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The Massachusetts Board of Education

Special Meeting Agenda

Massachusetts Board of Elementary and Secondary Education
Department of Elementary and Secondary Education
75 Pleasant Street
Malden, MA 02148
Monday, December 15, 2008
6 p.m.

Item for Discussion:

1. [Report of the Task Force on 21st Century Skills](#) - **Discussion**

Regular Meeting Agenda

Massachusetts Board of Elementary and Secondary Education
Department of Elementary and Secondary Education
75 Pleasant Street
Malden, MA 02148
Tuesday, December 16, 2008
9 a.m.

[Briefing](#)

Comments from the Chair

Comments from the Commissioner

Comments from the Secretary

Statements from the Public

Routine Business:

Approval of the Minutes of the November 18, 2008 Regular Meeting - **Vote**

Items for Discussion and Action:

1. TIMSS (Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study) Report - **Discussion**
2. [Report of the Task Force on 21st Century Skills](#) - **Continuing Discussion**
3. Charter Schools: Renewals for Five Schools: [Berkshire Arts & Technology](#), [Conservatory Lab](#), [Hill View](#), [KIPP](#), and [Robert M. Hughes](#) - **Initial Discussion**
4. [Charter Schools: Status Report on Uphams Corner Charter School](#) - **Initial Discussion**
5. [State Student Advisory Council Trimester Report](#) - **Discussion**

Other Items for Information:

6. Education-Related News Clippings
7. Report on Grants and [Charter School Extended Loan Term Approved by the Commissioner](#)
8. [FY 2010 Budget Update: Board's Budget Submission to Secretary of Education](#)
9. Directions to the Meeting

last updated: December 15, 2008

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The Massachusetts Board of Education

Special Board Meeting on 21st Century Skills Task Force Report

To: Members of the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education

From: Maura Banta, Chair

Date: December 8, 2008



This memo is designed to let you know my plans for conducting the December 15 meeting at which we will discuss the recommendations of the 21st Century Skills Task Force. Additional background materials for the discussion will be included in the Board book that you will receive in a few days.



At our November meeting, Gerald Chertavian led us through a presentation of the recommendations that came from the work of the Board's Task Force on 21st Century Skills. At the conclusion of the presentation we agreed to hold a special meeting this month to discuss the report recommendations and next steps. This special meeting will be held on Monday, December 15 from 6-9 p.m. in the third floor Board rooms at the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education. Dinner will be available from 5-6 p.m. on the fifth floor.

To help guide our discussion I have invited three experts to join us: Richard Murnane, a Harvard University professor of education and society; E.D. Hirsch, Jr., who is the founder and chairman of the Board for the Core Knowledge Foundation; and Michael Cohen, president of Achieve.

I plan to begin the meeting with a period of open Board discussion on the report, and then invite the three experts to comment both on the report's recommendations as well as on issues that surface during the Board's discussion. For the remainder of the session I would like the Board discussion to resume. Before we conclude the evening we will identify next steps.

Thank you for setting aside the additional time this month for this important meeting. As I have said before, this is an important topic as it will help us define the next phase of education reform for the Commonwealth.

  Enclosure: White Paper
School Reform in the New Millennium: Preparing All Children for 21st Century Success

  Presentation: Moving the Massachusetts Public Schools into the 21st Century

last updated: December 8, 2008

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The Massachusetts Board of Education

Briefing for the December 15, 2008 Special Meeting and the December 16, 2008 Regular Meeting

To: Members of the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education

From: Mitchell D. Chester, Ed.D., Commissioner

Date: December 5, 2008

The next regular meeting of the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education will be on Tuesday, December 16, 2008, at the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education in Malden. The meeting will start at 9 a.m. and will adjourn by 12:30 p.m. The Board also will hold a special meeting on Monday evening, December 15, 2008, from 6-9 p.m. in the same location. (A light supper will be provided for Board members starting at 5 p.m.) If you need overnight accommodations or any additional information about the schedule, please call Belinda Wilson at (781) 338-3118.

Overview

Special Meeting

The topic for discussion at our special meeting on Monday evening is the Report of the Task Force on 21st Century Skills. Task Force chair Gerald Chertavian and several members of the task force presented their report and recommendations to the Board on November 18th. This is an opportunity for the Board to review and discuss the report in depth. No votes are scheduled.

To help guide our discussion, Chair Maura Banta has invited three experts to join us: Richard Murnane, Harvard University professor of education and society; E.D. Hirsch, Jr., founder and chairman of the Board for the Core Knowledge Foundation; and Michael Cohen, president of Achieve.

Regular Meeting

The agenda for our regular meeting on Tuesday morning includes a report on the Commonwealth's participation in the Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study, continuing discussion of the report of the Task Force on 21st Century Skills, initial review of six charter school matters, and a report from the State Student Advisory Council.

Comments from the Chair

Comments from the Commissioner

Comments from the Secretary

We will each brief the Board on current issues and activities.

Items for Discussion and Action

1. TIMSS (Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study) Report - Discussion

In August 2006 the Board voted to have Massachusetts participate as its own "nation" in the 2007 administration of the Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS), allowing educators the rare opportunity to compare the performance of the Commonwealth's students to that of their peers worldwide. Participation in TIMSS provides us with another benchmark against which to calibrate our progress in raising student achievement. Participation involved a random sampling of 50 schools and 2,000 students at grades 4 and 8. Fourth graders completed a 30-minute questionnaire and took a 72-minute test with math and science questions. Eighth graders completed a 30-minute questionnaire and took a 90-minute test in math and science. The tests, which are given every four years, were administered in April/May 2007. We are receiving and releasing the results this month and I will present the report to the Board.

2. Report of the Task Force on 21st Century Skills - Continuing Discussion

Chair Banta will recap the discussion and anticipated next steps from our special meeting.

3. Charter Schools: Renewals for Five Schools: Berkshire Arts & Technology, Conservatory Lab, Hill View, KIPP, and Robert M. Hughes - Initial Discussion

At the Board's meeting in November, we presented an overview of the charter school review and renewal process. Another copy of the PowerPoint presentation is enclosed for easy reference. The Board will take action on renewal of 11 charters in this fiscal year. Five charter renewals are presented to the Board this month for initial review and discussion: Berkshire Arts & Technology, Conservatory Lab, Hill View, KIPP, and Robert M. Hughes. Associate Commissioner Jeff Wulfson and Charter Schools Director Mary Street will be at the Board meeting to respond to any questions about charter school matters. The Board will vote in January on these charter renewals.

4. Charter Schools: Status Report on Uphams Corner Charter School - Initial Discussion

The Board renewed the charter of Uphams Corner Charter School in 2007 with five conditions that the school had to meet by specified dates. The materials under Tab 4 summarize the five conditions and report on the school's progress. I will present a recommendation to you at the December 16th meeting.

5. State Student Advisory Council Trimester Report - Discussion

Board member AJ Fajnzylber, who chairs the State Student Advisory Council, will present the council's trimester report. He also will discuss with the Board the "On-Campus Student Voter" bill. The materials AJ has prepared are enclosed under Tab 5.

Other Items for Information

6. Education-Related News Clippings

Enclosed are several recent articles about education.

7. Report on Grants and Charter School Extended Loan Term Approved by the Commissioner

Enclosed under Tab 7 is a report on grants I approved in the last month, per the Board's vote in October 2008 to delegate grant approvals to the commissioner. This authorization allows us to make decisions and inform grant applicants on a timely basis. The Board also voted in October 2008 to delegate to the commissioner authority to approve extended loan terms for charter schools, a routine administrative matter. Under the charter school statute, a charter school may incur temporary debt in anticipation of receipt of funds, but requires approval from the Board if it wishes to agree to repayment terms that exceed the duration of the school's charter. The Commonwealth has no liability for any portion of these loans. The second item enclosed under Tab 7 is a memo on one charter school extended loan term that I approved on the Board's behalf under this authorization.

8. FY 2010 Budget Update: Board's Budget Submission to Secretary of Education

After the Board's vote last month on the FY 2010 maintenance and aspirational budget recommendations, we received further direction from the Administration about reductions to be made in the maintenance level. I will provide Board members with a copy of our budget transmittal letter to Secretary Reville.

9. Directions to the Meeting

If you have questions about any agenda items, please call me. I look forward to seeing you in Malden on December 15th and 16th.

last updated: December 10, 2008

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The Massachusetts Board of Education

Charter Renewal - Initial Discussion for Berkshire Arts and Technology Charter Public School

To: Members of the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education

From: Mitchell D. Chester, Ed.D., Commissioner

Date: December 5, 2008

This month, the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education (Board) will have an initial discussion of the charter renewal application of Berkshire Arts and Technology Charter Public School (BArT). The Board will vote on this renewal at its meeting on January 27, 2009.

Berkshire Arts and Technology Charter Public School

BArT, a regional Commonwealth charter school, is located in Adams. The school opened in 2004. BArT is chartered to serve grades 6-12, with a maximum enrollment of 308. BArT reached its maximum grade span in 2007-08, and is currently serving 246 students in grades 6-12. It expects to reach its maximum enrollment in 2010-11. BArT is chartered to serve students from Northern Berkshire County and currently enrolls approximately 27% of its students from Adams, 41% from North Adams, 19% from Pittsfield, and the remainder from approximately 12 other communities.

The school's mission statement reads: "The Berkshire Arts and Technology Charter Public School integrates the study of the arts and technology with core subjects to promote mastery of academic skills and content, prepare students for college and graduate independent thinkers, dynamic workers and active citizens for life. The school provides middle school and high school students in Northern Berkshire County with an intellectual community that regards everyone, including teachers and parents, as perpetual learners."

Basis of Recommendations Regarding the Renewal of Charters

The charter school regulations state that "[t]he decision by the Board to renew a charter shall be based upon the

presentation of affirmative evidence regarding the success of the school's academic program; the viability of the school as an organization; and the faithfulness of the school to the terms of its charter" 603 CMR 1.12. Consistent with the regulations, recommendations regarding renewal are based on the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education's (Department) evaluation of the school's performance in these areas. In its review, the Department has considered both the school's absolute performance at the time of the application for renewal and progress the school has made during the first four years of its charter.

The superintendents of all of the local districts that send students to BArT were invited to submit written comment to the Department regarding the renewal of the school's charter. No written comment was received from the superintendents.

The accountability process for charter schools recognizes that in exchange for increased freedom, a school must demonstrate results within the term of its five-year charter or risk non-renewal. The summary document that follows this memorandum compiles the school's record for the term of this charter.

Recommendation for Renewal

Based on the evidence gathered in the attached Summary of Review, summarized below, I recommend that the Board grant a probationary renewal of the school's charter. While the school has not demonstrated strong academic performance, sufficient efforts are being made to address current deficiencies. I further recommend that the conditions imposed include the requirement that, by 2010, the school demonstrate academic success by achieving growth in student achievement against standards set by the Department or by making Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) in 2009 and 2010.

Areas of Charter School Accountability

I. Faithfulness to Charter

- BArT's unique mission is to integrate visual and performing arts and technology into the academic curriculum. The school is making progress in implementing this mission.
- The college preparatory aspect of the program has become increasingly central. In the summer of 2008, the school's mission statement was revised to emphasize the goal of preparing all students for college.

II. Academic Success

- Teachers use the *Understanding by Design* backwards planning model to create a curriculum that is aligned with the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks. All of the quarterly units contained in the curriculum include performance-based assessments that integrate the arts and technology.
- Increasing the rigor of the academic program is a major focus for improvement. With the assistance of an outside consultant, BArT engaged in a whole school review process during the 2007-08 school year. As a result of this process, several initiatives implemented this year include:
- the separation of math/science and English language arts (ELA)/social studies into discrete classes taught by highly qualified teachers;
- grouping students by skill level to better target their needs;

- the use of formative assessments with quantifiable results that are used to inform curriculum and instruction;
- frequent, ongoing, and regular assessment of teachers by means of a newly adopted 5-10 minute observation protocol.
- 28% of BArT's students receive special education services, 9% are on 504 plans, and approximately 10% are involved in the state's social service system. The school has met the needs of its population of diverse learners by developing a strongly supportive school culture and offering a full array of special education services. BArT offers its students extensive academic support and remediation services, including a daily targeted supported study period. There are four special education teachers, a student services coordinator, a social worker, and seven special education paraprofessionals on staff.
- BArT has not made Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) in ELA or mathematics in the aggregate or for subgroups during the course of its charter.
- The school's NCLB status is Corrective Action for mathematics and Improvement Year 2 for ELA.

III. Organizational Viability

- BArT has faced several major challenges during the course of its first five year charter, including the initial inability to secure a facility, a difficult reception from local sending districts and consequent difficulty in attracting sufficient applicants, a disproportionately large population of students with special needs, and persistently low academic performance.
- Though the school was initially unable to secure the financing necessary to obtain a building because it opened at a time when a charter school moratorium was threatened, within six months of opening, it moved from a rented space in a district school to its current facility, which it purchased by the end of its second year of operations.
- The school has not yet reached its maximum enrollment of 308 students, which was set assuming 44 students in each of 7 grades. It expects to reach its maximum enrollment in the 2010-2011 school year, when our original 6th grade reaches 12th grade.
- BArT is fiscally sound and stable. The school has not met its enrollment targets throughout the charter term, but has budgeted carefully, secured a short-term line of credit, and raised additional sources of revenue to support operations.
- The school's executive director has served in that role since the school opened. The principal is new to his role this year, but has worked at the school as dean of students for the past two years.
- The school is governed by a nine member board of trustees, two of whom are founding members of the school. Appropriate channels of communication have been established between the board and school leadership, and the board has been proactive in supporting the school.
- Families and students have consistently expressed high levels of satisfaction with the school

IV. Dissemination

- The school's board and its executive director have done extensive outreach in the local community to promote the school and correct misperceptions concerning the school's program. Examples include presentations on local access television and radio, speaking at community group meetings, and building relationships with local colleges.
- BArT is a member of the Commonwealth Corporation's Diploma Plus network. Through this network, the school participates in professional development workshops and shares its best practices with other network schools, which are public schools in Massachusetts, Rhode Island, New York and California (Renewal Inspection Report, p. 26).

If you have any questions or require additional information, please contact Jeff Wulfson, Associate Commissioner, at 781 338-6500; or Mary Street, Director of Charter Schools, at 781 338-3200; or me.

  [Summary of Review](#)

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The Massachusetts Board of Education

Charter Renewal - Initial Discussion for Conservatory Lab Charter School

To: Members of the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education

From: Mitchell D. Chester, Ed.D., Commissioner

Date: December 5, 2008

This month, the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education (Board) will have an initial discussion of the charter renewal application of Conservatory Lab Charter School (CLCS). The Board will vote on this renewal at its meeting on January 27, 2009.

Conservatory Lab Charter School

CLCS, a Commonwealth charter school, is located in Boston. The school opened in 1999. CLCS is chartered to serve pre-kindergarten through grade 5 with a maximum enrollment of 154. The school is currently serving 135 students in kindergarten through grade 5, and plans to add pre-kindergarten in 2009-2010.

The school's mission statement reads: "The Conservatory Lab Charter School will engage all children by using the Learning Through Music curriculum model to ensure every child's academic, creative, and social success, as validated by qualitative and quantitative measures."

Basis of Recommendations Regarding the Renewal of Charters

The charter school regulations state that "[t]he decision by the Board to renew a charter shall be based upon the presentation of affirmative evidence regarding the success of the school's academic program; the viability of the school as an organization; and the faithfulness of the school to the terms of its charter" 603 CMR 1.12. Consistent with the regulations, recommendations regarding renewal are based on the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education's (Department) evaluation of the school's performance in these areas. In its review, the Department has considered both the school's absolute performance at the time of the application for renewal and progress the school has made during the first nine years of its charter.

The superintendent of the Boston Public Schools, the district sending students to CLCS, was invited to submit written comment to the Department regarding the renewal of the school's charter. No written comment was received from the superintendent.

The accountability process for charter schools recognizes that in exchange for increased freedom, a school must demonstrate results within the term of its five-year charter or risk non-renewal. The Summary of Review that follows this memorandum compiles the school's record for the term of this charter.

Recommendation for Renewal

Based on the evidence gathered in the attached Summary of Review and as further summarized below, I recommend that the Board renew the charter of the CLCS with conditions that require the school to implement its Learning Through Music program in alignment with its charter or to amend its charter to accurately reflect the school's current program, and require the school to make its current facility programmatically accessible or, if the school moves, ensure that any new facility is programmatically accessible.

Areas of Charter School Accountability

I. Faithfulness to Charter

- The school's original charter proposed an educational model in which students would succeed in traditional academic subjects through the integration of the study of music in all areas of the curriculum. This model was referred to as Learning Through Music (LTM) and the school was proposed as a lab for testing, refining, and ultimately disseminating the model to other educational organizations. The current LTM model includes limited integration of music into traditional academic subjects, with students receiving one, 30 minute interdisciplinary class each week. The school continues to provide violin instruction to all students, beginning in first grade, and daily music classes.
- Part of the school's mission is to validate the efficacy of its LTM curriculum model through qualitative and quantitative research. The school is not currently measuring the LTM program.
- CLCS underwent a full Coordinated Program Review in December 2007. The school's civil rights Corrective Action Plan was approved on August 8, 2008, with the exception of the handicapped accessibility criterion. The handicapped accessibility criterion was not approved because the plan did not fully remedy the accessibility issue of the school. The school was required to submit an action plan, due to the Department on October 15, 2008, to address this issue. As of November 5, 2008, the Department had not received the school's plan, and an overdue notification letter was issued to the school on November 6. On November 10th, CLCS requested and was granted an extension of the due date to November 25, 2008.

II. Academic Success

- Curriculum materials at CLCS are primarily commercially published texts.
- CLCS made Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) in the aggregate in English language arts (ELA) and mathematics and for all sub-groups in 2007. The school made AYP only for mathematics in the aggregate for 2008.
- The school has no NCLB status in ELA or mathematics.

- In response to low MCAS scores, the school has increased the amount of time spent on ELA and mathematics instruction, while decreasing the extent to which music is integrated into the daily core curriculum.



III. Organizational Viability

- CLCS is fiscally sound and stable.
- CLCS is currently governed by a twenty-three member board with a wide range of skills and expertise relevant to the school and its mission.
- CLCS maintains full enrollment and a lengthy waiting list.

IV. Dissemination

- CLCS was the recipient of a state dissemination grant for the 2005-06 and 2007-08 school years to work in collaboration with the Massachusetts Public Charter School Association and Project Zero at the Harvard Graduate School of Education for the sharing of best practices with other public schools as part of the "Making Learning Visible" project. This project included charter schools, district schools, and pilot schools.
- In August 2006, a CLCS violin teacher presented a workshop for the Chelmsford Public Schools on the Suzuki group violin techniques that CLCS has modified to work in public schools.

If you have any questions or require additional information, please contact Jeff Wulfson, Associate Commissioner, at 781 338-6500; or Mary Street, Director of Charter Schools, at 781 338-3200; or me.

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The Massachusetts Board of Education

Charter Renewal - Initial Discussion for Hill View Montessori Charter School

To: Members of the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education

From: Mitchell D. Chester, Ed.D., Commissioner

Date: December 5, 2008

This month, the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education (Board) will have an initial discussion of the charter renewal application of Hill View Montessori Charter School (HVMCS). The Board will vote on this renewal at its meeting on January 27, 2009.

Hill View Montessori Charter School

HVMCS, a Commonwealth charter school, is located in Haverhill. The school opened in 2004. HVMCS is chartered to serve kindergarten through grade 8 with a maximum enrollment of 296. It is currently serving 244 students in kindergarten through grade 6. It expects to reach its maximum grade span and enrollment in 2010-2011.

The school's mission statement reads: "The mission of HVMCS is to provide a grade K-8 public education that promotes academic excellence using the Montessori philosophy. In partnership with teachers and parents, children will attain high levels of academic, personal, and social achievement and so prepared, become constructive contributors to our community."

Basis of Recommendations Regarding the Renewal of Charters

The charter school regulations state that "[t]he decision by the Board to renew a charter shall be based upon the presentation of affirmative evidence regarding the success of the school's academic program; the viability of the school as an organization; and the faithfulness of the school to the terms of its charter" 603 CMR 1.12. Consistent with the regulations, recommendations regarding renewal are based on the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education's (Department) evaluation of the school's performance in these areas. In its review, the

Department has considered both the school's absolute performance at the time of the application for renewal and the progress the school has made during the first four years of its charter.

The superintendent of the Haverhill Public Schools, the district sending students to HVMCS, was invited to submit written comment to the Department regarding the renewal of the school's charter. No written comment was received from the superintendent.

The accountability process for charter schools recognizes that in exchange for increased freedom, a school must demonstrate results within the term of its five-year charter or risk non-renewal. The summary document that follows this memorandum compiles the school's record for the term of this charter.

Recommendation for Renewal

Based on the evidence gathered in the attached Summary of Review and as further summarized below, I recommend that the Board renew the charter for HVMCS.

Areas of Charter School Accountability

I. Faithfulness to Charter

- HVMCS is a public Montessori school that incorporates the Montessori philosophy and methods, aligns the curriculum with the Massachusetts curriculum frameworks, and meets the needs of a diverse group of students, including those with disabilities.

II. Academic Success

- The new leadership team, hired in 2007-08, has implemented significant changes in the use of formative assessment data, teacher recruitment, hiring, supervision and evaluation, and alignment of curriculum with state standards.
- HVMCS made Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) in English language arts (ELA) and mathematics in the aggregate and for subgroups in 2007 but not in 2008.
- The school has no status under NCLB.



III. Organizational Viability

- The school is fiscally sound and stable.
- The school is in the process of purchasing a building for occupancy in 2009-10.
- The school is governed by an eleven member board of trustees. The board provides careful oversight of the school leader. Appropriate channels of communication and collaboration have been established between the board and school leadership.
- The school plans to add grade 7 in 2009-10 and grade 8 in 2010-11.

IV. Dissemination

- In 2006 and 2007, an HVMCS kindergarten teacher conducted a Saturday seminar in conjunction with Northern Essex Community College Early Childhood program regarding the Montessori method of educating children.
- The Haverhill Superintendent of Schools, a Haverhill School Committee member, and an HVMCS founder co-authored an article about building respectful relationships between charter and district schools for the May/June 2004 issue of MASCD Perspectives. In addition, a best practices paper called *In Service of Children: How Charter and District Schools Can Work Together* was written and presented at the Massachusetts Charter Public School Association conference.
- In 2008, staff from six Massachusetts public Montessori schools - both charter and district - held a day-long conference to share best practices.
-

If you have any questions or require additional information, please contact Jeff Wulfson, Associate Commissioner, at 781 338-6500; or Mary Street, Director of Charter Schools, at 781 338-3200; or me.

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The Massachusetts Board of Education

Charter Renewal - Initial Discussion for KIPP Academy of Lynn Charter School

To: Members of the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education

From: Mitchell D. Chester, Ed.D., Commissioner

Date: December 5, 2008

This month, the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education (Board) will have its initial discussion of the charter renewal application of KIPP Academy of Lynn Charter School (KAL). The Board will vote on this renewal at its meeting on January 27, 2009.

KIPP Academy of Lynn Charter School

KAL, a Commonwealth charter school, is located in Lynn. The school opened in 2004. KAL is chartered to serve grades 5-8 with a maximum enrollment of 340. It is currently serving 333 students in grade 5 through grade 8. As described in its original charter application, the school's educational model follows that of the national KIPP organization.

The mission statement of KAL reads: "KIPP Academy Lynn will create an environment where the students of Lynn will develop the academic skills, intellectual habits and character traits necessary to maximize their potential in high school, college, and the world beyond."

Basis of Recommendations Regarding the Renewal of Charters

The charter school regulations state that "[t]he decision by the Board to renew a charter shall be based upon the presentation of affirmative evidence regarding the success of the school's academic program; the viability of the school as an organization; and the faithfulness of the school to the terms of its charter" 603 CMR 1.12. Consistent with the regulations, recommendations regarding renewal are based upon the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education's (Department) evaluation of the school's performance in these areas. In its review, the

Department has considered both the school's absolute performance at the time of the application for renewal and the progress the school has made during the first four years of its charter.

The superintendent of the Lynn Public Schools, the district sending students to KAL, was invited to submit written comment to the Department regarding the renewal of the school's charter. No written comment was received from the superintendent.

The accountability process for charter schools recognizes that in exchange for increased freedom, a school must demonstrate results within the term of its five-year charter or risk non-renewal. The summary document that follows this memorandum was prepared for you as a compilation of the school's record for the term of this charter.

Recommendation for Renewal

Based on the evidence gathered in the attached Summary of Review and as further summarized below, I recommend that the Board renew the charter of KAL.

Areas of Charter School Accountability

I. Faithfulness to Charter

- KAL follows the educational program of the national Knowledge Is Power Program (KIPP) which focuses on four areas: high-quality instruction, character development, a focus on results, and more time on task.
- The school maintains a strong, school-wide behavior management system.
- KAL runs an extended day and extended year: 197 school days, 7:20am-5:00pm Monday through Thursday, 7:20am-3:00pm on Friday, and two Saturdays per month from 9:00am-1:00pm.
- All students visit college preparatory high schools and colleges in the area.

II. Academic Success

- MCAS results are strong, with an aggregate Composite Performance Index (CPI) of 85.9 in English language arts (ELA) and 87.0 in mathematics in 2008.
- KAL made AYP in ELA and mathematics in the aggregate and for subgroups in all years, 2006 to 2008; no AYP determination was made in 2005. Under NCLB the school has no status in ELA and mathematics.
- Curriculum materials are largely teacher-created, with teachers writing highly detailed lesson plans that align with national KIPP standards and the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks.
- Teachers consistently use a wide variety of instructional strategies and multiple modalities. In addition, lessons frequently involve movement, singing, chanting, and rhythmic responses.

III. Organizational Viability

- KAL is fiscally sound and stable.
- There are currently eight members on the board of trustees, one of whom has been with the board since 2005. The board understands its role to be that of governance and oversight.
- The head of school is the school's founder.

- The school reports high levels of parent satisfaction through the results of a parent survey.
- KAL maintains nearly full enrollment and a lengthy waiting list.

IV. Dissemination

- KIPP Academy Lynn was approved for a math dissemination grant by the Department in November 2006. Teachers from local elementary schools visited KIPP to see the school's math program in action and participated in professional development workshops. The school chose not to apply for a continuation of the grant in 2007-08.
- In addition, KIPP regularly hosts visitors from a wide range of schools and other institutions including students, teachers, professors, and professionals from a variety of fields.

If you have any questions or require additional information, please contact Jeff Wulfson, Associate Commissioner, at 781 338-6500, or Mary Street, Director of Charter Schools, at 781 338-3200, or me.

 Summary of Review

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The Massachusetts Board of Education

Charter Renewal -

To: Members of the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education

From: Mitchell D. Chester, Ed.D., Commissioner

Date: December 5, 2008

This month, the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education (Board) will have an initial discussion of the charter renewal application of Robert M. Hughes Academy Charter Public School (RMH). The Board will vote on this renewal at its meeting on January 27, 2009.

Robert M. Hughes Academy Charter Public School

RMH, a Commonwealth charter school, is located in Springfield. The school opened in 1999 and is chartered to serve grades K-8, with a maximum enrollment of 180. The school is currently serving 184 students in grades K-8. RMH received its first charter renewal in February 2004 with five conditions, including one for academic concerns and four regarding continuing issues related to the governance and financial management of the school. The school obtained an opinion from the State Ethics Commission concerning a potential violation of conflict of interest law, hired a governance consultant, and revised its bylaws, but did not cooperate with the Office of the State Auditor, meeting all but one of the conditions imposed at the time of renewal.

The school's mission statement reads: "The mission of the Robert M. Hughes Academy Charter Public School is to provide urban students in Springfield, Massachusetts with the opportunity to achieve academic and personal excellence by offering an intellectually challenging curriculum and a supportive environment. Students will graduate from the school with a deep respect for learning and the strength of character required to become future leaders in society."

Basis of Recommendations Regarding the Renewal of Charters

The charter school regulations state that "[t]he decision by the Board to renew a charter shall be based upon the presentation of affirmative evidence regarding the success of the school's academic program; the viability of the

school as an organization; and the faithfulness of the school to the terms of its charter" 603 CMR 1.12. Consistent with the regulations, recommendations regarding renewal are based upon the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education's (Department) evaluation of the school's performance in these areas. In its review, the Department has considered both the school's absolute performance at the time of the application for renewal and progress the school has made during the nine years of its charter.

The superintendent of the Springfield Public Schools, the district sending students to RMH, was invited to submit written comment to the Department regarding the renewal of the school's charter. No written comment was received from the superintendent.

The accountability process for charter schools recognizes that in exchange for increased freedom, a school must demonstrate results within the term of its five-year charter or risk non-renewal. The summary document that follows this memorandum compiles the school's record for the term of this charter.

Recommendation for Renewal

Based on the evidence gathered in the attached Summary of Review, and as further summarized below, it is my recommendation that the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education grant a renewal with conditions to RMH. I further recommend that the conditions imposed require among other things that, by 2010, the school demonstrate academic success by achieving growth in student achievement against standards set by the Department or by making Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) in 2009 and 2010; and that the school comply with term limits and the minimum number of board members as stated in the school's bylaws, including identifying and recruiting new members with appropriate educational and financial expertise.

Areas of Charter School Accountability

I. Faithfulness to Charter

- RMH operates in a manner that is consistent with and faithful to the school's mission statement.
- RMH has created a stable school culture and an environment that is respectful, orderly, and conducive to student learning.
- Current school operations are inconsistent with several elements of the RMH amended charter, including Saturday school, creation of individualized learning plans for each student, an annual performance audit, and individual professional development plans for teachers.

II. Academic Success

- RMH did not make AYP in the aggregate and for subgroups in English Language Arts (ELA) in 2008.
- NCLB status is Improvement Year 2 for Subgroups in ELA and No Status for mathematics.
- CPI trajectories show uneven performance for both mathematics and ELA:
 - ELA scores declined in 2005, 2007, and 2008, with a CPI of 78.4 in 2008.
 - Mathematics scores declined in 2006 and 2007, but showed an increase of 15.8 points to reach a CPI of 74.6 in 2008.
- Documenting and addressing weaknesses in the school's academic program is a major focus for the

administrative team who arrived at RMH in 2007. The school has created a school improvement plan, called the School Academic Plan, and is systematically monitoring progress on the plan.

- The school's leadership team has created clear expectations for teachers and instituted daily classroom monitoring procedures.
- Throughout the term of the school's charter, site visitors have observed varied effectiveness of instructional practices.



III. Organizational Viability

- Over the charter term, various site visit teams have found that the board of trustees has overstepped its role by making decisions that are more appropriately addressed by the administrative team.
- The board of trustees is facing the retirement of four, founding board members. In July 2008, sixteen months after revising bylaws to comply with a Department requirement of three (3) consecutive three year terms, board members requested an amendment to return to original term limits of four (4) consecutive three year terms. The amendment request was denied.
- RMH is currently a fiscally viable organization. The school has met enrollment targets each year, hired a business manager, and recorded annual surpluses during this charter term.
- Over the course of the charter, teacher turnover has ranged between 38-50% each year. Additionally, the school's administration has consistently reported that the recruitment of qualified teachers has been a concern during the current charter term.

IV. Dissemination

- In the school's eighth year, RMH established partnerships with three Springfield public schools: a district middle school, a vocational high school, and a charter middle and high school. The partnership, called the Springfield Urban Schools Consortium (SUSC), intends to share successes and resources with the goal of having teachers at each school meet the definition for "Highly Qualified Teacher."
- According to the Application for Renewal, the school has created two models for replication, an after-school MCAS support program and the SUSC professional development initiative.

If you have questions or require additional information, please contact Jeff Wulfson, Associate Commissioner, at 781 338-6500; or Mary Street, Director of Charter Schools, at 781 338-3200; or me.

  Summary of Review

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The Massachusetts Board of Education

Uphams Corner Charter School - Report on Conditions

To: Members of the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education

From: Mitchell D. Chester, Ed.D., Commissioner of Elementary and Secondary Education

Date: December 5, 2008

Uphams Corner Charter School (UCCS) came before the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education (Board) for renewal in December of 2006. At that time, the school was recommended for non-renewal. The Board requested consideration of renewing the charter with conditions and in January 2007, the Board voted to renew the school's charter with five conditions relating to school improvement and relocation to Uphams Corner. At that time the Board specified that the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (Department) would report the school's progress toward meeting the conditions to the Board in December 2008. A summary regarding the conditions is provided below and additional information is included in the attached documents. I will present my recommendation regarding the school's status going forward at the Board meeting on December 16th.

Uphams Corner Charter School

UCCS, a Commonwealth charter school, is located in and chartered to serve Boston. The school opened in 2002 and the charter was renewed with conditions in 2007. UCCS is chartered to serve grades 5 through 8 with a maximum enrollment of 200. In 2008-2009, UCCS is serving approximately 174 students in grades 5 through 8 and reports a wait list of four. The school draws virtually all of its students from Boston.

The school's mission statement reads: "Uphams Corner Charter School offers an academically rigorous, rhetoric centered education in the liberal arts and sciences, leading to sound understanding, earnest reflection, self-discipline, integrity, and action. Our community is devoted to outstanding student performance and whole character formation. We will graduate all our students as powerful, articulate, moral citizens, working for the benefit of all."

On October 7, 2008, the Charter School Office conducted a site visit to UCCS. Before the visit, the site visit team reviewed the school's Year Six Site Visit Report, the 2007-08 annual report, a Progress Report on Renewal Conditions provided to the Board in December of 2007, the school's Accountability Plan, board of trustees materials,

and recent internal and external assessment data. On site, the team reviewed curricular documents and other information provided by the school. Team members conducted group and individual interviews with trustees, administrators, teachers, students, and parents, and observed classes.

The site visit had four purposes:

- to review the progress that the school has made in meeting the conditions imposed by the Board,
- to corroborate and augment the information contained in the school's annual report,
- to investigate the school's progress relative to its Accountability Plan goals, and
- to provide evidence that will support decisions regarding the school's charter.

Report on Conditions

In December of 2006, the Commissioner recommended that the charter for Uphams Corner Charter School not be renewed. In response to the Board's request that the renewal be granted with conditions, the following conditions were imposed in January 2007 regarding academic performance and location of the school.

Condition 1: By June 30, 2007, Uphams Corner Charter School shall have submitted to and received approval from the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education for the following items:

- A school improvement plan, consistent with the Department's standards for a District Plan for School Intervention.
- A charter school Accountability Plan, including goals and annual benchmarks regarding academic success, organizational viability, and faithfulness to charter. The Accountability Plan must be aligned to the school's plan for improvement as referenced above, and must include the school's plan for achieving Adequate Yearly Progress in the aggregate and for all statistically significant subgroups in English language arts and mathematics.
- All relevant amendments to its charter, in accordance with 603 CMR 1.11.

Status: Not fully met. The school improvement plan was received and approved in a timely manner. A draft Accountability Plan was received by the Charter School Office on June 28, 2007, but was not finalized until March 2008. An amendment request was received and was approved by the Board on October 30, 2007.

Condition 2: By June 30, 2007, the school shall engage a consultant, who shall be approved by the Commissioner, to review the school's leadership structure and provide training and assistance to strengthen the school's management.

Status: Not fully met. UCCS received approval from the Commissioner to engage the proposed consultant in June 2007. The consultant issued a report about school leadership but was not contracted to provide training or assistance to strengthen school management, as required by the condition. In September 2008, the school hired a leadership coach to work with the interim executive director, interim principal, and vice principal.

Condition 3: By December 2007, Uphams Corner Charter School shall have met or shall be making substantial progress toward the benchmarks set forth in its approved Accountability Plan.

Status: Not met. UCCS did not meet this condition because the school did not have an approved Accountability Plan in place by December 2007. The school's current Accountability Plan was approved by the Charter School Office in March 2008.

Condition 4: By December 2008, Uphams Corner Charter School shall demonstrate that it is an academic success by providing evidence that the school has met or is making substantial progress toward meeting all benchmarks in its 2007-2012 Accountability Plan and has made Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) in the aggregate and for all statistically significant subgroups in English language arts and mathematics for 2008.

Status: Not met. UCCS did not make AYP in English language arts and mathematics in the aggregate or for subgroups in 2008. Additionally, according to data submitted at the time of the site visit and in the 2007-08 annual report, UCCS has not met a majority of its academic Accountability Plan goals.

- Currently, the school's NCLB status is improvement year 2 in English language arts (ELA) and corrective action in mathematics.
- CPI trajectories for both mathematics and ELA show uneven but overall declining performance for the past five years. Scores declined in 2008 after showing substantial gains in 2007, although the 2007 CPI was lower in both subjects than in the first year tests were administered. Currently, the UCCS performance rating for mathematics is critically low, with a CPI of 39.9. The performance rating for ELA is moderate, with a CPI of 70.3.
- The school has persistently low proficiency rates, despite improvement in 2007:
 - In ELA, 51 percent or fewer students reached proficiency in all tested grades for all years from 2005-2008;
 - In mathematics, 15 percent or fewer students reached proficiency in all tested grades for all years from 2004-2008.

Condition 5: By December 2008, Uphams Corner Charter School shall have completed the necessary property acquisition and fundraising to permit a relocation of the school to the Uphams Corner area no later than September 2009.

Status: Minimal progress. At the time of the site visit, the board of trustees had not done any in-depth planning for the financial requirements involved with obtaining a new facility, either to lease or purchase. Subsequent to the site visit, the Charter School Office has learned that the site considered to be most probable by the school is most likely to be acquired by another charter school. In the site visit focus group, the board reported that, at this time, they do not know where the school will be located in September 2009. They plan to make a decision by the December 2008 deadline.

Additional Information

The attached site visit report provides additional information in the three areas of charter school accountability, including the following:

I. Faithfulness to Charter

- The school is not consistently implementing the education formats stated in the original charter. Site visitors did not see evidence of Socratic inquiry techniques, use of rhetorical skills, or community orientation during classroom instruction or in curricular documents.

II. Academic Success

- In year seven, the site visit team found that the school has not yet created a comprehensive curriculum. The curriculum is lacking a complete set of scopes and sequences, unit plans, and internal assessment documents.
- Curricular unit plans are identical in ELA, science, and mathematics for fifth and sixth grade, requiring students to repeat the same studies for two years.
- Student behavior has impacted the quality and quantity of learning:
 - During the year seven site visit, a majority of students were not engaged in class activities and did not answer teacher questions.
 - In over half of the classrooms, site visitors observed that students ignored posted rules or did not receive consequences for their misbehavior. In approximately 20 percent of classrooms, teachers did not have control over the class.
- In the three years that eighth grade students have taken the MCAS science exam, no eighth grade student at UCCS has reached proficiency.
- In 41 out of 45 comparisons conducted, the performance of UCCS students on MCAS mathematics exams was lower than students in the Boston Public Schools (BPS) at a statistically significant level. In 29 of 31 comparisons conducted, the performance of UCCS students on the MCAS ELA exams was statistically equivalent to that of BPS students.

III. Organizational Viability

- In the past seven years, UCCS has occupied three different facilities, none of which were located in the Uphams Corner neighborhood.
- UCCS has struggled with student enrollment, both in attracting students and in maintaining enrollment.
- Since the 2005-06 school year, UCCS has been able to attract only enough students to fill one of two intended sections in fifth grade. In the past three years targeted fifth grade enrollment was 40 students and actual enrollment ranged from 15-18 students.
- For the last several years, the school has lost large numbers of students from one year to the next. For the 2006-07 school year, of the 135 fifth through seventh grade students enrolled on Oct. 1, 2006, 42 (or 31 percent) either withdrew during the school year or did not re-enroll for the 2007-08 school year. The school reports a similar pattern for the 2007-08 school year.
- As a result of student attrition and in order to maintain fiscal solvency, the school has accepted large numbers of students into all grades at the beginning of and throughout each school year for the last several years. This has substantively affected the school's culture and academic program.
- UCCS has struggled to retain teachers. Teacher attrition rates have been persistently high, ranging from a low of 31 percent in the 2005-06 school year, to a high of 61 percent in the 2006-07 school year.
- The year seven site visit team found that the board of trustees is not effectively addressing critical school problems, such as the required acquisition of a permanent facility or the selection of a new executive director.

If you have any questions or require additional information, please contact Mary Street, Director of Charter Schools, at 781-338-3200; Jeff Wulfson, Associate Commissioner, at 781-338-6500; or me.

  [Uphams Corner Charter School Year 7 Site Visit Report](#)

  [Uphams Corner Charter School Additional Data Analysis & Federal Programs Information](#)

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The Massachusetts Board of Education

Trimester Report from the State Student Advisory Council

To: Members of the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education

From: AJ Fajnzylber, Chair, Student Advisory Council

Date: December 5, 2008

A defining moment in Massachusetts is most certainly the MERA reforms. We seem to love these four letter anagrams, because one of the direct outcomes of the MERA reforms was the MCAS. A common discussion that has been brought up so far this year in the State Student Advisory Council pertaining to schools has been the effects of MCAS on the students and a lack of other evaluation criterion. Many students believe that they may not be achieving as well as they are achieving on the MCAS as they can elsewhere. As we all know as members of the educational community, there are multiple forms of intelligence, and it is quite possible that the MCAS is missing some of these underlying intelligences. In a response to this phenomenon, the students and I have been working on a good deal of projects this year under a platform that I have nicknamed MLIFE. I apologize that MLIFE is five letters, but I think it works out pretty well nonetheless. MLIFE stands for Massachusetts students Living In Fundamental Education, which means we believe the system of education is essential, but it is necessary to make some changes.

MLIFE tries to tackle what may be missing in the average educational setting: personality. I believe the best example for this point is a scene in Pink Floyd's movie, the Wall. The song "Another Brick in the Wall" is playing (often known as "we don't need no education"), and we see the school system of England in the 50s. Things that we know and love such as poetry are discouraged at this school. It is the brick and mortar setting that we often fear and dislike to talk about. The students at this school line up and have masks on. They are often being lectured and the masks shield their personality. Just being "another brick in the wall" is a shout out to fight conformity and to encourage individuality. Although this metaphor is extreme, the general underlying point remains the same: although we have made great strides towards individuality, our schools still stifle creative thinking and work. We do in some way mask our students when we only assign them a student number for the MCAS, because we skip over the personal information that makes all of our students unique human beings.

In some instances, we are already at a point of greater understanding and development, for there are some schools that value new skills and personality. Some of the greatest schools for this are Vocational-Technical schools and

specialty schools like Boston Arts Academy. These schools exhibit the 21st century skills we like to talk about, and they are full of personality.

I visited BAA shortly after our October meeting, and I was very impressed. BAA is a school that has a great curriculum and uses a student's strength in arts to promote higher levels of learning for all students. They have an excellent humanities program which compares history to the present which is what history really should be doing. Students during an end of the quarter test had to write essays comparing the Iraq war and Vietnam as well as events leading up to world war two and events leading up to the Iraq war. The Math and Spanish programs that I visited incorporated art projects into learning about common academic themes. The math students had to a geometry project using any flag in the world, and the Spanish students prepared great visual presentations for Dia de Los Muertos (Day of the Dead). Additionally, every student at BAA uses some of their expanded time there to have a major. There are visual art, acting, dance, and music majors, all with great talent. The music majors were in a recording studio with the latest software recording their own music with skills at or above the college level. Even more astounding about the school, was its amazingly high graduation rates. Above 95% of the students at BAA, a school in the struggling district of Boston, graduate and go to college. Additionally, close to 100% of the students at BAA passed the MCAS. This school is amazing, but they will not be able to continue their great programming if we increase the number of MCAS tests. These students are succeeding at high rates with great knowledge in multiple fields. Let us not curtail these great learning experiences by having BAA have to reduce their curriculum to meet increasing measures of state accountability.

Secondly, the Vocational Technical Schools are already performing at high levels. Where else in the state can a student take math, history, and mechanical engineering? The Vocational Technical schools are already teaching a vast range of subject matter which prepares their students for high performance in both college and the work industries. Vocational Technical Schools boast higher graduation rates than the average school in the state, and it is evident that these schools will continue to succeed. We should encourage schools like this that train our students for today and tomorrow with the inspiration for individuality that are students need and crave.

What students need and crave is what brings me back to MLIFE and my trimester report. We started off our year with a broad range of goals which I presented to the board back in September. After a presentation of the goals to my peers in September, we formed work groups in order to achieve our vast range of initiatives. The work groups we have established are: Public Relations, School Climate, Student Rights, Higher Education, and Alternative Learning Strategies. I will explain each of these groups and their goals in brevity.

Public Relations is committed to several small projects that will be completed over the year. They will be making a power point presentation for student councils, and school committees. They will be working on the SSAC website for the advisory council, as well as trying to make internet updates for the council. Long term goals include making a student announcement for the public (on TV or radio, etc.) and getting the SSAC name out to the public by increasing the schools represented in the Student Advisory Council System.

The School Climate or school environment group focuses on issues that are causing our students to struggle in school. This group primarily focuses on drop-out rates, sex education, going green (recycling, etc.), new after school programs, and improved teacher qualification. They are all working on deciding what their final projects for the year will be.


The Student Rights Workgroup is working on disseminating student rights around the state. In the past year the


Greater Boston Regional Student Advisory Council created student right note cards which the SSACs student rights group is going to try to spread around the state. They are also sending out quizzes and surveys to the schools to find out how much students know about their rights. Finally, this group wants to increase student awareness of help hotlines, and other resources to keep the students healthy.


The Higher Education workgroup is working on "Virtual High School" and AP course awareness. Students are often not informed of additional learning opportunities which would help them in college, so this group is going to promote these opportunities. The group is well aware that advertisement of these programs is limited, and they will work on increasing student participation in these programs.


The Alternative Learning Strategies workgroup is working on various projects to increase knowledge of the Readiness plan and its goals, new learning and teaching strategies, teacher qualifications and evaluations, and the pros and cons of extended learning time. Their goals include online teacher surveys with anonymous responses up to quarterly. They will also be working on evaluating current qualifications for teachers, and improvements that can be made.


Personally, and with the help of my Executive Committee, I have been working on expanding our State system to other states. We have decided that this would be a good goal for the year and it is important to have national connections if we are to reach our full potential. We understand this is a broad goal, so it will take a few years to achieve. We hope to send out letters to other State Boards of Education and encourage them to adapt SAC like systems in other states, and create a plan for our long term goals. Global and national competence has been a common goal for us in the State Student Advisory Council, and these projects will help increase our knowledge and understanding of the country and world, and encourage other states to follow the great example that is the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

 ["On Campus Student Voter" Bill Memo](#)

 ["On Campus Student Voter" Bill Amendment Text](#)

 [An Act Relative to Voter Registration](#)

 [Secretary of State William Galvin supports "On Campus Student Voter" bill](#)

 [Election 2008: Second-largest youth voter turnout in American history](#)

 [A Motion to support the "On Campus Student Voter" Bill](#)

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The Massachusetts Board of Education

Charter Schools - Information Regarding Approval of Loan beyond Charter Term for Boston Collegiate Charter School

To: Members of the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education

From: Mitchell D. Chester, Ed.D., Commissioner

Date: December 5, 2008

Under the charter school statute, G.L. c. 71, § 89(j)(6), a charter school may incur temporary debt in anticipation of receipt of funds, but requires approval of the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education (Board) if it wishes to agree to repayment terms that exceed the duration of the school's charter. At its October 21, 2008 meeting, the Board delegated to me the authority to approve such loan requests per G.L. c. 15, §1F, paragraph 3. During the past month, under this newly-delegated authority, I approved an extended loan request for the Boston Collegiate Charter School (BCCS) as described below. This approval is explicitly conditioned upon the inclusion of the following standard language in the final loan agreement(s):

The parties to the loan(s) acknowledge and agree that the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, including but not limited to the Board and the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, provides no representations or guarantees with respect to these loans and has no liability for any portion of the loans. Furthermore, specifically and without limitation, the Board's approval of the loan has no impact on any action that the Massachusetts Board of Elementary and Secondary Education may choose to take in the future with respect to probation, revocation, or renewal of the School's charter.

The school submitted its request in a letter dated November 5, 2008, in which the board of trustees of BCCS requested approval to enter into financing agreements that extend beyond the term of the school's current charter for up to \$8 million. These loan agreements will consist of Qualified Zone Academy Bonds (QZAB) issued by the Massachusetts Development Finance Agency, with a term of up to 16 years. The school's nonprofit partner, the Boston Collegiate Charter School Foundation, has agreed to acquire the property at 200 and 215 Sydney Street in Dorchester for use by the school. This property is near the school's current main campus at 11 Mayhew Street in Dorchester. The QZAB bond proceeds will be used to improve the Sydney Street facility to house the school's middle school expansion as previously approved by the Board in the fall of 2005.

The request was reasonable and consistent with the charter school statute and regulations.

If you have any questions regarding this loan approval or wish to see the school's full request, please contact Mary Street, Director of Charter Schools, at 781-338-3200; Jeff Wulfson, Associate Commissioner, at 781-338-6500; or me.

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The Massachusetts Board of Education

FY 2010 Budget Update: Board's Budget Submission to Secretary of Education

December 11, 2008

Paul Reville, Secretary
Executive Office of Education
One Ashburton Place
14th Floor, Room #1403
Boston, MA 02108

Dear Secretary Reville:

Enclosed are the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education's Fiscal Year 2010 Budget Recommendations, adopted by the Board on November 18, 2008. I am transmitting these budget recommendations to you in accordance with Chapter 69, Section 1A, which states: *"The commissioner shall propose a budget to the board; said budget shall reflect the goals and objectives of the board and the secretary of education, in this chapter called the secretary. The board shall review and make recommendations regarding the budget to the secretary. The secretary shall then prepare and submit a budget request on behalf of the department to the house and senate committees on ways and means, the joint committee on education, and the secretary of administration and finance."*

The budget worksheet contains the two FY2010 Budget requests (an anticipated maintenance and an expansion budget) that were adopted by the Board at its November 18th meeting. Also included on the chart is a second maintenance budget that reflects our Department's lower maintenance target that we transmitted to you at your request in late November. All three FY2010 budget requests are in blue text and the priority expansion or consolidated programs are in bold text. You will note that none of the budgets include an estimated amount to fully fund the FY2010 Chapter 70 formula. A number of data elements used in the calculation of the Chapter 70 formula are not available at this early date. The Department will work with you, the Governor, and the Legislature to assist with the calculation of the Chapter 70 formula as the data becomes available.

At its November meeting, the Board adopted an anticipated maintenance budget of \$568.5 million and an expansion budget of \$680.8 million, excluding Chapter 70. A third revised maintenance budget of \$547.1 million was

transmitted to you subsequent to the Board's November meeting.

The spreadsheet columns identify:

o the FY2009 Elementary and Secondary Education (ESE) budget as adopted; o the FY2009 budget after the reductions implemented last month; o the percentage reduction from the FY2009 adopted budget to the current budget; o the FY2010 maintenance budget that the Board's budget committee presented to the full Board for consideration (this budget was developed within the fiscal constraints established by the Executive Office for Administration and Finance for each Secretariat); o the FY2010 "Revised" maintenance budget (this budget was developed to meet the lower maintenance target budget); o the cumulative change that the FY2010 maintenance budget represents from the adopted FY2009 ESE budget; and o the FY2010 expansion budget that the Board's budget committee presented to the full Board for consideration (the lines recommended for increased funding and/or a consolidation of programs in FY2010 are in bold text).

The budget items are presented in four categories on the spreadsheet: 1) grants to school districts and other entities; 2) direct educational services in institutional settings; 3) Department-directed programs; and 4) local aid, including Chapter 70.

The budgets presented on the spreadsheet reflect two principles: (1) the elimination of earmarked funds in favor of Department-implemented initiatives that include the solicitation of non-governmental partners through a competitive bidding process to secure performance-based contracts for services, and (2) the consolidation of similar programs into a combined new account that will allow the Board and Commissioner to target scarce resources in these new accounts to address high priority needs.

Brief descriptions of all the Board's budget expansion items are listed below in the same order as they appear on the attached two-page chart:

- Expansion of the Department's current Full Day Kindergarten (FDK) Program to \$42.8 million. The requested increase will allow the Department to increase funding for FDK classrooms in low income / high need districts to \$18,000, will allow funding for those high need districts that have not been eligible under the current budget language and will allow for continued "Transition to FDK" grants to achieve the goal of universal FDK.
- \$26.0 million for a new consolidated Extended Learning Day Program. This new program consolidates the After-School and Expanded Learning Time Programs into a comprehensive Extended Learning Day Grant Program.
- \$2.2 million for a new consolidated Gifted and Talented Grant Program. This new program consolidates the current W.P.I. School of Excellence and Gifted and Talented Programs.
- \$10 million for a new consolidated Statewide Reading Program for elementary and middle schools. This new program combines the current Bay State Reading Institute and Early Intervention Tutorial Programs earmarks with the John Silber Early Literacy funds to create a new Statewide Reading Program.
- \$5.0 million for a new consolidated Drop-Out Prevention and Recovery Program. This new program consolidates the current matching Citizen Schools and Youthbuild earmarks and Alternative Education Grants to create a new Drop-Out Prevention and Recovery Program.
- \$12.0 million for a new Interdisciplinary Human Services Grant and Technical Assistance Program to promote integrated academic, human services and health promotion activities.

- \$1.5 million for new 21st Century Challenge Grants to create up to five 21st Century Districts and up to ten 21st Century Schools, which will allow ESE to fund pilot sites consistent with the recommendations of the Board's Task Force on 21st Century Skills.
- \$5.0 million for expansion of the Department's current Professional Development for Mathematics Program. The increase is requested to more adequately address the state-wide demand for content based professional development in mathematics and science.
- \$1.0 million for a new consolidated Professional Development for Individualized Student Instruction Program. This program expands the current Professional Development for English Language Acquisition (ELA) Program with additional funding to train classroom teachers to address the individual needs of English language learners and students with disabilities within the regular classroom setting.
- \$2.0 million of new funds to the Department to develop curriculum resources to assist schools and educators in the improvement of curriculum and to identify and disseminate effective school- and district-based instructional practices.
- \$3.6 million to adequately fund the Educational Quality and Accountability Center that was transferred to ESE this past June. The increase of \$600K represents the annualized cost of staff salaries and full-year contracts to meet the requirements of the legislation.
- \$34.1 million to fund the MCAS contract and the staff associated with implementing this program. The increase of \$4.8M will allow the development and piloting of multiple assessment measures, participation in a multi-state Algebra II end-of-course exam, development of an on-line Biology test, and accelerated scoring next year.
- \$1.0 million for a new Regionalization Planning and Implementation Grant Program.
- \$17.3 million for the Department's Main Administration Account. This represents the minimum funds required in FY2010 to maintain the Department's new offices and administrative staff that are funded in FY2009.
- \$65.0 million to fully fund Regional School Transportation, an increase of \$3.7 million above the FY2009 GAA.
- \$2.2 million to fully fund the Transportation of Non-Resident Students, an increase of \$125 thousand above the FY2009 GAA.
- \$247.5 million to fully fund the Special Education Circuit Breaker Program at the 75% reimbursement rate, an increase of \$17.4 million above the FY2009 GAA.

If you have any questions about these recommendations, I would happy to discuss them with you.

Sincerely,

Mitchell D. Chester, Ed.D.
Commissioner of Elementary and Secondary Education

  [View Budget Spreadsheet](#)

last updated: December 11, 2008