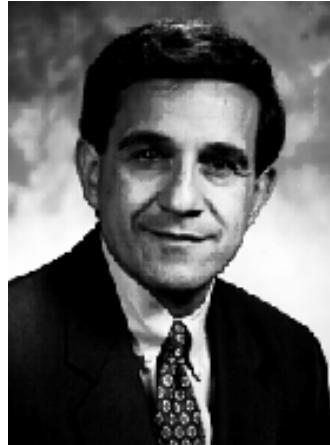


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Commissioner's Update

October 4, 1995

Dear Superintendents and Charter School Leaders:

This first of the two coordinated October mailings contains the following five items for your use. Please copy any which should be disseminated to your staff:

1. [Reallocation of funds for Eisenhower professional development](#)--the amount for distribution has actually increased over our earlier estimates
2. Massachusetts Governor's Committee on Physical Fitness--notification of award schedule
[No Longer Available]
3. [Teachers Guide to Fellowships and Awards](#)
4. [Safe Schools Program materials](#)--includes a student guide, which is being sent to guidance counselors and health coordinators, and a pamphlet describing the state law on discrimination with a poster for your use

Under separate cover, you will be receiving two other items in the near future. First, you will be receiving a notice about whether your district has met its school spending requirements for last year, based on the end-of-year report, and whether the budget for FY 96 meets this year's requirements as well. In cases where there are issues raised, the notice will spell out what steps are necessary. Second, you will receive a notice from Advanced Systems, the contractor who administers the state MEAP tests, about the schedule and logistical information for the MEAP in the spring of 1996.

Finally, as always, most of the materials I am sending in hard copy are available for reading or printing off our Internet site on the world wide web (<http://www.doe.mass.edu>). Please visit our home page regularly; you will find very useful and timely information there.

All the best, and
Sincerely,

Robert V. Antonucci
Commissioner of Education

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Revised Allocations of Eisenhower Funds

Memorandum

To: Superintendents
From: Robert V. Antonucci, Commissioner of Education
Date: October 2, 1995

There is good news concerning the Dwight D. Eisenhower Program. These funds have been increased for FY96 over the amount first sent to your school district. The [attached chart](#) indicates the exact amount of your revised allocations. Of the increase, 5.5% of the funds may be used for professional development in any core subject. 94.5% must still be used solely for mathematics and science.

In September 1995, [Massachusetts was named an "Ed-Flex" state](#) by the U.S. Secretary of Education. This designation allows the Department to waive certain federal statutory and regulatory provisions for six federal programs, of which the Eisenhower Program is one. This flexibility is in keeping with the spirit of the [Education Reform Act](#). Waivers for the Eisenhower Program will be granted if the increased flexibility will improve professional development opportunities in the disciplines, and ultimately improve learning for students. Waiver requests for the Eisenhower Program should be addressed to the Commissioner's Office.

If your district has received an approval letter for the FY96 Eisenhower Program, an amendment form needs to be submitted by your district in order to access the increased funding. The form needs to include the revised budget pages and a signed AM-1. Please submit an original and two copies of this form. These forms are attached for your use and are required by state contract rules and regulations.

If your district has NOT received an approval letter for the FY96 Eisenhower Program, you may submit your grant application for the increased amount.

If you have any questions regarding the status of your application or the process for filing an amendment, please contact: Instruction and Curriculum Services, (781) 338-3000.

cc: D.D. Eisenhower Program Contacts



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A Teacher's Guide to Fellowships and Awards

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Introduction

Improving the quality of teaching and learning in our schools requires that we provide teachers with time and resources for professional development. When teachers have opportunities to engage in dialogue and reflection with colleagues, share ideas, and collaboratively develop new teaching methods, schools and children reap the benefits.

Meaningful professional development experiences strengthen teachers' knowledge and skills. Such experiences provide opportunities for teachers to focus on different aspects of teaching and learning at different points in their careers, to strengthen their teaching, and to discuss, reflect upon, and evaluate their practice in a community of fellow professionals.

Teachers who have participated in satisfying experiences gain a sense of renewal. They believe in life-long learning and model this for their students. They have reached out to join the broader professional community, strengthening an alliance dedicated to educational excellence. Such professional development opportunities will strengthen and support teachers' capacity as *shapers, advocates and leaders in implementing reforms* to enhance student learning.

The efforts to improve schools and teaching involve teachers in new and expanded roles. In these new roles, they are increasingly responsible for reforms that include curriculum development, implementation of new teaching methods, alternative assessments, mentoring and peer coaching, and decision-making beyond the classroom. These and other significant educational changes require approaches to professional development that go beyond the traditional inservice workshops and three credit courses to include a variety of opportunities.

A Teacher's Guide to Fellowships and Awards both presents alternatives to traditional inservice training for pre-kindergarten through grade twelve teachers and supports and celebrates the professional development of those who work with young people. The awards recognize and honor teaching excellence, innovative classroom practice, and exceptional leadership. The guide is intended to help teachers find a combination of educational and personal experiences that contribute to increased competence and satisfaction. In addition, it provides a rich array of opportunities from which Massachusetts teachers may draw when designing their individual professional development plans for recertification.

The Guide

This Guide contains a total of 141 institutes, fellowships, and awards. The entries are organized by discipline or topic, and many of the entries include the name of past participants/recipients who have indicated an interest in sharing information. The institutes are either free, scholarship-assisted, or offer a stipend to participants. Most of the programs are offered each year, although the application dates and contacts for application information may change.

Preparing to Use This Guide

What should you consider when designing a professional development plan that includes a variety of experiences? First, keep in mind that any long-range plan for professional growth is developmental and will be influenced by where you are in both your personal life and in your career. So, you may want to first ask questions such as:

- What do you consider your strengths regarding subject knowledge, pedagogy and leadership?
- What interests and excites you the most?
- Are there areas in which you would like to gain more knowledge or skill?
- How best do you learn new information?
- How does a particular program of interest interface with your individual plan for recertification and your school's professional development plan?

In determining which professional development option is right for you, consider:

- How much of a commitment of time, energy, and cost will it demand?
- What personal, family, and professional responsibilities and obligations must you consider?
- How will the opportunity affect your subject knowledge and teaching practice?
- In what ways will the experience strengthen the connection between your development and students' development?
- How will the option contribute to and align with your school's improvement plan? To your district's professional development goals?

Where to Request Copies of This Guide

To receive copies of *A Teacher's Guide to Fellowships and Awards*, contact:

Massachusetts Department of Education
Office for the Advancement of Mathematics and Science
350 Main Street
Malden, MA 02148
781-338-3456

or

Massachusetts Field Center for Teaching and Learning
University of Massachusetts at Boston
100 Morrissey Boulevard
Boston, MA 02125-3393
(617) 287-7660

Where to Send Information for Future Editions

This guide may not include all of the professional development resources that exist for

Massachusetts teachers. We would appreciate receiving information on fellowships and awards not published in this guide for inclusion in future editions. If you know of additional institutes, fellowships, and awards, please submit relevant information to the addresses listed above.

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Recommendations on the Support and Safety of Gay and Lesbian Students

Public health and educational research has documented that gay and lesbian students and other students dealing with sexual identity issues face increased risk of violent victimization, harassment, and discrimination, impeding their ability to do well in school. In addition, due to their low self-esteem, lack of support, and family difficulties, some of these students may be at greater risk for alcohol and other drug abuse, suicidal behavior, infection with HIV and other sexually transmitted diseases, and homelessness.

In response to these concerns, Governor William F. Weld signed an executive order in February, 1992, establishing the Governor's Commission on Gay and Lesbian Youth. In February, 1993, the Commission issued its report, *Making Schools Safer for Gay and Lesbian Youth: Breaking the Silence in Schools and in Families*, which makes recommendations regarding educational issues.

Based on the recommendations in this report, the Board of Education voted in May, 1993, to adopt the following steps to improve the safety of schools and school-based support services for these students:

- 1. Schools are encouraged to develop policies protecting gay and lesbian students from harassment, violence, and discrimination.**

In order to guarantee the rights of all students to an education and to prevent dropping out, school policies should include sexual orientation within anti-discrimination policies, as well as within policies which guarantee students' rights to an education and to equal access to school courses and activities.

In order to make schools safe for all students and to prevent violence and harassment, schools should amend existing anti-harassment policies to include prohibiting violence, harassment, and verbal abuse directed against gay and lesbian students and those perceived to be gay or lesbian. Incidents of anti-gay abuse should be treated with the same discipline procedures as other incidents involving bias and hatred.

- 2. Schools are encouraged to offer training to school personnel in violence prevention and suicide prevention.**

In order to prevent violence in schools, teachers, guidance counselors, and all school staff should be provided with training in violence and suicide prevention, including the particular issues/concerns of gay and lesbian students.

- 3. Schools are encouraged to offer school-based support groups for gay, lesbian and heterosexual students.**

In order to support students who are isolated and may be at high risk for suicide, high schools should establish support groups where all students, gay, lesbian and heterosexual, may meet on a regular basis to discuss gay and lesbian youth issues in a safe and confidential environment. These gay/heterosexual alliances should be open to all students and should have a faculty advisor and support from the school administration.

4. Schools are encouraged to provide school-based counseling for family members of gay and lesbian students.

School systems should extend existing student support teams, guidance services, and partnerships with community agencies to provide counseling services to gay and lesbian students and their families.

For further information on making schools safe for gay and lesbian students, please refer to the Department of Education document [Gay/Straight Alliances: A Student Guide](#).

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