | 2.0 | $17,332 |
| Westwood | 2.0 | $17,072 |
| Carver | 1.9 | $16,465 |
| Avon | 1.3 | $13,514 |
| Scituate | 1.4 | $12,988 |
| Nahant | 1.0 | $12,166 |
| Hawlemont | 1.0 | $11,895 |
| Brookfield | 1.4 | $11,786 |
| Halifax | 1.0 | $10,861 |
| Norfolk | 1.0 | $10,571 |
| Berkley | 1.2 | $10,486 |
| Sudbury | 1.1 | $9,099 |
| Somerset | 1.0 | $9,058 |
| Acushnet | 1.0 | $8,666 |
| Brimfield | 1.0 | $8,666 |
| Concord | 1.0 | $8,666 |
| Dover-Sherborn | 1.0 | $8,666 |
| Farmington River | 1.0 | $8,666 |
| Holland | 1.0 | $8,666 |
| Hopkinton | 1.0 | $8,666 |
| Lenox | 1.0 | $8,666 |
| Northborough | 1.0 | $8,666 |
| Sherborn | 1.0 | $8,666 |
| Wales | 1.0 | $8,666 |
| Worthington | 1.0 | $8,666 |
| Medfield | 1.0 | $8,493 |
| Sunderland | 0.8 | $7,106 |
| Harvard | 0.5 | $3,986 |
| Chesterfield-Goshen | 0.1 | $953 |
| Rockport | 0.1 | $693 |
| Wrentham | 0.1 | $520 |
| Middleton | 0.1 | $433 |
| **Total** | **3553.4** | **$32,763,647** |

#

# Appendix C: CMVS Academic Achievement Data

The Department did not issue school, district, or state accountability determinations for the 2019-2020 school year due to the cancellation of state assessments and school closures related to COVID-19. Additionally, the Department did not issue school, district, or state accountability determinations in 2021; spring 2021 MCAS administration included a partial test for grades 3-8 and some grade 3-8 students took the assessment remotely. Due to the disruption caused by COVID-19 and permitted by federal and state waivers, the Department published and held constant the accountability determinations for FY2019 for the 2020-2021 data publication.

**Next Generation MCAS Tests of Spring 2019 - Percent of Students at Each Achievement Level for GCVS**



**Next Generation MCAS Tests of Spring 2019 - Percent of Students at Each Achievement Level for TECCA**



1. GCVS has a three-year certificate to operate from July 1, 2019 through June 30, 2022. TECCA has a five-year certificate to operate from July 1, 2017 through June 30, 2022. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
2. The tuition for special education students is the cost of providing the special education required by the student. G.L. c. 71, § 94(k). [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
3. Until December 2017, the CMVS tuition rate remained at $6,700, less $75 per pupil retained by the Department (total rate of $6,625 per pupil paid to each CMVS). [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
4. <http://www.doe.mass.edu/finance/chapter70/profile.xlsx>. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
5. The “high needs” category includes any student identified as economically disadvantaged, English learners, or students with disabilities. [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
6. <http://www.doe.mass.edu/finance/schoolchoice/> [↑](#footnote-ref-7)