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The Massachusetts Board of Elementary and Secondary Education

Board Documents - August 28, 2007

Board of Education Agenda Items:

1. State Education Budget for FY 08 and Implications for FY 09 - **Discussion**
2. [Schedule for Reviewing and Updating Curriculum Frameworks](#) - **Discussion**
3. Approval of Grants and Report on Grants Approved by Commissioner since June 2007 - **Vote**
4. Board of Education Annual Report for FY 2007 - **Discussion and Vote**

Other Items for Information:

5. Parent Involvement: Massachusetts Parent Teacher Association Mission
6. Governor's Commonwealth Readiness Project
7. Tentative Schedule for Release of 2007 MCAS Results and AYP Determinations; 2007 NAEP Results

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The Massachusetts Board of Elementary and Secondary Education

Proposed Schedule and Process for Curriculum Framework Review

To: Members of the Board of Education

From: David P. Driscoll, Commissioner of Education

Date: August 20, 2007

Since passage of the Education Reform Act of 1993, the Board has approved curriculum frameworks in the core subject areas of English language arts (ELA), mathematics, science and technology engineering, history and social science, foreign languages, visual and performing arts, and health. The curriculum frameworks establish state standards for the content that Massachusetts public schools are expected to cover in locally defined curricula, and form the basis for the MCAS assessments in ELA, mathematics, science/technology engineering and history/social sciences.

We can take pride in the fact that the Massachusetts curriculum frameworks are nationally recognized as being strong and sound. At the same time, we are committed to reviewing the frameworks periodically and updating them as needed. In fact, Mass. Gen. Laws Chapter 69, Section 1E directs the Board to "develop procedures for updating, improving or refining" the curriculum frameworks. We propose to establish a routine schedule to ensure that all of the frameworks are systematically reviewed and revised/refined over a five-year cycle.

We anticipate that the process of review and revision/refinement of each framework will take approximately one year - approximately six months for the initial review stage, and six months during which framework revisions or refinements are drafted, considered and adopted. At the conclusion of the first stage, we will report to the Board on the review process and make recommendations for revision and refinement. We will return to the Board for action on any proposed revisions at the conclusion of the second stage.

We propose to launch a five-year cycle of review of the curriculum frameworks in the fall of 2007, beginning with the Commonwealth's ELA Curriculum Framework. The proposed five-year schedule is as follows:

Content Area	Review Process	Consideration of Proposed Amendments

English Language Arts	Fall 2007	Spring 2008
Mathematics	Winter 2008	Fall 2008
Science/Technology Engineering	Fall 2008	Spring 2009
Visual and Performing Arts	Winter 2009	Fall 2010
History/Social Science	Fall 2010	Spring 2011
Health	Winter 2011	Fall 2011
Foreign Languages	Fall 2011	Spring 2012

For each framework we propose to convene an advisory group composed of pre-K through grade 12 educators as well as scholars from higher education with expertise in the content areas addressed by the framework. Members of the advisory group will participate in the curriculum framework review process, and will make recommendations to the Department and the Board on proposed revisions/refinements to the framework.

We will establish an open process for nomination of candidates to serve on each advisory group, with active efforts to solicit participation from individuals with expertise and experience across grade levels and subject matter and representing various kinds of schools and districts. If Board members would like to nominate candidates, please contact Acting Commissioner Jeff Nellhaus. The Commissioner will select advisory group members from among all of the well qualified nominees. We expect to have the advisory group for the ELA framework in place by early fall.

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The Massachusetts Board of Elementary and Secondary Education

Briefing for the August 28, 2007 Regular Meeting of the Board of Education

To: Members of the Board of Education

From: David P. Driscoll, Commissioner of Education

Date: August 21, 2007

The next regular meeting of the Board of Education will be on Tuesday, August 28, 2007, at the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education in Malden, starting at 9:00 a.m. Coffee will be available at 8:30 a.m. The meeting will adjourn by 12:00 noon. If you need overnight accommodations or any additional information about the schedule, please call Belinda Wilson at (781) 338-3118.

Overview

At this month's meeting we will review the current (FY 2008) state budget for education and discuss some initiatives that the Board might want to promote in its FY 2009 budget request. Deputy Commissioner Jeff Nellhaus and I will go over the proposed schedule and process for reviewing and updating the curriculum frameworks. We are presenting a substantial number of federal and state grants for the Board's approval, as is typical before the start of a new school year. The grants package also includes information on grants that I approved in July under the authority that the Board voted in June. Finally, the review and approval of the Board's annual report for FY 2007 gives us the opportunity to reflect on some important accomplishments and look ahead to further progress in the years ahead.

Regular Meeting

Comments from the Chairman

The Chairman will update the Board on current issues and activities. He will also ask student Board member Zachary Tsetsos to report on the State Student Advisory Council's four-day summer leadership conference. The conference gave elected student representatives from high schools across the Commonwealth a great opportunity to

discuss issues including the proposed MassCore high school curriculum, breaking down barriers to learning, students as change agents, high school science assessment, school finance, and college readiness. Jeff Nellhaus and I had a lively and wide-ranging session with the students covering such topics as the achievement gap and how to eliminate it, and the level of preparation that students need in middle school (for high school) and in high school (for college). We are fortunate to have such a thoughtful and engaged group of student leaders chaired by Zachary Tsetsos.

Comments from the Commissioner

Executive Leadership Program for Educators (ExEL). Earlier this year, a team from the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, four urban school district teams (Boston, Springfield, Worcester, and Chelsea) and teams from the state of Oregon were invited by Harvard University to participate in the Executive Leadership Program for Educators (ExEL). Funded by the Wallace Foundation, this three-year leadership initiative focuses on helping urban school districts expand high quality teaching and learning. ExEL is a collaboration of Harvard's education, business, and government schools involving faculty members working together to build on the knowledge and skills of the participating teams in four essential areas: instructional improvement; systems thinking and alignment; leadership and team building strategies; and assessment and organizational improvement.

The program began in 2006 as a way to integrate several separate programs and approaches being used in Harvard's graduate schools to help improve leadership in urban and high needs districts and state departments of education. Ohio and Kentucky participated in the first cohort, with Massachusetts and Oregon forming the second cohort this summer. Among other things, ExEL seeks to improve the working relationships between and among districts and the state Department of Elementary and Secondary Education through the development of a network so that high quality teaching and learning will be brought to scale more effectively and efficiently.

In July, the ExEL faculty held an intensive week-long summer institute at Harvard to begin the leadership training for the Massachusetts and Oregon participants. Our team includes Jeff Nellhaus, Bob Bickerton, Bobbi D'Alessandro, Julianne Dow, Lynda Foisy and Carole Thomson from the Department, Ann Reale representing the Board of Education, and Tom Scott representing the Mass. Association of School Superintendents. Superintendent Chris Martes and former superintendent Joan Connolly joined us in the summer institute. Two in-state institutes will be held during 2007-08. Participants will have access to online courses and resources and will have a skilled coach to assist them in the work. The ExEL work aligns with our strategic plan and will enable our state to learn from distinguished faculty and colleagues within Massachusetts and from other states. We will update the Board periodically on the ExEL program.

Items for Discussion and Action

1. State Education Budget for FY 08 and Implications for FY 09 - *Discussion*

Now that the fiscal year 2008 budget has been adopted and signed into law, I would like to review those line items that were the main focus of the Legislature and Governor this past year and discuss the possible implications for the FY 2009 budget. Formal discussions and deliberations will begin fairly soon as the Board typically has an initial discussion of its budget recommendations for the next year at the October meeting with a final vote at the November meeting.

2. Schedule for Reviewing and Updating Curriculum Frameworks - *Discussion*

The Board has approved curriculum frameworks in English language arts, mathematics, science and technology engineering, history and social science, foreign languages, visual and performing arts, and health. Our curriculum frameworks are nationally recognized as being strong and sound. Both state law and good practice require us to review them periodically and update them as needed. At this month's meeting we are presenting a proposed schedule and process to ensure that all of the frameworks are systematically reviewed and refined over a five-year cycle, starting with the English language arts framework this year.

3. Approval of Grants and Report on Grants Approved by Commissioner since June 2007 - Vote

Presented for your approval at this month's meeting are grants totaling \$6,216,284 under the following programs:

- Technology Enhancement (\$987,102 - federal funds)
- School Partnerships/Communities of Care (\$30,000 - federal funds)
- McKinney-Vento Homeless Education (\$794,680 - federal funds)
- Community Service Learning - Planning/Implementation (\$40,617 - federal funds)
- Community Service Learning - Sustainability ((\$7,000 - federal funds)
- Community Service Learning - Partnership (\$60,000 - federal funds)
- Competitive Academic Support Services - Work and Learning, School Year Program (\$410,765 - state funds)
- Competitive Academic Support Services - Work and Learning, Summer Program (\$589,235 - state funds)
- Academic Support and College Transition Services, School Year Program (\$311,000 - state funds)
- Academic Support and College Transition Services, Summer Program (\$139,000 - state funds)
- Competitive Academic Support Services - Pathways One Stop Career Center, School Year Program (\$404,515- state funds)
- Competitive Academic Support Services - Pathways One Stop Career Center, Summer Program (\$95,485 - state funds)
- Comprehensive School Health Education Assessment Trainer Program (\$5,000 - federal)
- Massachusetts 21st Century Community Learning Centers (\$2,011,885 - federal funds)
- Massachusetts 21st Century Community Learning Centers Exemplary Programs (\$80,000 - federal funds)
- Alternative Education for Suspended and Expelled Students (\$185,000 - state funds)
- Safe and Supportive Learning Environments (\$65,000 - state funds)

I recommend that the Board approve the grants as presented.

Also included under Tab 3, following the yellow sheet with the motion to approve the grants, is a report on the grants that I approved earlier this summer, under the authority that the Board granted to me at the June 26th Board meeting. These grants total \$4,502,001 under the following programs:

- Perkins IV Tech-Prep Transition (\$1,186,171 - federal funds)
- Workplace Education Phase 2 (\$415,830 - state funds)
- Early Literacy Intervention (\$2,900,000 - state funds)

If you have questions about any of the grants - those that I approved in July or those slated for approval by the Board at this month's meeting - we will be pleased to respond.

4. Board of Education Annual Report for FY 2007 - *Discussion and Vote*

The Board's annual report for FY 2007 includes key data and chronicles the major decisions and actions of the Board from July 2006 - June 2007. The annual report is an impressive record of some of our accomplishments in service to the students of Massachusetts. After the Board accepts the annual report, we will distribute copies to the Governor and the Legislature and post the report on our website.

Other Items for Information

5. Governor's Commonwealth Readiness Project

Governor Patrick has launched his Readiness Project, including naming a council to lead the development of a 10-year strategic plan to improve public education. Enclosed for your information is the Governor's press release and other information about the project.

6. Tentative Schedule for Release of 2007 MCAS Results, AYP Determinations, and NAEP Results

Under Tab 6 is the tentative schedule for release of the 2007 MCAS results, Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) determinations, and National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) results. We have provided this information to school officials also.

7. Directions to the Meeting

If you have questions about any agenda items, please call me. I look forward to seeing you at the meeting in Malden on August 28th.

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