

## **SQF Tier Update**

In November 2014, the Boston School Committee voted to adopt the School Quality Framework (SQF) developed by the School Quality Working Group (SQWG) with input from a broad and diverse set of community stakeholders, a holistic means to assess school quality. School tiers were initially calculated based on 2013 and 2014 data to be implemented during school choice season in Fall 2015.

BPS twice delayed the implementation of the SQF in 2015 and 2016. In 2017 the tiers were re-calculated using 2015 and 2016 data for Fall 2017 implementation. However since the tiers were primarily based on PARCC data, mirroring the state's accountability methodology, schools were "held harmless", meaning that their tier could improve from their initial SQF tier, but schools would not be penalized based on PARCC data. High schools were also exempted from being tiered as they do not require a tier for home-based assignment.

In November 2018 tiers were updated based on 2017 and 2018 data. Since the tiers were updated using current year data (2018), it was not possible to make tiers available to schools and families until immediately prior to school choice season. Due to this short timeline families choice lists were expanded to include schools available to them based on either of the most recent tier calculations.

Moving forward BPS would like to provide more transparency and predictability for schools and families with respect to when tiers will be updated.

## **Options**

### **1. Full Update Every Two Years**

- Calculate data every two years. Next calculation in Fall 2020
- Do not publish any new data in between calculations

### **2. Full Update Every Year**

- Calculate data every year. Next calculation in Fall 2019

### **3. Update tiers every year with Soft Landing**

- Calculate data every year. Next calculation in Fall 2019
- Families receive all schools on both calculations
- Displayed most recently calculated tiers

## Tier Change Analysis

| Tier | # of Schools (2017) | # of Schools (2018) |
|------|---------------------|---------------------|
| 1    | 31                  | 41                  |
| 2    | 30                  | 19                  |
| 3    | 8                   | 21                  |
| 4    | 9                   | 20                  |
| N/A  | 44                  | 21                  |

**Notes:** In 2017, high schools did not receive tiers. Tier 4 includes overrides

Compared to the hold-harmless tiers that were implemented in 2017, a full 2018 update would've resulted in the following distribution of tier changes for schools. 25 schools would keep the same tier, 20 schools would improve one or more tiers, and 28 schools would decline one or more tiers.



**Note:** High Schools did not receive tiers in 2017 and are excluded from change analysis.

- Seven schools moved by two or more tiers in a positive direction from the previous hold-harmless tier:
- 17 Schools moved by two or more tiers in a negative direction from the previous hold-harmless tier:
- While high schools did not receive tiers in 2017, high schools' SQF data was calculated in both 2017 and 2018. High schools with the greatest change between the 2017 calculation and 2018

## High Schools

High schools did not receive tiers last year, but their data was calculated. 2017 and 2018 tiers for high schools:

| Tier | # of High Schools (2017) | # of High Schools (2018) |
|------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1    | 4                        | 9                        |
| 2    | 9                        | 7                        |
| 3    | 6                        | 4                        |
| 4    | 8                        | 7                        |
| NA   | 8                        | 7                        |

**Note:** Tier 4 includes overrides. 2017 Tiers are calculated without hold harmless and never published.

## Analysis of Options

|           | <b>2 Year Update</b>                     | <b>Every Year Update</b>             | <b>Soft Landing</b>   |
|-----------|--|--------------------------------------|---|
| Strengths | Most continuity for schools and families | Most up-to-date information utilized | Newest data is utilized.<br><br>Soft landing for schools as they will continue to appear on families lists<br><br>Provides the greatest number of options for families. |
| Drawbacks | Does not provide most recent data        | More volatility for families         | Increased number of choices for families = increased transportation   |

### Notes:

Most schools received a school quality tier, however, there are some schools, such as early education centers as well as special education and alternative schools that are not given a score because they do not have students who take standardized tests or they are specialized schools.

### Historic SQF Tier Calculations:

2015 tiers = based on 13/14 (Not utilized for assignment)

2017 tiers = 15/16 (Assignment based on 2015 & 2017 tiers = better of the two calculations)

2018 tiers = 17/18 (Assignment based on 2017 & 2018 tiers = better of the two calculations)