

**Board of Elementary and Secondary Education
Assessment Committee Meeting
DESE, 75 Pleasant Street, Malden, MA
March 22, 2016, 11:40 a.m.-12:45 p.m.**

Members of the Committee Present:

Dr. Roland Fryer, Committee Chair

Mr. Paul Sagan, Board Chair

Secretary of Education James Peyser

Dr. Penny Noyce

Mr. Donald Willyard

Mr. Paul Toner (Board of Higher Education Representative)

Mitchell D. Chester, Commissioner of Elementary and Secondary Education, Secretary to the Board

The Committee unanimously approved the minutes of the January 13, 2016 Assessment Committee Meeting.

Deputy Commissioner Jeff Wulfson informed committee members that the various assessment working groups continue to hold meetings and have begun to make recommendations. He said the Department's review of the mathematics and English language arts (ELA) framework, after five years of implementation, continues. Mr. Wulfson said the Department continues to engage the field and policy associations to promote the framework review tool on our website.

Associate Commissioner Michol Stapel, said grade 10 MCAS testing began today, and MCAS testing in grades 3-8 will begin on March 28. She said PARCC testing will begin sometime after April vacation. She said the assessment office is holding face-to-face meetings and virtual training with districts prior to testing. Ms. Stapel reminded Board members of districts' assessment choice with 70 percent administering PARCC and 30 percent administering MCAS.

Mr. Wulfson informed committee members of a recent report in artificial intelligence scoring for assessments. He said the Department is not moving in that direction, nor is it using artificial intelligence for its testing program. He said the Department will follow the research and proceed cautiously.

Associate Commissioner Bill Bell said the state's assessment bid is now public. He said proposals are due on May 6, and leading up to submission the Department will hold question and answer sessions and a bidder's conference. Mr. Bell said a final selection will likely occur in July. Secretary Peyser asked how the Department will handle different trade off with financial constraints. He requested that policy related choices related to the contract be brought back to the Board or committee for input. Commissioner Chester said he will come back to the Board when bids are submitted with recommendations. Mr. Willyard asked about negotiable and non-negotiables in the contracts. Mr. Wulfson said the request for responses identifies the core work as well as additional areas to explore.

Ms. Stapel updated the committee on the test administration workgroup. She said the group met twice and includes a variety of roles by expertise, grade levels, and those that administered MCAS and PARCC. She said the workgroup talked about the timing of the test, computer-based testing, and testing window. Mr. Wulfson said the Department and the Massachusetts

Association of School Superintendents are hosting a meeting next week to discuss technology and computer-based testing.

Dan Wiener, administrator of inclusive assessment, updated the committee on the accessibility workgroup, which consists of thirty individuals. He said PARCC offers many accommodations for students with disabilities and English language learners, but does not include some accommodations that Massachusetts offers with MCAS. He said the group discussed graphic organizers, paper and computer-based testing, timed testing, and expanded accommodations.

Senior Associate Commissioner Brooke Clenchy reviewed the work of the high school testing group. She said the group looked at the high school testing program for English Language Arts, mathematics, science, and history/social science, with a focus on the competency determination and college and career readiness. Ms. Clenchy said the work group included thirty-five representatives from ESE, the Department of Higher Education, teachers, principals, department heads, superintendents, and college professors. Mr. Wulfson said the transition to a high-school standard is very sensitive due to the competency determination, and we want to make sure our students have enough exposure to the assessment.

Ms. Clenchy also updated the committee on the ELA and mathematics review panel which includes forty-one K-12 educators, curriculum specialists, higher education faculty, and others to identify possible refinements to the standards. She said the groups met several times, and will continue to meet over the summer. Mr. Wulfson said the Board will have an opportunity to review the comments, and release the frameworks for additional comments. Commissioner Chester said the comments thus far are very targeted and constructive.

David Buchanan, assistant director of literacy and humanities, said the Department requested members to apply for the history/social science review panel. He said the high school testing work group did point to a history/social science test in their proposals. Mr. Buchanan said a framework survey will be available in the spring or summer and the review panel will convene in the fall.

The meeting adjourned at 12:45 p.m.