

**Board of Elementary and Secondary Education  
Assessment Committee Meeting  
DESE, 75 Pleasant Street, Malden, MA  
May 26, 2016, 3:40 p.m.-4:45 p.m.**

Members of the Committee Present:

Mr. Paul Sagan, Board Chair

Secretary of Education James Peyser (designee Tom Moreau)

Mr. Donald Willyard

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

Committee Members Absent: Dr. Roland Fryer, Dr. Penny Noyce, Mr. Paul Toner (DHE Designee)

Commissioner Chester welcomed board members to the committee meeting which will include a monthly update on the development of the next generation MCAS assessment and other related items.

The Committee deferred the approval of the minutes of the April 25, 2016 Assessment Committee Meeting.

Associate Commissioner Michol Stapel said PARCC paper-based testing is complete and computer-based PARCC testing runs through June. She said there have not been any wide-spread issues to report. In response to Chair Sagan's question about issues in prior years, Ms. Stapel said the PARCC call center has seen the greatest improvement. She confirmed that some districts who previously administered PARCC online switched to paper administration this year. Chair Sagan requested an update on prior testing issues.

Deputy Commissioner Jeff Wulfson said there is some nervousness amongst schools and districts regarding a possible mode-effect with paper versus online tests. He said the Department is working on the issues and hopes to minimize the disruption. Mr. Wulfson said testing refusals do not seem to be a wide-spread issue in Massachusetts, although our data is antidotal at the moment. Commissioner Chester said he visited several schools around the state during the testing windows. He said it is not clear to what extent the mode-effect is due to the presentation of items or familiarity with technology. Commissioner Chester said the National Assessment of Educational Progress will be given online and they will study potential mode effects.

Mr. Wulfson said there was test security breach, which PARCC responded too. Ms. Stapel said the representative sample used last year for the reporting of statewide results is much different this year due to the majority of districts choosing PARCC. She said Massachusetts will not be able to report statewide results this year. Mr. Moreau said the Department must make the short term challenges of the assessment transition well know and clear.

Rob O'Donnell, of the Office of Planning and Research, said the Department received two bids for the next generation assessment from American Institutes for Research whose subcontractor would Data Recognition Corporation and Measured Progress whose subcontractor would include Pearson Education North America. He said the two bidders will present demonstrations to the review panel in June.

Mr. Wulfson said the Department is revisiting its relationship with the PARCC consortium as the contract comes to an end. He said the discussions continue with regard to accessing PARCC content for the next generation assessment. In response to Mr. Willyard's question regarding the selection of test questions, Mr. Wulfson said Massachusetts is choosing the best test items from PARCC and creating new items. Mr. Wulfson confirmed that Massachusetts has contracted with both for-profit and non-profit testing companies.

Mr. Wulfson said he expects to produce a draft concept paper with the recommendations of the working groups to share with the field in the near future. Ms. Stapel said the Department received over 300 applications from educators to sit on the test content review panels. She said each grade level and subject assessment has a corresponding test content panel. Final selections will be made in early June. Bob Lee, the Department's MCAS Chief Analyst and PARCC coordinator, said the MCAS Technical Advisory Committee met to discuss best practices for performance levels, performance level descriptors, and other reporting topics.

Ken Klau, Director of Digital Learning, said the Department and the Association of School Superintendents convened 300 school and district leaders to discuss technology and digital readiness. He said Massachusetts districts are entitled to \$42.4 million in federal E-rate funds, but only \$16.7 million was disbursed. He said this is due to a variety of reasons including administrative issues on the federal level. Mr. Klau said there are many tools on our website to assist districts with e-rate, technology planning, and readiness assessment tools. He said the state information technology office (MassIT) has been very helpful to the Department's efforts to secure additional funding for districts and to support them. Mr. Klau said the Department, Executive Office of Education, and MassIT are working with the Education Superhighway to further assist districts with their technology planning.

Mr. Wulfson said the Department plans to attend association sponsored conferences to update the field on the assessment development, including the joint conference of superintendents and school committee members. He said the review of the English language arts and mathematics standards are still underway. He said encouraged educators and members of the public to complete the standards survey and provide feedback. Mr. Wulfson also informed committee members of the accountability system survey form on our website.

Chair Sagan requested that the Department reach out to members to schedule assessment committee meetings throughout the summer.

The meeting adjourned at 4:45 p.m.