



# SEZP // Springfield Empowerment Zone Partnership

The Springfield Empowerment Zone Partnership (SEZP) is a unique collaboration of the **Springfield Public Schools** (district), **Springfield Education Association** (teacher's union), and **Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education** (state).

## Who We Are

Established in 2015, SEZP combines school-level flexibility and autonomy with strong local and state support and accountability to improve the longitudinal life outcomes of the nearly **5,000 students** in the **16 Springfield Public Middle and High Schools** it manages and operates.

In all of its work, SEZP is in pursuit of equity and anti-racism, acknowledging the systemic oppression our students and families encounter daily and working to disrupt these provision gaps urgently and courageously.

We believe that principals and teachers should have the power to make decisions tailored to their students' unique needs. We believe in the value of local partnerships and community participation.

## What We Value

- ✓ **Developing the whole child** to give them the enduring intellectual, social and emotional skills and development necessary for deeper learning
- ✓ **Providing students with a clear path to financial independence** and lifelong success through early exposure to college and high-growth career pathways
- ✓ **Differences in people** and how a racially, multilingual, and culturally diverse community enhances the learning environment
- ✓ **Teacher voice and participation** to drive change within our schools and meet their students' unique needs
- ✓ **Our families, caregivers, and local community partners** and the expertise they provide in developing our students

*"SEZP demonstrates a collaborative approach to turning around low-performing schools and making them sustainable and accountable. This model gives our schools the flexibility and the tools needed to have our students and staff succeed."*

**Daniel Warwick, Superintendent**  
Springfield Public Schools

*"The Zone partnership works in a way where there's collaboration. There's respect. We can have open-ended conversations, agree to disagree and still come out shaking hands."*

**Tracy Sasanecki, President**  
Springfield Education Association (Teacher's Union)

# Our Impact

**4**  
New Student-Centered Schools Launched  
*(dual language, newcomers, over-age)*

**4**  
New Wall-to-Wall Early College High Schools Launched

**↑ 160%**  
School Leaders of Color  
*(over 5 years)*

**↑ 54%**  
Educators of Color  
*(over 5 years)*

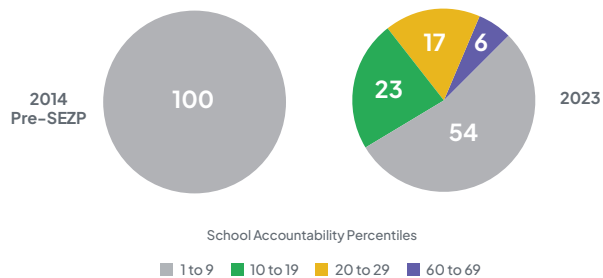
**\$3+ million**  
Grants to Springfield CBOs for Out-of-School Time  
*(over 2 years)*

**96%**  
of Teachers Rated Most Recent Contract

- ✓ Since 2017, only three schools serving grades 6–12 in the entire state of Massachusetts have exited underperforming status – two are SEZP schools, including the single highest improving school in the state.
- ✓ Parents continue to be satisfied with the Zone’s progress as evidenced by the following nationally-normed survey results: 74% of surveyed parents approve of the Zone’s expectations for teachers, 73% approve of school leadership and if given the opportunity, 69% of parents would not change their student’s schools.

## Increase in Quality Seats

% of SEZP Students Enrolled in Schools by Accountability Percentiles



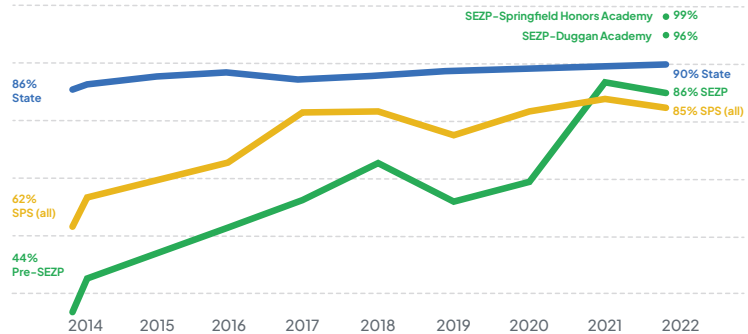
### 46% Increase in Quality Seats Across the Zone

In 2014, 0% of SEZP students were in quality seats.\* Today, 46% of SEZP students are in quality seats.

\*Schools whose state accountability percentile ranking, a measurement of school quality as determined by the state, is above 10%

## Increase in High School Readiness

Graduation Rates



### 40% Increase in High School Graduation Rate

Currently serving over 80% of Springfield’s middle school-aged students, the totality of the Zone’s impact can be seen in rising high school graduation rates across the city, as students are arriving to 9th grade more prepared. During the Zone’s existence, Springfield Public Schools have overall improved their graduation rate from 62% in 2014 to 85% in 2022.

## About Springfield, MA



**#3**  
Most Populous City in State

**#1**  
Lowest Income Per-Capita in the State

**24,000**  
Students in Public Schools

**92%**  
Students of Color

## Interested in learning more?

**Matt Brunell**  
Co-Executive Director

**Colleen Curran**  
Co-Executive Director

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