MCIEA School Quality Measures Data Dashboard: Frequently Asked Questions

What is MCIEA?

The Massachusetts Consortium for Innovative Education Assessment (MCIEA) is a partnership of seven public school districts and their local teacher unions, joined together to create a fair and effective accountability system that offers a more dynamic picture of student learning and school quality than a single standardized test. Formed in 2016, the Consortium believes in a new accountability model that champions students, educators, and families, and reflects what the community wants to know about our schools. MCIEA's system focuses on a school quality framework that includes multiple measures of student engagement, student achievement, and school environment, and emphasizes performance assessments in the classroom to measure students' deeper mastery of content and skills. Teachers are at the heart of improving student learning and are directly engaged in all aspects of the work

What is the MCIEA school quality measures framework?

The MCIEA school quality framework – derived from a combination of empirical findings, public polling, and focus groups with local stakeholders – is comprised of five categories: three inputs (Teachers and Leadership, School Culture, and Resources) and two outcomes (Academic Learning and Community and Well-Being).

How was the MCIEA school quality measures framework developed?

The framework was developed by a close reading of empirical research to derive key factors related to high-quality schools and by asking school stakeholders what they care about most when it comes to school quality. In the fall of 2016, MCIEA held focus groups with more than 250 students, teachers, family members, school leaders, and district administrators. Feedback from these groups helped to finalize the framework.

How does MCIEA measure school quality?

Consistent with its principles and best practices, MCIEA uses multiple measures to assess school quality. Specifically, MCIEA combines administrative data (e.g., student-teacher ratios, graduation rates, number of art teachers per student) with two survey measures: a student perception survey administered to all students in grades 4-12 and a teacher perception survey given to all teachers.

What is the MCIEA school quality data dashboard?

First it is important to understand what the school quality dashboard is *not*: the dashboard is not designed to rank, rate, or sort schools according to their performance. MCIEA believes

that no single measure -- especially not a single standardized test -- can adequately determine the quality of a school; rather, a school's progress must be assessed holistically across multiple categories, each with multiple measures. The MCIEA school quality dashboard is a tool designed to help users -- including district leaders, school leaders, teachers, and community members -- better understand a school's performance across any one of multiple categories, using multiple measures. This depth of understanding can be used by school communities to celebrate their strengths and to hone in on areas that need improvement.

Where do the MCIEA surveys come from? How do I know they're reliable?

The majority of MCIEA survey scales come from previously validated survey instruments, including those used by the Chicago Consortium for School Research and the CORE Districts in California. A full list of the measures can be found here. When previously validated measures were not available to measure a category in our framework, we worked with experts in survey design to draft original scales. These scales are assessed each year for reliability and validity and – when necessary – items are adjusted or changed. This work suggests that our surveys have high degrees of reliability.

When is the MCIEA data collected?

MCIEA surveys are administered through an anonymous online survey link to teachers and students in the spring, according to individual school and district schedules. MCIEA asks districts for administrative data at the end of the school year.

How can I tell whether my school is doing well or not?

MCIEA believes that each school is characterized by areas in which they excel and areas in which they could improve. A "performance spectrum" on each page assesses the extent to which a school is meeting or exceeding community-wide standards for a particular category or measure. The "approval zone" was set by polling and interviewing stakeholders on what would constitute an acceptable level of performance for a school. Because MCIEA believes that all schools can and should improve, the zones below the approval zone are defined by the estimated number of years required for improvement.

What does it mean if there are "insufficient responses" for my school?

To help ensure that the data displayed is as representative as possible of a particular school, we require a minimum response rate of 30 percent of students or teachers. If you see a message of "insufficient responses," it means that the school did not meet that threshold for a particular year.

Can I see responses by subgroup?

The dashboard does not yet have this functionality. However, our goal is that users will be able to disaggregate the results by subgroup – including by students' race, economic status, language status, and special education status.
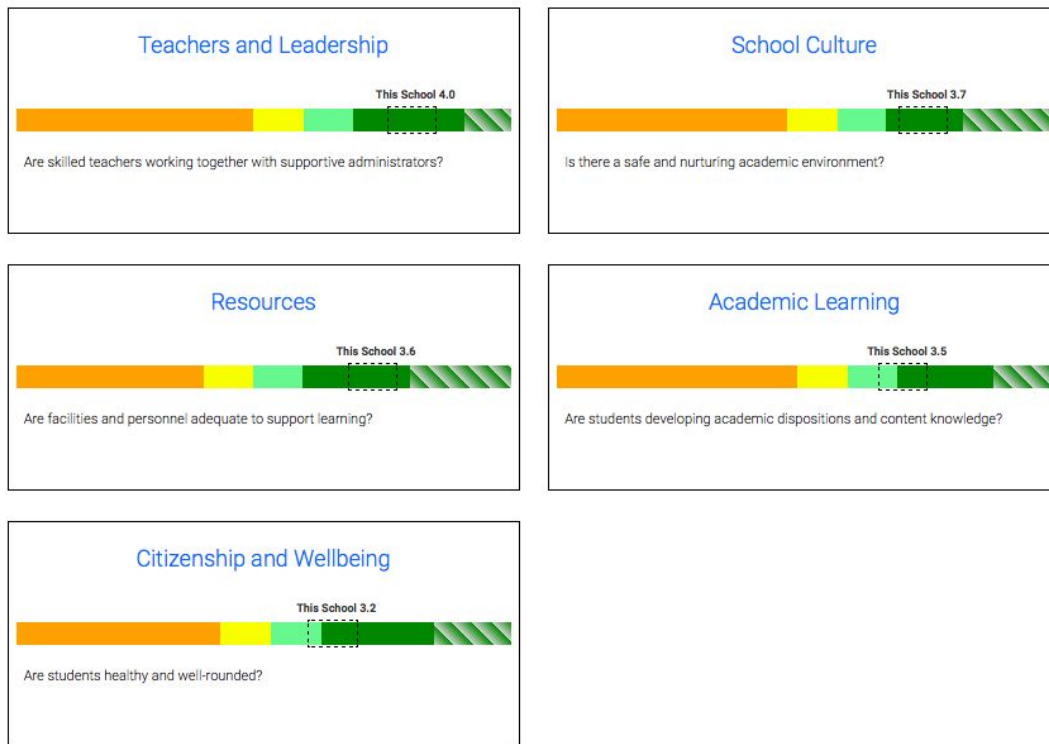
How do I read the dashboard?

Click on the name of the school, and you will see a summary page indicating the school's performance across the five dimensions of the school quality framework. Each dimension is summarized with a guiding question that the data can help answer. At the top of the summary page – as with all pages – you will see the name of the school, the years of data available (which you can toggle between), and the district name.

By choosing and clicking one of the dimensions, you can see the subcategories. Continuing to click through subcategories, you can also see survey scales and individual survey questions. A sample page with survey data is below.

School Name

Data from 2017-2018 school year.

Show year: 2016-2017

District: | District

Toggle between multiple years of data

School Culture > Academic Challenge > Academic Challenge > Academic Challenge Scale

These questions come from the "Academic Challenge" scale, under "School Culture."

Academic Challenge Scale

The following survey questions concern perceptions of Academic Challenge.

Total Responses: 319   **Average Response:** 4.0 (out of 5)   **Administrative Data:** 4.0 (out of 5)

"Total Responses" indicates the total number of responses for all questions on measure. The "Average Response" is the average of all these responses.
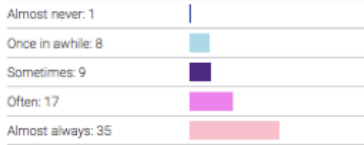
This School 4.0

How often does your teacher ask you to explain your answers?

Total Responses: 70
Most Popular: Almost always
Source: Students

Histogram | Raw Data

Click on "Histogram" to see a distribution of responses.

Almost never: 1	
Once in awhile: 8	
Sometimes: 9	
Often: 17	
Almost always: 35	

How often does your teacher take time to make sure you understand the material?

Total Responses: 70
Most Popular: Almost always
Source: Students

Histogram | Raw Data

The question text

The survey from which these responses come: student or teacher

4, 3, 4, 4, 4, 3, 4, 3, 3, 5, 3, 5, 3, 5, 5, 4, 3, 3, 4, 4, 5, 5, 3,
4, 2, 4, 5, 4, 5, 5, 2, 5, 5, 5, 4, 3, 2, 4, 4, 5, 3, 5, 3, 4, 5, 5, 3, 4, 3, 4, 5,
5, 3, 2, 3, 4, 5, 4, 4, 5, 3, 5, 5, 4, 4

How well does your school foster academic challenge for all students?

Total Responses: 13
Most Popular: Quite challenging
Source: Teachers

Histogram | Raw Data

Not at all challenging: 0	
A little bit challenging: 0	
Somewhat challenging: 1	
Quite challenging: 9	
Extremely challenging: 3	
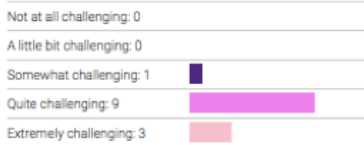
How effectively does your school challenge students who are struggling academically?

Total Responses: 13
Most Popular: Quite hard
Source: Teachers

Histogram | Raw Data

4, 3, 2, 5, 4, 4, 3, 4, 4, 4, 5, 4

Click on "Raw Data" to see the individual responses.

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