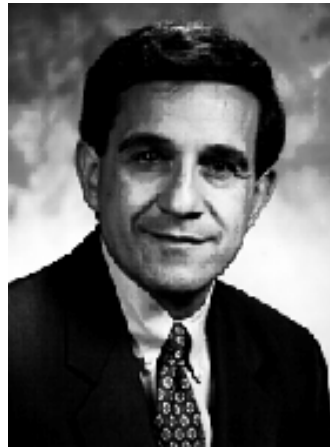


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## Commissioner's Update

February 16, 1996

Dear Superintendents and Charter School Leaders:

I am glad to have had the opportunity to see many of you in recent weeks at various events, including the regional superintendents' roundtables, and to discuss with you current state and local issues. I know you are all awaiting the release of the [preliminary estimates of FY 97 Chapter 70 figures](#) on state aid and local contribution for education, which I will be able to release no later than February 25. Please consult the Department's Internet site daily (<http://www.doe.mass.edu>), because we will post the numbers there immediately once they are released.

In this mailing, I have enclosed the following items for your review. As always, please copy and distribute these to your staff:

1. **DRAFT English Language Arts and Social Studies curriculum frameworks:**  
These two frameworks have not been accepted or endorsed by me or the State Board of Education, and we are looking for public comment on the drafts. With the mailing of these two drafts, this completes our distribution of paper copies. Copies of the frameworks have been sent to every superintendent, every teacher study group, and every public library will also soon have a set; in addition, the current drafts are on the Internet.  
**[ No longer available ]**
2. [Schedule of regional workshops on the 1996 MEAP:](#)  
These five regional workshops will offer a brief, focused training for school administrators on the March/April MEAP. Registration requested by March 1.
3. [Title I Appropriations memo](#)
4. [Schedule for spring professional development seminars for school administrators](#)
5. [Information on state conferences concerning the Americans with Disabilities Act](#)

I hope these materials are useful to you as you move forward with the school year and continue to implement the many improvements Education Reform has stimulated statewide.

All the best, and

Sincerely,

**Robert V. Antonucci**  
Commissioner of Education

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## 1996 Massachusetts Educational Assessment Program

### Memorandum

**To:** Superintendents  
**From:** Robert V. Antonucci, Commissioner of Education  
**Date:** February 16, 1996

The next administration of the Massachusetts Educational Assessment Program at grades 4, 8 and 10 will take place between March 18 and April 5, 1996. Some pertinent information is enclosed to notify you of the upcoming Massachusetts Educational Assessment Testing Program workshops in March and to help your staff prepare for the testing. Please note that this information is also being sent directly to school principals.

- 1. Two MEAP Questions for District Use** - The questionnaire section of the 1996 MEAP allow for districts to ask two multiple-choice questions of their own choosing at each grade level being tested (i.e., 2 question at grade 4, 2 at grade 8 and 2 at grade 10). Superintendents may choose to ask any multiple-choice questions they wish and the frequency of responses for each option will be reported to you. Further an analysis of the data will relate student scores to the options chosen for the district questions. Each question can have up to six possible answers. However, any option with fewer than 20 responses will not be reported or analyzed. Although this district option for local questions will be discussed at the March workshops and will be explained in the Test Coordinators Manual, it is mentioned here so you may consider possible questions in advance. Responses to questions may be used to analyze the performance of students from different feeder schools or students following different programs of study in school.
- 2. [MEAP Administration Workshop Schedule](#)** - This schedule lists the dates times and locations of the workshops. The workshops will outline test administration procedures. Please pre-register as soon as possible; we need to hear from you by no later than March 1. You may:

- mail the enclosed form in the postage-paid envelope provided;
- fax: (603) 749-6398;
- phone: 1-800-431-8901, x145; or
- e-mail [susan@asme.com](mailto:susan@asme.com).

If you have any questions regarding the enclosed information, please feel free to contact the Department's Accountability and Evaluation Services at 781-338-3000 or Mark Wiley or Susan Modeski at Advanced Systems at 1-800-431-8901.

Workshop Schedule for the Grade 4, 8 and 10

## Administration of the Massachusetts Educational Assessment Program

Dates for the Massachusetts Educational Assessment Program workshops are shown below. These workshops will provide information on the administration of the Grade 4, 8, and 10 assessments tests.

<b>Date</b>	<b>Time</b>	<b>Workshop Locations</b>
<b>March 4</b>	<b>1:30 p.m.-3:30 p.m.</b>	John Duggan Middle School 1015 Wilbraham Rd. Springfield, MA 01109
<b>March 5</b>	<b>9:00 a.m.-11 a.m.</b>	Taconic High School 96 Valentine Rd. Pittsfield, MA 01201
<b>March 6</b>	<b>1:30 p.m.-3:30 p.m.</b>	Holiday Inn, Worcester 500 Lincoln St. Worcester, MA 01605
<b>March 7</b>	<b>9:00 a.m.-11:00 a.m.</b>	North Reading High School Park St. North Reading, MA 01864
<b>March 8</b>	<b>9:00 a.m.-11:00 a.m.</b>	Norton High School 66 West Main St. Norton, MA 02766

If schools in the region in which a workshop is scheduled close due to inclement weather, the workshop will be rescheduled for the following week.

[Registration Form](#)

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## FY 97 Title I Appropriations

### Memorandum

**To:** Superintendents and Title I Directors  
**From:** Robert V. Antonucci, Commissioner of Education  
**Date:** February 16, 1996

As you begin your district budget planning for FY 97, I wanted to provide you with an update on the proposed Title I federal budget for FY 97.

Currently, Congress is debating proposed funding levels for FY 97. The proposal that is presently being debated includes a 17.1% cut, or \$20,358,000, in Title I funding for Massachusetts for next year. If you are in the midst of district budget planning for FY 97, we would advise that you prepare your Title I budget with this percentage decrease in mind. Please be advised that this in no way constitutes the approved final allocations you will receive. Final Title I state allocations are not anticipated until April or May 1996.

As a result of Title I Reauthorization by the federal government, beginning in FY 97 states may only provide Title I funding to districts that have 2% or more low-income students **and** 10 or more low-income students. As we have in the past, Massachusetts will continue to use AFDC as the low-income measure for Title I eligibility. All districts that are ineligible for FY 97 funding will be notified in writing by March 31, 1996.

As well, please note that while Congressional debates are still in progress, districts should be anticipating that there may be similar cuts to other federal programs, including Drug Free Schools, Title VI, Eisenhower Professional Development, and Goals 2000. Please call Dan French, Administrator of Instruction and Curriculum Services, at (781) 338-3000 if you have any questions regarding Title I.

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## Seminar Series On Leadership For Education Reform For School And District Administrators

Please join us for these high quality professional development sessions

### Seminar Topics

- Leadership
- Decision Making
- Assessment
- Professional Development Planning
- Technology for learning, teaching and communicating

### Seminars

- Seven seminars on the leadership skills required for the effective implementation of education reform
- Recommended for teams of up to four school and district administrators
- Each seminar will have multiple sessions
- Hands-on training to strengthen knowledge, understandings and skills
- Workshops are limited to 45 participants.

For Further Information  
Call 781-338-3000

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## Leadership: A Key Ingredient in School Improvement

### Seminar #1

Workshop Leader: Paul McGowan

Dates: March 14, 26; April 23

Time: 9:00 - 3:00

Location: Colonial Hilton, Wakefield

This three-session seminar will provide district administrators and school principals with knowledge and skills that strengthen their leadership and their capacity to respond to the changes and implications of education reform.

The three sessions will focus on:

- Creating a leadership plan to improve effectiveness
- Providing leadership for systemic change in schools
- Building public support for school reform

## **Decisions, Decisions, Decisions...Practical Strategies that Work**

### **Seminar #2**

Workshop Leader: Louise Thompson

Dates: April 24, May 16

Time: 9:00 - 3:00

Location: Sheraton Tara, Braintree

In a two-session workshop, administrators will expand the repertoire of decision making skills and techniques they use in their schools and districts as they implement education reform. The workshops will focus on building consensus, collaborative decision making, and developing a mini-plan for the implementation of decision making strategies that are essential to the implementation of education reform.

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## **The Art of Designing Effective Professional Development Plans**

### **Seminar #3**

Workshop Leaders: Kathy Dunn, Nick Donohue, The Regional Laboratory for Education Improvement for the Northeast and the Islands.

Dates: March 6, April 3, May 1

Time: 9:00 - 3:00

Location: Ramada Inn, Auburn

### **Seminar #4**

Dates: March 13, April 10, May 15

Location: Sheraton Tara, Framingham

During this three-part series, teams of educators from schools and districts will formulate creative, ambitious, and practical district professional development plans that will work in their setting. Teams will be asked to come with a project and will leave with a product that aligns teaching, learning, and assessment standards with professional development goals and activities.

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## **Student Assessment in the Classroom and on the State Test**

### **Seminar #5**

Workshop Leader: Dennie Palmer-Wolf

Dates: April 29, May 20

Time: 8:30 - 12:30

Location: Ramada Inn, Auburn

### **Seminar #6**

Dates: April 30, May 21

Time: 8:30 - 12:30

Location: Ramada Rolling Green, Andover

The workshops will address classroom assessment and the state's testing program. This two-session workshop will provide an update on and hands-on experiences with:

- The most current approaches to student assessment
- The most effective strategies for assessing student work in the classroom
- Approaches to aligning classroom assessment with the state's Curriculum Frameworks

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## **Educational Technology: What District Leadership Needs to Know**

### **Seminar #7**

Workshop Leaders: Bob Milley, Stephanie Meegan

Dates: April 12, 26; May 10

Time: 9:00 - 3:00

Location: Massachusetts Elementary School Principals' Association, Marlboro

School administrators will have hands-on opportunities to learn about new technology including networking, Internet, and presentation tools in a three session series of workshops. They will also receive information on making decisions that strengthen the ways that technology supports instruction and administration in their schools.

Topics:

- Local (*LAN*) and wide (*WAN*) area networks for schools and districts
- Using the Internet for instruction and administration
- Using technology to strengthen communication within the district and with the community

[Registration Form](#)

[Commissioner's Update Archive](#)

## Americans with Disabilities Act Conference Dates

### Memorandum

**To:** Superintendents of Schools  
**From:** Robert V. Antonucci, Commissioner  
**Date:** February 16, 1996

The Massachusetts Office on Disability and Adaptive Environments will be holding statewide conferences in March and in May to address common issues regarding the Americans with Disabilities Act. The Department of Education is one of several agencies supporting these events. The conferences will be useful to your ADA coordinators, principals and special education directors, and I encourage you to send representatives to these events.

**"ADA: National Access for Public Schools"** is the New England Regional ADA/Schools Training Conference. It will be held at the Sturbridge Host Hotel and Conference Center in Sturbridge on March 4th and 5th, with March 6th set aside for trainers. Call 1-800-893-1225 for information.

The second conference to be held on May 13th and 14th at the Royal Plaza Hotel in Marlborough is entitled, **"ADA Without Fear: Solutions for State and Local Governments."** Dozens of practical workshops and special interest forums will be offered. For more information call 1-800-322-2020, V/TTY, or 617-695-1225.

Additionally, superintendents can obtain the new ADA Compliance Guide by calling 1-800-949-4232, by contacting the General Accounting Office, or you can view the document on the Internet at <http://www.aces.k12.ct.us/www/aec/>.

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