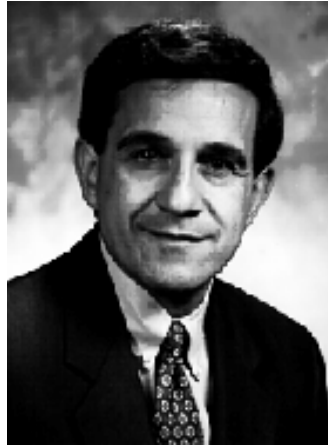


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Commissioner's Update

November 12, 1997

Dear Superintendents and Charter School Leaders:

It was terrific to see so many of the superintendents at the MASS/MASC conference on the Cape last week. I hope you enjoyed the preview of the [sample state test questions in mathematics, science/technology and English language arts](#). If you did not attend the conference, we are posting these materials on our website. This is part of what will be a major state effort to raise public understanding about the upcoming state tests. The Department will be providing materials to support your local efforts to engage your communities around the issue of testing.

In this mailing, I have enclosed eight items for your use and distribution to staff:

1. [College-to-School Report, issued by the Board of Higher Education](#).
This is being released publicly on Thursday November 13. The report includes information on the need for remedial education in Massachusetts institutions of higher education for high school graduates from the class of 1995. Individual high school reports are included.
2. Announcement of grant opportunity in the area of educational technology--under federal Technology Literacy Challenge Grant, "Projects with Statewide Impact."
[No longer available]
3. [Memorandum on appropriate certifications for persons engaged in reading instruction](#).
4. [Board-in-Brief summary of November 4 Board of Education meeting](#).
5. Brochure describing school-to-work activities underway in sample Massachusetts communities.
[No longer available]
6. Memorandum providing new contact hotline for superintendents for teacher certification matters.
[No longer available]
7. [Request for nominees for federal teacher recognition program--Presidential Awards for Excellence in Mathematics and Science](#).
8. [Invitation for participation in Governor's Fitness Awards Program](#).

Thank you for your continuing hard work, and best wishes to you and your families as we prepare for Thanksgiving.

Sincerely,

Robert V. Antonucci
Commissioner of Education

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College-to-School Report

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts Board of Higher Education

Stanley Z. Koplik *Chancellor*
James F. Carlin *Chairman*
One Ashburton Place, Room 1401
Boston, Massachusetts 02108-1696

November 12, 1997

Dear Superintendent and High School Principal:

We are pleased to provide you with the enclosed copy of the second annual College-to-School Report. Last year's report was a pilot, containing information from 14 Massachusetts public higher education institutions. This year all 28 public higher education institutions are included. The report provides data on the performance of June 1995 Massachusetts high school graduates who enrolled in the fall of 1995 as freshmen.

The College-to-School Report is designed to promote discussion about the academic performance of Massachusetts' high school graduates in public higher education and to increase direct communication between college and high school faculty. Ultimately, the goal of this project is to ensure the successful transition of students from secondary to public postsecondary education.

The attached report provides several items of particular interest to individual high schools including:

- The number of 1995 high school graduates who attended a public higher education institution full-time in Massachusetts.
- The number and percent of these students who returned in fall 1996.
- The number of students who required remedial coursework in English (includes writing and/or reading) or mathematics.
- The percentage of students enrolled in remedial coursework who returned in the fall of 1996.

- The average and range of credits earned by returning students.
- The average and range of first year grade point averages (GPA) earned by returning students.

To protect the confidentiality of individual students, we provide data only on those schools that had more than five high school graduates returning to a public college or university campus in Fall 1996. Because of this fact, your high school may not be listed in this report. For the high schools who met the confidentiality criteria, an individualized report on their graduates' performance after one year of attendance at a public college or university campus is attached to this cover letter.

It is important to note that the information provided in this report should not be used to compare high schools with each other due to the fact that the sample does not contain those students who attended out-of-state institutions and private institutions. In addition, the database currently does not contain students' high school grade point averages (GPA) and without this information, we cannot determine whether weaker performing students from some high schools are being compared with stronger performing students from another.

We hope that you find the information contained in this report to be informative and useful. If you have any questions, comments, or suggestions, please contact Jack Warner, Vice Chancellor of the Board of Higher Education at (617) 727-7785, ext. 210. Sincerely,

Stanley Z. Koplik
Chancellor
Board of Higher Education

COLLEGE-TO-SCHOOL REPORT FOR MASSACHUSETTS HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATES

Second Annual Report, 1997

- [Introduction](#)
- [Report Overview](#)
- [Future Plans](#)

PARTS I-III are available as PDF files.

- [PART I: Segment Summaries \(State University, State College and Community Colleges\)](#)
 - [PART II: Summary of 1995 Mass. High School Graduates' Performance in Mass. Public Higher Education](#)
 - [PART III: Summary of 1995 Transfer Patterns between Mass. Public Higher Education Institutions](#)
-

Introduction

This is the second year of the Board of Higher Education's College-to-School Report, a system-wide initiative to provide high schools and colleges with information on the performance of Massachusetts high school graduates enrolled in Massachusetts public postsecondary institutions. The report is designed to help improve communication between public colleges and high schools in Massachusetts by providing several indicators of how students perform and persist in college.

The College-to-School Report provides administrators and faculty in both high schools and colleges with data on the performance of high school graduates after their first year of enrollment at a public higher education institution. The report contains useful information on the number of 1995 high school graduates who required remedial course work in English (writing and/or reading) or math, the percentage of students enrolled in remedial courses, the percentage of students enrolled in remedial courses who returned in the Fall 1996, the overall return rate of students, and the average number of credits earned by returning students in the first year.

We recommend that the information in this report not be used to compare high schools with each other due to the small number of students from some high schools, and the fact that the report does not include those students who attended out-of-state institutions and private institutions. In addition, the database currently does not contain students' high school grade point averages (GPA). Without this information, we cannot determine whether weaker performing students from some high schools are being compared with stronger performing students from another.

The College-to-School Report is based on data submitted by all 28 Massachusetts public higher education institutions, with a total enrollment of 25,613 freshmen in the fall of 1995. Approximately 13,213 students (or 52%) graduated from a Massachusetts high school in June, 1995. This report is based on the performance of these students.

Report Overview

This three-part report includes the following data, compiled by institution and aggregated by segment, for those students who graduated from Massachusetts high schools in June, 1995 and enrolled as freshmen in 28 Massachusetts community colleges, state colleges and UMASS in the Fall 1995:

- number of full-time students (taking 12 or more credits) enrolled as freshmen in Fall 1995

- number and percent of students who returned in Fall 1996
- number and percent of students enrolled in remedial English and mathematics courses in Fall 1995
- number and percent of remedial students who returned in Fall 1996
- average number and range of credits earned by returning students
- average and range of first year grade point average (GPA) earned by returning students

Part I, "Segment Summaries," is a system-wide summary that provides aggregate numbers and percentages of full-time students enrolled in remedial English and Math courses. It also provides the average and range of student GPA's and credits earned by returning students in each higher education institution and segment (university, state colleges and community colleges).

Part II, "Summary of 1995 High School Graduates' Performance in Massachusetts Public Higher Education," shows how 1995 high school graduates performed in their first year of enrollment at Massachusetts public higher education institutions. Data are reported only for high schools that had five or more students who returned in Fall 1996 to a university, state college or community college campus.

Part III, "College to College Report," examines those full-time freshmen students who transferred from one MA public higher education institution to another some time between the Fall of 1995 and the Fall of 1996. The report does not track transfers to out-of-state or private institutions, and therefore should be viewed as only partial data.

Changes from the Second Annual Report compared with the Pilot Year

The first year of the College-to-School Report was a pilot year and all public higher education institutions did not participate in the study. This year, all 28 campuses are represented and provide a wider perspective on the relationship between Massachusetts high schools and post-secondary institutions. Private high schools were not included last year, but are represented in this year's report.

Due to the feedback received from public higher education institutions and high schools, several changes were made to the report this year. The cohorts examined on the college level are now based on full-time students (enrolled with 12 credits or more) only. For community college students, the cohorts were adjusted for those students enrolled in one-year certificate programs who completed their programs. In addition, information on remedial coursework at all Massachusetts public higher education institutions has been updated.

Finally, Part III: The College-to-College Report, was added to account for those students who transferred from one Massachusetts public higher education institution to another between Fall 1995 and Fall 1996, to illustrate their patterns of transfer.

Future Plans

Next year's report will provide information about 1996 high school graduates entering public higher education in Fall 1996 and their performance through Fall 1997. Beginning with the 1997 high school graduates, future reports will be able to compare a student's high school and college GPA at four-year institutions.

College-to-School reporting is designed to promote discussion about the academic performance and persistence of Massachusetts high school graduates in public higher education. Future reports will be further refined over the course of the next year as reactions from high schools and campuses are received. Ultimately, increased direct communication between college and high school faculty should clarify the relationship between the learning gained in high school and success in college, and lead to improved student academic preparation and performance.

Highlights Regarding Student Performance at the University

- Approximately 10 percent of the full-time University students in the report were enrolled in a remedial English course and 15 percent were enrolled in a remedial math course in Fall 1995.
- Of the students enrolled in remedial courses, 72 percent of the students in English remedial courses returned in 1996, and 74 percent of the students in remedial math courses returned in 1996. The overall return rate for students in the 1995 University cohort was 86 percent.
- Returning full-time University students in the 1995 cohort earned an average 2.6 grade point average (GPA).
- Returning University students in the report earned an average 26.6 accumulated credits by the Fall 1996.

- Of the University students who did not return in the Fall 1996, 8 percent transferred to another UMass institution, 10 percent transferred to a Massachusetts state college and 19 percent transferred to a Massachusetts community college.

Highlights Regarding Student Performance at the State Colleges

- Approximately 12 percent of the full-time state college students in the report were enrolled in a remedial English course and 14 percent were enrolled in a remedial math course in Fall 1995.
- Of the students enrolled in remedial courses, 63 percent of the students in English remedial courses returned in 1996, and 67 percent of the students in remedial math courses returned in 1996. The overall return rate for students in the 1995 state college cohort was 80 percent.
- Returning full-time state college students in the 1995 cohort earned an average 2.4 GPA.
- State college students in the report earned an average of 26.8 accumulated credits by the Fall of 1996.
- Of the state college students who did not return in the Fall 1996, 5 percent transferred to a UMass institution, 7 percent to another Massachusetts state college, and 23 percent to a Massachusetts community college.

Highlights Regarding Student Performance at the Community Colleges

- Approximately 37 percent of the full-time freshmen at community colleges were enrolled in a remedial English course and 41 percent were enrolled in a remedial math course in Fall 1995.
- Of the students enrolled in remedial courses, 55 percent of the students in English remedial courses returned in 1996, and 52 percent of the students in remedial math courses returned in 1996. The overall return rate for community college students in the 1995 cohort was 62 percent.
- Returning full-time community college students in the 1995 cohort earned an average 2.4 GPA.
- Community college students in the 1995 cohort earned an average of 22.4 credits by the Fall of 1996.
- Of the community college students who did not return in the Fall 1996, 4 percent transferred to another Massachusetts community college, 6 percent to a Massachusetts state college and 4 percent to a UMass institution.

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Required Certification for Persons Engaged in Reading Instruction

To: Superintendents, Principals, and Other Interested Parties

From: Robert V. Antonucci, Commissioner of Education

Date: October 31, 1997

With the increased emphasis on literacy, many school districts are employing staff trained in a variety of reading methodologies in order to meet the needs of a diverse student population. The purpose of this memorandum is to respond to questions which have been raised regarding the appropriate certification for staff engaged in reading instruction in public schools.

1. Certification requirements for staff implementing recognized reading tutorial programs that require training in a specific reading methodology

These include, but are not limited to, programs such as:

- ~ Reading Recovery
- ~ Wilson Reading Program
- ~ Orton-Gillingham
- ~ Project READ

Since teachers implementing these structured programs generally do so in a tutorial session format (i.e., working with only one student or a few students at a time) and use a very prescribed methodology, a Massachusetts Department of Education general certificate appropriate for the level being taught (i.e., Early Childhood Education, Elementary Teacher, or Middle School Teacher) is acceptable for performing this function.

2. Certification requirements for staff employed to implement a broad range of reading activities that require more than 20% of that person's time

Such a range of activities could include:

- diagnosis of reading difficulties for all students;
- provision of reading instruction; and
- consultation in reading to classroom teachers.

Teachers performing the above activities are considered to be employed in the role of a teacher of reading and thus must have a Massachusetts Department of Education Teacher of Reading certificate.

3. Certification requirements for Title I Language Arts and Title I Reading Programs

(a) Teachers employed in a **Title I Language Arts Program** are required to hold only a Massachusetts Department of Education general certificate for the level being taught, provided that the activities being performed are integrated language arts and the written job description reflects this emphasis. Classroom lessons should include activities that develop reading, writing, speaking, listening and viewing in an integrated fashion.

(b) Teachers employed in a **Title I Reading Program** must have a Massachusetts Department of Education Teacher of Reading certificate if they teach reading for more than 20% of their time. The only exception would be Title I teachers engaged solely in recognized reading tutorial programs that require training in a specific reading methodology, as described in 1. above.

If you have any questions regarding this memorandum, please contact Carole Thomson at

(781) 338-3000.

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Board in Brief

This is Board in Brief, issued at the request of Commissioner Bob Antonucci, to bring you up to date on Massachusetts Board of Education matters. The following is a report on the meeting held Tuesday, November 4, 1997 at the Quinsigamond School in Worcester.

November 4, 1997

State Education Budget Request for FY 99 Approved

Commissioner Antonucci presented to the Board the FY 99 state education budget proposal, which includes several items that reflect the Board's initial review and comments at the October Board meeting. After extensive discussion, the Board voted to approve the FY 99 education budget request. Among other items, the budget request includes \$234 million for early childhood education programs, up substantially from the \$65 million appropriated by the Legislature this year. Board Chairman John Silber and member Bill Irwin emphasized that high quality early childhood education is crucial to children's future success in school. The increase would make programs available to many more children between ages 3 and 5, enable more school districts to expand kindergarten programs to full-day, and support innovative approaches to early learning. The Board is also proposing additional funding for a longitudinal study of the effectiveness of early childhood education in Massachusetts, and for monitoring of and technical assistance to these programs.

The Board's budget also includes increased funding for school building assistance; an \$18.5 million increase for reimbursements to districts that lose students to charter schools; a \$17.7-million block grant that consolidates several state and federal programs; funding to develop the required Certificate of Occupational Proficiency for vocational education students; \$2 million for grants for alternative education programs; increases in foundation aid, regional school aid, and funding for so-called minimum aid at \$75 per pupil; a \$3.5 million increase for adult learning centers; and additional funding to support the Metco program, including a study of that program's impact on student achievement. The budget proposal now goes to the Executive Office of Administration & Finance, which prepares the Governor's budget request (House 1) for filing in January, and to the House and Senate Ways and Means Committees. The final education budget for FY 99 is expected to be approved by the Legislature and the Governor by July 1998.

Annual Report on School Building Assistance Needs Accepted

The School Building Assistance Act requires the Board to develop an annual report analyzing school construction needs in the Commonwealth, and to submit the report each November to the Governor, the Secretary of Administration and Finance, the House and Senate Ways and Means Committees and the Joint Committee on Education. This year's report identifies 124 projects remaining on the FY 98 School Building Assistance priority list, and anticipates that about 60 additional projects will be submitted to the Department of Education for inclusion on the FY 99 priority list. On a unanimous vote, the Board accepted the annual School Building Assistance Needs Report.

Fitchburg Controlled Choice Plan Approved

On the recommendation of Commissioner Antonucci and the Racial Imbalance Advisory Council, the Board voted 5 in favor and 3 abstaining to approve the Fitchburg Voluntary Controlled Choice Student Assignment Plan, which was adopted by the Fitchburg School Committee earlier this year. The Board initially discussed the plan in August and at that time referred it to the statewide Racial Imbalance Advisory Council for further study. Several Board members noted the need for a broader review of the current racial imbalance law. The Board will discuss this issue at the December 15th meeting.

Approval of Grants The Board approved nearly \$30 million in grant awards to programs for the Massachusetts Family Network, Community Partnerships for Children, Goals 2000 Professional Development, and the Massachusetts Performance Assessment Program

The Massachusetts Family Network grants, totaling \$749,705 awarded to five recipients, will provide services to 2600 new families and 3000 additional children through comprehensive family education and support programs. The Community Partnerships for Children grants, totaling \$35,136,052 to 122 recipients, will serve 5200 three- and

four-year olds in early care and education programs in 260 cities and towns.

Remarks by State Representative Harold M. Lane, Jr. of Holden

Representative Hal Lane, House Chair of the Legislature's Joint Committee on Education, Arts and Humanities, addressed the Board on several issues. Regarding recent Board discussions on the new charter school law, he asked the Board to see how the new law works before recommending changes. On recent comments by Board members about a possible 12th-grade exit exam, Chairman Lane urged the Board to focus first on implementing the 4th, 8th and 10th-grade tests specifically mandated by the Education Reform Act.

Chairman Lane praised Commissioner Antonucci for his leadership, and encouraged the Board to seek additional funding for the Department of Education so the agency can carry out all its responsibilities under Education Reform as well as other requirements. Board members assured Chairman Lane that they are proposing an increased administrative budget for the Department, and that they welcome his support in securing the funds.

Other Business

Board Chairman John Silber announced that the Commissioner will be appointing committees to review and revise the Massachusetts curriculum frameworks for the arts, health education and foreign languages. He asked Board members to propose persons who might serve on the committees. Chairman Silber also reviewed the Board's progress over the past year, citing accomplishments such as adoption of the curriculum frameworks in English Language Arts and History and Social Science, and the 1997 implementation of the grade 3 Iowa test in reading as a benchmark against which to measure future results.

Commissioner Antonucci reported that the Department has received 42 letters of intent from prospective applicants for 12 new Commonwealth charter schools, and 23 letters of intent for 13 new Horace Mann charter schools. Applicants to establish charter schools will each submit a prospectus by November 14 and a final application by January 5. The Board will vote to grant charters in February 1998. Board member Jim Peyser recommended that the Board file legislation proposing several amendments to the charter school law that was enacted this past July.

The Board received a written report describing legislative and regulatory activity in special education at the federal and state level. The Board is expected to review an initial draft of proposed revisions to the state special education regulations in January or February 1998.

The Board and Commissioner were welcomed by Worcester Superintendent James Garvey and Quinsigamond School principal Louis Pero, who described the positive impact of Education Reform on the students and schools in Worcester. The Board also heard from speakers on charter schools, the Massachusetts Academy for Mathematics and Science, the Metco program, and arts education.

Next Meeting

The next regular meeting of the Board of Education will be held on Monday, December 15, at the Department of Education in Malden.

Board in Brief and other Massachusetts Department of Education documents are available for review at the Department of Education's web site: www.doe.mass.edu

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1998 Presidential Awards for Excellence in Science and Mathematics Teaching

TO: Superintendents, Principals and other interested parties

FROM: Robert V. Antonucci, Commissioner of Education

DATE: November 11, 1997

Attached please find an application form for teachers who are interested in applying for the 1998 Presidential Awards for Excellence in Science and Mathematics Teaching (PAESMT). The program, sponsored by the National Science Foundation, identifies outstanding science and mathematics teachers, kindergarten through 12th grade, in each state and the four U.S. jurisdictions.

You are encouraged to invite your teachers to apply so that they can play a leadership role in helping to advance major reform movements in these disciplines. Please feel free to make as many copies of the application form as you need. The completed application needs to be postmarked by February 27, 1998.

Massachusetts is entitled to select three finalists in each of the four award groups: elementary mathematics, elementary science, secondary mathematics, and secondary science. The secondary groups include middle, junior, and senior high school teachers.

Each finalist will receive \$750 from the national Science Foundation, and be eligible for the Presidential Award (one for each award group). The Presidential Award includes a \$7,500 National Science Foundation grant to the awardee's school, and an expense-paid trip for the awardee and a guest to Washington D.C. for an awards ceremony.

All K-12 teachers may apply. It is hoped that teachers from all locations (urban, suburban, small town and rural) and all under represented minority groups will participate.

If you have any questions about the PAESMT program, for mathematics contact Anne Collins at 781-338-3000; for science contact Kathy Brown 781-338-3000.

Thank you for your interest in this teacher recognition program.

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Governor's Fitness Awards Program

November 12, 1997

Dear Superintendent:

The Department of Education and the Massachusetts Governor's Committee on Physical Fitness and Sports (MGCPF&S) invite your schools to participate again this year in the Governor's Fitness Awards Program. This award is determined by the *Exercise Across Massachusetts Fitness Challenge*. This is the third year of this program.

The purpose of this program is to promote physical fitness and sports participation and to help develop life-long habits among youth. Current research has shown that:

"Half of today's youth do not engage in physical activity appropriate to long-term health promotion." *Donna E. Shalala, Secretary of Health and Human Services*

"Students are more likely to develop life-long fitness habits if they set goals, measure their progress, get recognition and have fun." *American Running and Fitness Association*

"Young people who play sports are more likely to graduate from high school and less likely to get involved in drugs and get pregnant." *Joycelyn Elders, M.D.*

There were three top recipients of last year's Governor's Fitness awards. The John F. Kennedy School in Franklin had 100% participation of students, staff. They walked 152.6 miles per participant. The Huckleberry School in Lynnfield had a 100% participation of students and staff and walked 100.8 miles per participant. The Salisbury Memorial School in Salisbury walked 94.5 miles with 100% participation from students and staff.

The contest will be judged on total mileage and the percent of total school population participating in the contest. The winning school will be honored at an awards ceremony in May by the Youth Fitness Subcommittee of the MGCPF&S. In addition, a press release will be issued by the MGCPF&S recognizing the winning schools.

Please read and copy the enclosed information and distribute to the appropriate principals. Principals should return the [participation form \(PDF\)](#) no later than December 20th if their school is planning to enter the competition.

Thank you for your consideration of this program.

Sincerely,

Robert V. Antonucci
Commissioner of Education