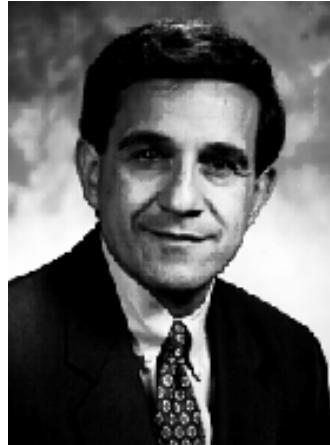


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## Commissioner's Update

September 21, 1995

### Dear Superintendents and Charter School Leaders:

It's autumn, schools are off and running, and this package is full of what I hope will be useful information for you.

1. **Ed-Flex:** I've put the process in motion to use the new federal authority to waive regulations and statutes in six federal program areas; let me know your needs.
2. **Foundation Reserve account:** There is about \$1 million available to help communities unable to meet their spending requirements; this memorandum explains who is eligible and how to access the funds.
3. **Charter school per pupil estimates** are included.  
[No Longer Available]
4. **Business and technology education advisory:** This clarifies the role of business and technology education in the "structured learning time" definition of the new student learning time standards.
5. **Assessment advisory committees:** This is a request for nominations for the 200 people we need to serve on the committees which will help shape the upcoming assessment of students and schools.
6. **Nutrition forms:** Last year, there were over 24 pages of forms which federal and state regulations required districts to complete annually; this year I have thoroughly revamped and streamlined the process and would like to know what you think.
7. **Teacher of the Year:** The 1996 Massachusetts Teacher of the Year, Kathleen Sherman, is available to you for workshops on issues of inclusion.
8. **Religious holidays memo:** This lists a two-year schedule of Jewish holidays which may be useful to you in planning your calendar.  
[No Longer Available]

As always, I appreciate your copying those items which members of your staff and community would be interested in seeing. To further disseminate this information, we

are posting all of this material on our world wide web site on the Internet (<http://www.doe.mass.edu>) and will post increasing amounts of information through this electronic means. If you haven't tied in yet, please call MCET at 1-800-556-4376 to register for your free account. This is a very important linkage.

I wish you well and look forward to hearing from you, seeing you or speaking with you soon.

Sincerely,

Robert V. Antonucci  
Commissioner of Education

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## Ed-Flex Demonstration Partnership Site

**To:** Superintendents, Principals, and other Interested Parties

**From:** Robert V. Antonucci

**Date:** September 20, 1995

Several months ago, I wrote to you regarding the Commonwealth's proposal to the U.S. Department of Education to become an Educational Flexibility Demonstration State ("Ed-Flex"). Under Goals 2000, the Ed-Flex program grants only up to six states the administrative latitude to waive certain federal statutory or regulatory requirements. In essence, the Secretary of Education is transferring his authority to grant waivers to the state.

**I am pleased to report that last week, Massachusetts was named the nation's third Ed-Flex partnership site.**

In making his announcement, U.S. Secretary of Education Richard Riley stated that "Massachusetts has a demonstrated commitment to promoting flexibility, accountability and effective innovation in order to improve teaching and learning."

Ed-Flex fits into the broader context of statewide systemic improvement initiated by the Education Reform Act of 1993, in that the Act made possible a fundamental shift in the state's regulatory environment. Instead of traditional efforts to improve education through disjointed grants and regulations, the Education Reform Act enacted deep structural changes to provide schools with unprecedented flexibility so long as they achieve benchmark results.

Specifically, the federal programs included in this Ed-Flex initiative are:

- Title I (formerly Chapter I)
- Title II (Eisenhower Professional Development)
- Title IV (Safe & Drug Free Schools and Communities)
- Title VI (formerly Chapter 2)
- Part C of Title VII (Emergency Immigrant Education)
- Carl D. Perkins Vocational and Applied Technology Act

As the Department develops its application process for granting waivers, both under Ed-Flex as well as other state provisions, we would like your feedback. I want to move aggressively using this new authority to waive regulations and statutes authorized by the federal government, so long as the waivers improve learning or teaching without harming students' opportunities to learn.

**Specifically, we would like you to tell us what statutory or regulatory provisions might inhibit your schools from achieving higher standards of teaching and learning.** The waiver authority is intended to assist local school

districts in implementing state and local school improvement plans designed to help all students reach challenging academic standards.

It is important to note that Massachusetts will not be authorized to waive the following federal statutory or regulatory requirements:

1. Maintenance of Effort;
2. Comparability of Services;
3. Equitable Participation of students and professional staff in private schools;
4. Parental Participation and Involvement, and
5. The Distribution of Funds to Local Districts.

I am asking that you let us know of specific statutes or regulations that fall under the participating programs, that you would find useful to have waived. Please send us your recommendations, including the specific federal program area, the statute or regulation, and how a waiver would help to improve teaching and learning in your school or school district. Please send these recommendations **by October 20, 1995** to:

**Ed Flex  
Office of the Deputy Commissioner  
Massachusetts Department of Education  
350 Main Street  
Malden, MA 02148**

If you have any questions regarding this initiative, please call Jane Thomas at 781/338-3000.

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## Foundation Reserve Program

**To:** Superintendents, Mayors and Boards of Selectmen

**From:** Robert V. Antonucci, Commissioner of Education

**Date:** September 20, 1995

The foundation reserve program was established in the fiscal year 1996 state budget to provide equitable relief to those cities and towns which are unable to fully fund their local educational spending requirements due to extraordinary or unforeseen circumstances. (See Chapter 38 of the Acts of 1995, line item 7061-0011.) A total of \$1,051,338 is now available for distribution under this program. Awards made under this program are one-time, non-recurring awards, and will not be included in the calculation of base aid in subsequent fiscal years. It is not the intent of this program to relieve a community from its basic financial obligations under the Commonwealth's education reform law.

I hope this program proves to be helpful and that the process for distributing these funds will work efficiently for communities in need.

**Municipalities are eligible for an award under this program if one or more of the following circumstances exists and creates an unreasonable financial hardship on a municipality:**

1. an extraordinarily large increase in the municipality's minimum local contribution from FY95 to FY96;
2. an extraordinarily large decrease in the municipality's cherry sheet aid from FY95 to FY96;
3. significant and unforeseeable changes in the municipality's financial situation subsequent to its adoption of a budget for the current fiscal year;
4. where a waiver of a municipality's minimum required contribution to a regional district has been approved by DOR but disapproved by a majority of the members of the district, where such approval is required;
5. where the calculation of a municipality's required contribution has been adversely affected by administrative errors; or
6. any other exceptional or unusual circumstance which, in the opinion of the Commissioner of Education, would impose an unreasonable hardship on a community in order to meet the minimum local contribution.

**Here are the requirements to apply for an award under this program:**

1. The enabling legislation for this program requires that a city or town must first apply to the Department of Revenue for a waiver under the provisions of section 271 of Chapter 38 of the Acts of 1995, and then be denied a waiver by DOR. All

applicants must meet this requirement, unless the circumstances on which the request is based occurred after the deadline for applying for a DOR waiver or are clearly unrelated to the conditions under which DOR is authorized to grant a waiver.

2. Applicants send a letter to the Commissioner of Education, stating the amount of funds applied for and setting forth all relevant information to support the request.
3. The application must be approved by the board of selectmen in a town, the city council in a Plan E city, or the mayor in all other cities.
4. The application is then sent to: Massachusetts Department of Education

**Financial Management Office  
350 Main Street  
Malden, MA 02148-5023**

5. The city or town official sends a copy of the application to the chair of each school district of which the city or town is a member.

The Commissioner of Education will determine applicant eligibility based on the criteria described above and the funds available. The Commissioner may request additional supporting information for any application.

Applications received on or before November 30, 1995, will receive equal consideration with all other timely filed applications. Applications received after this date will be reviewed on a first come, first served basis, subject to the availability of funds.

For further information or assistance concerning the foundation reserve program, please contact Jeff Wulfson (tel. 781-338-3000; e-mail [jwulfson@doe.mass.edu](mailto:jwulfson@doe.mass.edu)).

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## Student Learning Time / Business and Technology Education

**To:** Superintendents and Charter School Leaders

**From:** Robert V. Antonucci, Commissioner of Education

**Date:** September 20, 1995

The purpose of this memorandum is to clarify the impact of the student learning time standards adopted by the Board of Education in December 1994 on the scheduling of business and technology education.

The purpose of the student learning time standards is "to ensure that every public school in the Commonwealth provides its students with the structured learning time needed to enable the student to achieve competency in core academic subjects and acquire the knowledge and skills described in the Common Core of Learning established by the Board of Education" (603 CMR 27.01). This shall be accomplished by providing 900 hours of structured learning time per school year for every elementary school student and 990 hours per school year for every secondary school student no later than the 1997-1998 school year. During the 1995-1996 and 1996-1997 school years schools must offer students at least 900 (elementary) and 990 (secondary) annual hours of structured learning time exclusive of homeroom, recess, lunch, and time spent passing between classes.

"Structured learning time" is defined as "time during which students are engaged in regularly scheduled instruction, learning activities, or learning assessments within the curriculum for study of the core subjects."

The term "core subjects" includes both the core academic subjects specified in the Education Reform Act of 1993 (mathematics, science and technology, social studies, English language arts, world languages, and the arts) and "subjects, other than those defined as the core academic subjects, focused on helping students acquire the knowledge and skills described in the Common Core of Learning." Each local or regional school district must decide for itself what subjects included in its curriculum, other than the core academic subjects, meet the requirements of this definition and will be considered "core subjects" in their school system.

In my opinion, a school district may reasonably consider business and technology education "core subjects" under the student learning time standards since business and technology-related competencies are included in the Common Core of Learning. The Common Core includes the following areas related to student acquisition of business and technology knowledge and skills:

**All students should:**

- Manage money, balance competing priorities and interests, and allocate time among study, work and recreation.
- Set goals and achieve them by organizing time, work space, and resources effectively.
- Know career options and academic and occupational requirements needed for employment and economic independence.
- Use computers and other technologies effectively.
- Apply mathematical skills to interpret information and solve problems.
- Apply the fundamental principles of the life sciences, physical sciences, earth/space sciences and the science of technology to analyze problems and relate them to human concerns and life experiences.
- Analyze, develop and act on informed opinions about current economic, environmental, political, and social issues affecting Massachusetts, the United States and the world.

Business and technology education courses which are designed to help students acquire these Common Core of Learning skills can be an important secondary curriculum offering to prepare students for adult responsibilities. It continues to be a local or regional district's option to maintain business and technology education as a component of its comprehensive high school education program.

I hope that this memorandum helps to clarify the relationship between business and technology education and the new student learning time standards.

cc: Business and Technology Education Department Heads

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## Recruitment of Assessment Development Committee Members

**To:** Superintendents, Principals and Other Interested Parties

**From:** Robert V. Antonucci, Commissioner

**Date:** September 20, 1995

I am writing to request your assistance in the next critical phase of Education Reform: the development of the [Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System, MCAS](#). While it will take several years to fully implement the system, I would like to initiate the process this fall by establishing Assessment Development Committees comprised of local educators and community and business leaders to collaborate with Department staff and the testing contractor to carry out this important endeavor.

A total of seven Assessment Development Committees will be formed, one for each of the subjects covered by the Commonwealth's [Curriculum Frameworks](#). Committee members will serve as important resources in the development of assessment exercises and performance standards. In turn, they will be afforded an invaluable opportunity for professional development.

Attached are materials describing the responsibilities of the Assessment Development Committees, criteria for membership, and application procedures.

Please contact Jeff Nellhaus or Kit Viator of Accountability and Evaluation Services, (781) 338-3000, if you have any questions concerning this process.

Sincere thanks for your cooperation.

## Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System

### Overview of Purpose, Scope of Responsibilities, and Application Procedures of the Assessment Development Committees

The Massachusetts Department of Education seeks individuals interested in working with the Department and its contractor to develop the new assessment system mandated by the [1993 Education Reform Law](#). The law specifies that students in grades four, eight and ten be tested annually in mathematics, science and technology, English/language arts, social studies, the arts, world languages and health. Individual student results will be returned for the mathematics, science and technology, English/language arts, social studies and world language portion of the assessment. School and district results will be based on all subjects mentioned above. For tenth graders, passing this assessment will be a requirement for high school graduation. Seven development committees comprised of between 25 and 30 people consisting

of educators and content experts will be established. These Assessment Development Committees will meet monthly beginning in 1996. [Dates for the first six meetings of the year](#) are listed below.

## **Purpose of the Committees**

**The role of each of the Committees will be to work in collaboration with the Department and the state's testing contractor to assist with the following activities:**

- establish assessment frameworks using the Common Core of Learning [ [HTML](#) | [PDF](#) ] and the [Curriculum Frameworks](#) as the foundation for the Frameworks;
- develop assessment specifications (the types and numbers of assessment items) within the design established by the Department of Education, the State Assessment Advisory Committee, and the assessment contractor;
- produce and review assessment items (considering a range of formats);
- review the results of field tests;
- develop and review scoring guides;
- collaborate with other committees to establish performance standards; and
- advise on aspects of test administration, analysis, and reporting.

## **Composition of the Committees**

Each Committee will be comprised primarily of local educators who have the appropriate subject matter expertise and who also represent regular, Transitional Bilingual Education, Special Education, Title I, and vocational/technical programs. Special attention will be given to establishing the committees so they reflect the Commonwealth's racial/ethnic and regional diversity. We also hope to include business and community leaders and representatives from higher education on the Committees. In order to ensure a strong link between Curriculum Frameworks and the new assessment system, we plan to have approximately 20-30% of the Assessment Development Committees comprised of by members of the Curriculum Frameworks Committees. We expect that 25-30 individuals will serve on each Committee; in total we seek to fill approximately 200 Committee memberships.

## **Scope of Responsibilities**

### **Membership Criteria**

1. Each Committee will be coordinated by staff from the Department of Education and from its testing contractor; members should be able to work effectively as a member of a team and must be willing to make the long-term commitment described below;
2. Commitment to the Commonwealth's Common Core of Learning and the Curriculum Frameworks; and
3. Capacity to attend meetings as outlined below.

## **Time Commitment**

**Meetings are expected to include the following:**

- two or three day orientation meeting in the fall of 1995;



**\*English Language Arts may schedule an additional meeting in order to prepare items to field test during the Spring administration of the MEAP.**

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## National School Lunch, School Breakfast and Special Milk Agreement Renewals

**To:** Public School Superintendents, Private School and Child Care Administrators

**Copy:** Food Service Directors

**From:** Robert V. Antonucci, Commissioner of Education

**Date:** September 18, 1995

Federal regulations which govern and provide funding for costs associated with the National School Lunch, School Breakfast and Special Milk programs still require an annual agreement. The FY96 agreement and policy statement were delayed because we revamped the entire process. The result is a flexible, less paper-intensive process. While last year, the combined package included an average of 24 pages, this year's renewal consists of one (1) document, which is attached. This now is one of the simplest lunch, breakfast and milk program renewal processes in the country, I am told.

School programs simply need to renew the agreement and policy statement. The FY95 agreement and policy statement should be reviewed and understood by school administrative and program staff. *If the districts' food service program remains unchanged*, the appropriate notation should be made, titles checked and the authorized representative should sign. *If there are changes*, make the notations/revisions, attach to the Agreement, sign and return. Enrollment and other data, previously requested on these forms, will be collected from within the Department. During the year if you make changes to the program, notify Nutrition Programs and Services to incorporate the changes into your agreement.

Schools contracting for food service management still need to submit a copy of that contract for review. Annual contract extensions should be submitted also. A contract is for the duration of no longer than one (1) year with options for yearly renewals not to exceed four (4) additional years.

The completed and signed agreement should be returned by October 15, 1995. If you need assistance please contact Nutrition Programs and Services at **(781)338-3000**.

We hope that this process reduces paperwork and streamlines the programs. It is our hope in the future to continue to operate with more flexibility and integrate program functions where appropriate.



- > [Teacher of the Year](#)
- > [Milken Family Foundation](#)
- > [Christa McAuliffe Fellowship](#)
- > [Presidential Awards](#)
- > [Master Teacher Program](#)
- > [National Teachers Hall of Fame](#)
- > [Fulbright Memorial Fund](#)
- > [George Washington Scholars](#)

[Educator Services](#) > [Career Advancement](#) > [Recognition Programs](#) >

## The 1996 Massachusetts Teacher of the Year

Dear Friends,

Established in 1952, the **National Teacher of the Year Program** is the oldest and most prestigious awards program that focuses public attention on excellence in teaching. The program, co-sponsored by the Council of Chief State School Officers and Scholastic Inc., recognizes and honors the contributions of classroom teachers by granting one outstanding teacher a year's paid sabbatical. During that year, the teacher travels the nation and addresses educational issues with a wide variety of audiences.

**The Massachusetts Teacher of the Year Program is administered by the Massachusetts Department of Education.**

Each year, the program honors a Massachusetts teacher who exemplifies fine teaching in the Commonwealth. The purpose of the program is to select a teacher who is worthy of speaking for, energizing, and representing the positive contributions of all teachers statewide.

The selection process for the **Massachusetts Teacher of the Year** begins early in the calendar year with a call for nominations. A record 332 teachers were nominated for the 1996 program. An independent panel of experts including [past Teachers of the Year](#) reviewed written applications, interviewed eight finalists, and made a recommendation to me for my endorsement.

The following corporations and organizations are supporting the 1996 Massachusetts Teacher of the Year Program: J. L. Hammett Company, Apple Computers, Mid-West National Life Insurance Company, Megatech PC- Build Computer Kits, Microsoft Corporation, UMASS/Boston Graduate College of Education and Harvard Graduate College of Education.

The Massachusetts Teacher of the Year automatically becomes the state's candidate for the National Teacher of the Year Program.

I am proud to present the 1996 Massachusetts Teacher of the Year, **Kathleen Sherman of Falmouth**, and wish her much good luck & success!

Sincerely,



Robert V. Antonucci  
Commissioner of Education

**For more information on the program, please contact:**

The Massachusetts Teacher of the Year Program  
Massachusetts Department of Education  
350 Main Street, Malden, MA 02148  
781-338-3000

**Kathleen Sherman** is an inclusion teacher in grades 2-4 at the East Falmouth Elementary School in the Falmouth Public Schools. According to those who work with her, Kathy's determination to provide for the best interest of the child has led her to define her role as *"one that meets the special needs of students, parents, other teachers, administrators, and the community."* Treating everyone with patience and respect, she makes both children and adults believe in themselves and then achieve at the highest possible level.

Kathy designed and implemented the inclusion initiative at the East Elementary School, the first of its kind in the Falmouth School System. Beginning with a core of five classroom teachers, the model has now spread to all twenty classrooms and six kindergarten sections. As a result of its success, Kathy has been a frequent presenter of workshops on the topic of inclusion.

Kathy's involvement in the schools extends far beyond her work as an inclusion teacher. In addition to serving on Falmouth's math and language arts committees, she has taught workshops on mathematics to both teachers and volunteers, coordinated a Cape-wide poetry contest, helped organize Falmouth's first Family Math Night, and assisted in a training program in Won Way Phonics.

*As Teacher of the Year, Kathy is available during the 1995-96 school year to present workshops, seminars, or keynote addresses. Please contact Kathy at 508-540-6655 to schedule a presentation.*

**Possible Workshop/Speaking Topics**

- Inclusion as a philosophy: what does it mean, how to manage
- Flexible grouping for inclusion classes
- Integrating a strong phonetic program with whole language

**1996 Massachusetts Teacher of the Year  
Ms. Kathleen Sherman, Falmouth**



### **Teacher of the Year Finalists**

Ms. Debra Auday, Boxford  
Mr. Ron Howland, Reading  
Mr. Robert Cuddi, Winthrop  
Ms. Alicia Roy, Palmer  
Ms. Claire-Marie Hart, Beverly  
Ms. Nancy Silva, Plymouth  
Ms. Margaret Voss, Marblehead

### **Teacher of the Year Semi-Finalists**

Ms. Clarice Cargill, Foxborough  
Ms. Laurie Levin, Needham  
Ms. Susan Constable, Medfield  
Ms. Joyce Mahn, Canton  
Ms. Patricia Doherty, Wachusett Reg.  
Ms. Elizabeth Milligan, Franklin  
Ms. Mary Devlin, Deerfield  
Ms. Jean Marie Page, Rockland  
Ms. Linda Fobes, Cambridge  
Ms. Joan Shannahan, Stoughton  
Ms. Anne P. Gaine, Southbridge  
Ms. Christine Trombley, Topsfield  
Ms. Debra Hale, Newburyport  
Ms. Joan Tuttle, Burlington  
Mr. Donald LeClerc, Marblehead  
The Working Together Team, Cambridge

### **Recent Massachusetts Teachers of the Year**

1995 Jerry Howland, Boston

1994 Virginia Freyermuth, Duxbury

1993 Steven Levy, Lexington

1992 Ronald Adams, Quincy

1991 Charles Sposato, Framingham

1990 Molly Murphy, Brookline

1989 Marjorie Montgomery, Newton

1988 James McDermott, Worcester

1987 Margot Desjardins, Westport

1986 Donna Viveiros, Fall River

1985 Francis Smith, Wayland

1984 Cathleen Hughes, Scituate

1983 Donald Pottle, Shrewsbury

1982 Joseph Kelly, Lexington

1981 Margaret Campbell, Longmeadow

1980 Marta Valdes, Boston

1979 Rita Croteau, Worcester

1978 Olive Craigwell, Boston

1977 Martin Badoian, Canton

1976 Barbara Boschert, Worcester

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