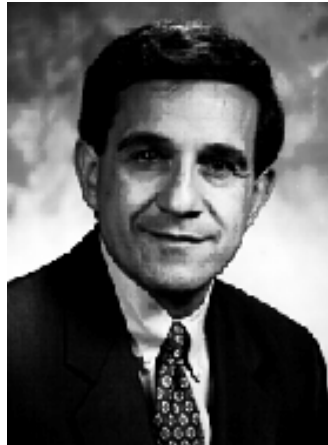




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## Commissioner's Update

January 29, 1998

Dear Superintendents and Charter School Leaders:

As I mentioned last week in the coordinated mailing, I have a number of items related to educational technology in this packet. As it turns out, there are other materials as well which makes this the largest mailing to you in months.

I also want to be sure you have an opportunity to take a look at the Governor's budget for fiscal year 1999, which was released this week. It is an excellent budget for public education. There are several initiatives in the budget and in the outside sections which will be of interest. You can find the budget on the Internet at this address: [www.magnet.state.ma.us/bb/fy99h1/contents.htm](http://www.magnet.state.ma.us/bb/fy99h1/contents.htm).

In this packet, you will find these documents for your use and distribution to staff:

1. [Special Packet on Technology Procurement.](#)
2. [Announcing two-year sabbatical opportunities for educators to work at the Department of Education in science education, special education, vocational technical education \(mathematics\), professional development, and assessment](#)
3. Announcement of three public hearings (February 3-25) on proposal to amend the state Racial Imbalance Law.  
[No Longer Available]
4. [Request for comment on proposal to amend the Time and Learning regulations](#)
5. [Memorandum of Agreement reached between the Lawrence School Committee, the Commissioner of Education and the Board of Education.](#)
6. MassEd.Net Internet accounts for educators flyer, which I encourage you to post in places where your teaching staff can view it.  
[ No longer available ]
7. Draft of document on district-by-district technology data for last fiscal year. We have been asked to provide this draft data publicly, and want to ensure its accuracy.  
[No Longer Available]
8. Schedule of March workshops for Lighthouse Technology sites statewide.  
[No Longer Available]
9. Announcement of March 3 conference on the issue of recruiting a diverse teacher workforce.  
[No Longer Available]
10. [Announcement of public information sessions in March on the new Massachusetts Teacher Tests](#)
11. [Update on disciplinary procedures for students with special needs](#)
12. [Material on School-to-Work.](#)

We have a new Director, Fran Kane, and we have prepared some suggestions for your

consideration on how to strengthen the School to-Work program in your curriculum.

As always, I hope these materials are useful to you and your staff. I will look forward to communicating again with you soon.

All the best, and

Sincerely,

**Robert V. Antonucci**  
Commissioner of Education

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## Special Packet on Technology Procurement

### Memorandum

To: Superintendents, Technology Directors, and Business Directors

From: Commissioner Robert V. Antonucci

Date: January 28, 1998

Spurred by the most successful three NetDays in the Nation and \$2.25 billion new federal Universal Service Funds, Massachusetts schools are experiencing unprecedented technology activity. Based on our recent phone/fax survey, over 92% of Massachusetts school districts are planning on installing networks in their schools in 1998. However, the survey also reveals that close to half of these districts may run into serious conflicts between state procurement laws and the tight time frames established by the Universal Service Fund.

This packet will provide you with valuable information about how to procure technology-related goods and services including network installations.

There are five main pieces in the packet:

1. **ETIS Handbook.** The Educational Technology Integration Services Handbook provides you with step-by-step guidance about how to use the Department of Education's new statewide contract. Districts that procure goods and services through the ETIS vendor pool can save substantial amount of time and money. In contrast to the typical RFP process, ETIS procurements enable districts to negotiate directly with one or more pre-approved vendors to receive the best possible value. On Wednesday, January 28, the Department is launching a new interactive web site [www.doe.mass.edu/etis/](http://www.doe.mass.edu/etis/) that will enable districts to access up-to date evaluation and cost overhead information on ETIS vendors. Later this week, we will mail a copy of the handbook and an associated a catalog of vendor information to technology directors.
2. **Universal Service Fund Guidebook.** Starting on January 1, 1998, school districts and libraries became eligible for co-payments from the Federal Communication ranging between 20% and 90% on all future telecommunications and network purchases. The Guidebook has been developed by Mass Networks to help school districts access their Universal Service Fund co-payments. Additional information can be found at the Mass Networks web site [www.massnetworks.org](http://www.massnetworks.org) or by calling 1-800-NET-1997.
3. **Joint Letter on Network Installation Procurements.** As identified in the last coordinated mailing, considerable confusion has developed as to whether districts can procure network installations through G.L. c. 30B as a good or service, or whether the more rigid G.L. c. 149 public construction procurement laws need to be followed. The joint advisory, issued by my office in cooperation with the Attorney General's Office and Executive Office for Administration and Finance, lays out some of the issues that districts should consider in procuring such contracts and establishes a clear preference for use of statewide blanket contracts for such procurements.
4. **Copy of the Bill Filed by Governor Cellucci.** On January 26, Governor Cellucci filed a bill to provide school districts with an alternative path to procure network installations. The bill does not yet have a number. If passed, the bill would not alter any of the existing procurement options, but would provide districts that have substantial construction associated with their network installation project with an expedited process for completing their procurement.
5. **Summary of Network Installation Procurement Options.** The final piece in the packet is a map of options districts can utilize to procure their network installations. As explained in the accompanying text, districts have considerable latitude in choosing their path and there are advantages and disadvantages to each option.

While I realize that this material may seem unnecessarily complicated, Massachusetts state procurement laws create a disjointed patchwork of processes. We are doing our best to sort them out and provide you with as much useful information as possible.

[Commissioner's Update Archive](#)

## Statewide Content Specialists Opportunities

### Memorandum

**TO:** School Superintendents, Principals and Other Interested Parties  
**FROM:** Robert V. Antonucci, Commissioner of Education  
**DATE:** January 30, 1998  
**RE:** Statewide Content Specialists Opportunities:

- Science Education (1)
- Special Education (1)
- Vocational Technical Education: Mathematics (1)
- Professional Development (1)
- Assessment (1)

The Massachusetts Department of Education is seeking to expand our ability to address district needs in education reform areas. For the past several years, we have had content specialists in mathematics and science as part of our PALMS initiative, and this year we added seven additional practitioners in special education, English Language Arts, History and Social Science, Technology Education, and Educational Technology.

We are now seeking five additional practitioners to serve *two year sabbaticals* in the areas listed above, commencing with the 1998-99 school year. Subject to appropriation, we anticipate expanding the program further in the 1999-2000 school year to include other reform and curriculum content areas.

These content specialists will work collaboratively with the other content specialists to offer technical assistance to Massachusetts public schools as they work to implement and assess the learning standards of the state curriculum frameworks for all students, including limited English proficient students and students with disabilities. Individuals selected as content specialists will be based in the Department's office in Malden and will travel at times throughout the state to work with school districts. **Each position is full time/37.5 hours a week for a full calendar year with a total of 5 weeks of vacation time, commencing September 1, 1998.** School districts will be compensated (wages and benefits) for the staff member on leave to work with the Department. The salaries of the selected content specialists will be based on their local contract.

This is an exceptional professional development opportunity for the selected classroom teachers to work with their colleagues throughout the Commonwealth and provide leadership in statewide education reform initiatives. It is also a unique opportunity for the Department to benefit from the energy and expertise of school-based practitioners. Enclosed are job descriptions and the application requirements for each of the above positions. Application materials should be forwarded by Tuesday, **March 31, 1998** to:

Educational Improvement Group  
Massachusetts Department of Education  
attn.: Ann Silver  
350 Main Street  
Malden, MA 02148

Thank you for your help in notifying potentially interested educators of these opportunities. We are excited about this partnership with districts and look forward to receiving applications for these new positions. If you have questions, please contact Maryellen McDonagh (x 432) about the vocational technical education position, Linda Martin (x 261) about the special education position, Tom Noonan (x 297) about the science position, Melanie Winklosky (x 216) about the professional development position, and Jeff Nellhaus (x 106) about the assessment position.

**MASSACHUSETTS DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION**  
**Two-Year Leadership Sabbatical Opportunity**  
**Mathematics Specialist for Vocational Technical Education**

The Mathematics Specialist for Vocational Technical Education will be responsible for supporting the implementation of the Mathematics Curriculum Framework in vocational technical schools and high schools with vocational technical education programs. This individual will work in collaboration with the statewide coordinators for Mathematics and Science and Technology, the *High Schools That Work* coordinators, the Tech Prep coordinator and the special education content specialists to improve the instruction of mathematics for students enrolled in vocational technical education programs.

**Responsibilities**

- Provide leadership for systemic improvement of mathematics education in vocational technical education programs in coordination with the Department's Partnership Advancing the Learning of Mathematics and Science (PALMS);
- Provide leadership for the implementation of the Mathematics Curriculum Framework and strategies for integrating with science and other academic and vocational curricula;
- Work with vocational technical educators to develop standards-based curriculum which includes the learning standards of the Massachusetts Mathematics Framework;
- Work with *High Schools That Work* Coaches, Tech Prep Coordinators, and other staff involved in systemic change initiatives to develop and disseminate effective models, applied vignettes, project-based mathematics, and instructional practices that reflect the learning standards of the curriculum frameworks;
- Coordinate with the Perkins Gender Equity Centers in resource development and program delivery which promote equity in mathematics and science for females and other underrepresented groups;
- Coordinate service delivery with the PALMS Statewide Coordinators for Mathematics, Science, and Technology Education;
- Develop and provide professional development to academic and vocational technical teachers in support of mathematics pedagogy, content, and assessment as defined in the curriculum frameworks.

**Qualifications**

- Knowledge of Education Reform initiatives and vocational technical systemic change initiatives;
- Knowledge of the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks in Mathematics, Science & Technology, and English Language Arts;
- Familiarity with national academic standards and assessment projects;
- Master's degree plus a minimum of five years experience teaching mathematics to secondary vocational technical students. Experience with presenting challenging mathematics curricula to students with diverse learning styles is desired;
- Familiarity with educational technology and its use in implementing and assessing the learning standards of the curriculum frameworks;
- Experience conducting teacher training and workshops for colleagues on curriculum and assessment development;
- Excellent communication and writing skills; and
- Ability to work on a team.

**Application Materials/Timelines**

Interested teachers should submit the following materials:

1. A letter of nomination and recommendation from the district's Superintendent

2. Nominated teacher's statement addressing:

- current role, areas of expertise
- proposed ideas for sabbatical activities
- knowledge of the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks

3. Nominated teacher's wages, benefits, and resume.

4. Two letters of support from colleagues.

Application materials should be forwarded by Tuesday, **March 31, 1998** to:

Educational Improvement Group  
Massachusetts Department of Education  
attn.: Ann Silver  
350 Main Street  
Malden, MA 02148

Selected first round candidates will be interviewed in April. Finalists will be recommended to the Commissioner for his consideration in May, 1998.

Questions about the vocational technical education positions may be directed to Maryellen McDonagh at 781-338-3000.

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**MASSACHUSETTS DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION  
Two-Year Leadership Sabbatical Opportunity  
Statewide Curriculum Content Specialist for Special Education**

The Statewide Content Specialist for Special Education will be responsible for supporting public schools as they work to maximize access to the Massachusetts curriculum frameworks and assessment for students with disabilities. This support will be in the form of materials, technical assistance advisories, and statewide professional development opportunities, as well as on-site training and consultation with school district personnel.

**Responsibilities**

- Maintain updated information of changes in Federal and State special education statutes and regulations so that timely technical assistance advisories and materials can be developed and disseminated to public school districts, private 766 schools, and collaboratives.
- Participate in a workgroup that will examine the current IEP form and the new addendum for the purpose of recommending revisions in format and content. Collaboratively develop and implement a technical assistance plan that will help school district personnel implement resulting changes.
- Develop and disseminate innovative curriculum adaptations, materials, and methods of instruction that educators can use to engage students with disabilities in the content knowledge of the curriculum frameworks.
- Ensure that the perspective of students with disabilities and the adults who are concerned with their education is reflected in the materials, technical assistance advisories, and training provided to school districts personnel by all content specialists.
- Participate in the development of the Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System (MCAS) so that all students with disabilities have the opportunity to participate fully in this statewide assessment. Collaboratively develop and implement a technical assistance plan that will help school district personnel implement MCAS appropriately.

**Qualifications**

- Knowledge of Massachusetts Education Reform initiatives and national standards and assessment projects;
- Familiarity and experience with adapting curriculums for students with disabilities;
- Master's Degree plus a minimum of five years teaching experience, preferably including experience with regular and special education students. Experience teaching with diverse learners in an inclusive setting is preferred;
- Knowledge of state and federal special education laws and regulations;
- Familiarity with educational technology and its use in implementing and assessing student progress;
- Experience conducting teacher training and workshops for colleagues on curriculum and assessment topics;
- Excellent communication and writing skills; and
- Ability to work on a team.

### **Application Materials/Timelines**

Interested teachers should submit the following materials:

1. A letter of nomination and recommendation from the district's Superintendent
2. Nominated teacher's statement addressing:

- current role, areas of expertise
- proposed ideas for sabbatical activities
- knowledge of the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks

3. Nominated teacher's wages, benefits, and resume.
4. Two letters of support from colleagues.

Application materials should be forwarded by Tuesday, **March 31, 1998** to:

Educational Improvement Group  
Massachusetts Department of Education  
Attn.: Ann Silver  
350 Main Street  
Malden, MA 02148

Selected first round candidates will be interviewed in April. Finalists will be recommended to the Commissioner for his review and approval in May, 1998.

Questions about the special education position may be directed to Linda Martin at 781-338-3000.

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**MASSACHUSETTS DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION**  
**Two-Year Leadership Sabbatical Opportunity**  
**Statewide Coordinator for Science**

The Statewide Coordinator for Science Education will direct the implementation of the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks and assessment program in science education, involving appropriate stakeholders in the process and content. This person will coordinate federal and state-related science education programs administered by the Massachusetts Department of Education ensuring the sound development of the science component of the statewide systemic initiative, **PALMS** (Partnerships Advancing the Learning of Mathematics and Science). The Science Statewide Coordinator will work in collaboration with the Statewide Coordinator in Mathematics and in Technology Education as well as the Department's other content specialists.

#### **Responsibilities**

- Provide leadership for systemic improvement of science education in school districts in Massachusetts;
- Provide leadership for the implementation of the Science & Technology Curriculum Frameworks and strategies for integrating the other disciplines;
- Provide leadership in the continued development and implementation of the Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System (MCAS) in the area of science;
- Develop documents and materials to assist school districts with the process of review and revision of local standard-based curricula related to science education;

- Work with Massachusetts educators to develop and disseminate innovative instructional models and vignettes for project-based science instruction based on the learning standards;
- Provide leadership to plan and coordinate the Department's Integrated Professional Development Programs such as the Summer Content Institutes;
- Coordinate PALMS activities with the other science & technology education related Department programs: Dwight D. Eisenhower, Perkins, bilingual, equity, special education, early childhood, community-service learning, the new statewide assessment program, school to-work and adult education;
- Increase communication and collaboration with all professional organizations with special emphasis on science education;
- Coordinate the development of resources and programs to promote equity in science education for females and underrepresented groups;
- Evaluate nationally-validated standards-based science education programs and develop mechanisms and resources to disseminate them to school districts;
- Develop and provide high quality professional development opportunities to support science & technology pedagogy, content and assessment;
- Assure appropriate indicators are collected and reported so that national and international comparisons can be made;
- Work to promote mathematics and science & technology reform with key stakeholders, including: parent and community training, media relations, PALMS Regional Providers, cultural organizations, business partnerships and professional organizations.

### Qualifications

- Master's Degree and certification in Science Education; five plus years experience in science education, leadership and management experience in schools and/or partner institutions.
- Strong knowledge with special emphasis on science education and experience in Massachusetts Education Reform initiative, systemic change, the PALMS model/philosophy and quality professional development.
- Strong knowledge and experience with the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks and the Science & Technology learning standards. Strong knowledge & experience in current research, standards-based curriculum content and science education.
- Ability to develop and present quality professional development to support district/state implementation of the Massachusetts Curriculum Framework in Science & Technology.
- Familiarity and experience with international, national science education standards and assessments.
- Professional memberships include evidence of leadership in Science Education organization(s) at the local, state and/or national level.
- Familiarity and experience collecting and analyzing data and program evaluation.

### Application Materials/Timelines

Interested teachers should submit the following materials:

1. A letter of nomination and recommendation from the district's Superintendent
2. Nominated teacher's statement addressing:
  - current role, areas of expertise
  - proposed ideas for sabbatical activities that align with the PALMS strategic plan
  - in-depth knowledge of the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks
3. Nominated teacher's wages, benefits, and resume.
4. Two letters of support from colleagues.

Application materials should be forwarded by Tuesday, **March 31, 1998** to:

Educational Improvement Group  
 Massachusetts Department of Education  
 Attn.: Ann Silver  
 350 Main Street  
 Malden, MA 02148

Selected first round candidates will be interviewed in April. Finalists will be recommended to the Commissioner for his consideration in May, 1998. Questions about the science education position may be directed to Tom Noonan at 781-338-3000.

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**MASSACHUSETTS DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION**  
**Two-Year Leadership Sabbatical Opportunity**  
**Statewide Curriculum Content Specialist for Professional Development**

The Statewide Content Specialist for Professional Development will be responsible for supporting public schools as they work to improve student learning through standards-based teaching and assessment as articulated by the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks. This support will be in the form of materials, technical assistance advisories, and statewide professional development opportunities.

**Responsibilities**

- Develop and disseminate training and technical assistance materials and methods of instruction that educators can use to engage colleagues in the content knowledge and pedagogy of the curriculum frameworks.
- Advocate and communicate the vision of teaching, learning, and assessment as described in the curriculum frameworks to teachers, parents, and the broader community.
- Collaboratively develop and implement a technical assistance plan that will help school district personnel implement the Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System (MCAS) appropriately.
- Plan, design, and conduct professional development programs for schools, districts, and associations.
- Work as a member of the Professional Development Team.

**Qualifications**

- Knowledge of Massachusetts Education Reform initiatives and national standards and assessment projects;
- Master's Degree plus a minimum of five years classroom teaching experience, including experience planning, designing, and/or conducting professional development programs;
- Excellent communication, facilitation, and writing skills; and
- Ability to work on a team.

**Application Materials/Timelines**

Interested teachers should submit the following materials:

1. A letter of nomination and recommendation from the district's Superintendent
2. Nominated teacher's statement addressing:

- current role, areas of expertise
- proposed ideas for sabbatical activities
- knowledge of the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks

3. Nominated teacher's wages, benefits, and resume.
4. Two letters of support from colleagues.

Application materials should be forwarded by Tuesday, **March 31, 1998** to:

Educational Improvement Group  
Massachusetts Department of Education  
Attn.: Ann Silver  
350 Main Street  
Malden, MA 02148

Selected first round candidates will be interviewed in April. Finalists will be recommended to the Commissioner for his review and approval in May, 1998. Questions about the professional development position may be directed to Melanie Winklosky at 781-338-3000.

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**MASSACHUSETTS DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION**  
**Two-Year Leadership Sabbatical Opportunity**  
**Statewide Content Specialist for Assessment**

The statewide content specialist in assessment will work closely with the staff of the Department's Accountability and Evaluation staff to support standards-based reform efforts associated with the implementation of the Commonwealth's new testing program, the Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System (MCAS).

**Responsibilities**

- Provide training for teachers and administrators in developing local assessments based on the Massachusetts curriculum frameworks;
- Provide technical assistance to schools related to assessment design, methods, reporting, test administration and policy matters related to MCAS;
- Participate in the development of assessment items for MCAS; and
- Assist in public-outreach efforts related to MCAS, including preparation of publications and materials.

**Qualifications**

- Knowledge of the Massachusetts Education Reform Law, especially as it pertains to the state Curriculum Frameworks and the new state testing program, the Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System (MCAS);
- Demonstrated knowledge and understanding of classroom and large scale assessment design, methods and reporting principles;
- Experience and demonstrated skill at training teachers in the use of standards-based instruction and assessment methods, including methods for scoring open-ended test questions;
- Knowledge and understanding of national reform efforts related to standards and assessment;
- Knowledge and understanding of issues related to the participation of students with special needs and/or students with limited English proficiency in assessment programs;
- Demonstrated content expertise and teaching experience with one or more of the following Curriculum Framework content areas: English language arts, history/social science, mathematics, and science & technology;
- Excellent presentation and writing skills;
- Ability to work as a member of a team; and
- Master's degree and five years of teaching experience.

**Application Materials/Timelines**

Interested teachers should submit the following materials:

1. A letter of nomination and recommendation from the district's Superintendent
2. Nominated teacher's statement addressing:
  - current role, areas of expertise
  - proposed ideas for sabbatical activities

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## Public Comment Requested on Change in State Regulation for Student Learning Time

### Memorandum

**TO:** Interested Parties  
**FROM:** Robert V. Antonucci, Commissioner of Education  
**DATE:** January 27, 1998

#### Background

On January 12, the Massachusetts Board of Education voted to seek public comment on a proposal to amend the state's student learning time regulations. These regulations, adopted in 1994, set standards for the minimum number of hours of structured learning time that students at all grade levels in Massachusetts public schools should receive. Previously, the only state standards were the minimum number of days and total annual hours schools should be open for students.

#### Proposal

The proposed amendment would clarify the definition of "core subjects" in the state regulation (603 CMR 27.02). Currently, the regulation reads:

"27.02: As used in 603 CMR 27.00, the terms listed below shall have the following meanings:

"Core subjects" shall mean:

(a) the core academic subjects specified in G.L. c. 69, section 1D (mathematics, science and technology, history and social science, English, foreign languages, and the arts), and the subjects covered in courses which are part of an approved vocational technical education program under G.L. c. 74; and

(b) subjects, other than those defined as "core academic subjects," focused on helping students acquire the knowledge and skills described in the Common Core of Learning established by the Board of Education."

Under the proposal, sub-section (b) of the current regulation would be replaced with a new text:

(b) other subjects approved by the school committee as part of the district's program of studies.

#### Process

Written comments are requested through March 13, 1998, in accordance with state law G.L. c. 30A, s.3. Written comments may be submitted in any of three ways: by mail to the Massachusetts Department of Education, Attn: Nicholas Fischer, 350 Main Street, Malden, MA, 02148 by email at [nfischer@doe.mass.edu](mailto:nfischer@doe.mass.edu). After comments are reviewed, we anticipate action by the Board of Education on April 9, 1998. If the regulation is amended, we anticipate that the effective date for the new regulation will be July 1, 1998.

Thank you for your participation in this process.

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## Memorandum of Agreement

The Lawrence School Committee ("the Committee"), the Commissioner of Education ("the Commissioner"), and the Massachusetts Board of Education ("the Board") (together, "the Parties") hereby agree as follows:

1. The Parties shall form a joint search committee composed of nine members, five appointed by the Committee and four appointed by the Commissioner, to screen and recommend qualified candidates for the position of permanent superintendent of the Lawrence Public Schools ("the District"). The joint search committee shall forward its recommendations to the Lawrence School Committee and the Commissioner and Board of Education on or before April 15, 1998. The Committee, Commissioner and Board shall confer and agree upon a candidate for appointment. The Committee shall not make or extend either a temporary or a permanent appointment to the position of District Superintendent until a candidate is identified that has the support of the Committee, the Commissioner and the Board. In the event that a new permanent Superintendent is not appointed by June 30, 1998, the Commissioner, after consultation with the Mayor, shall appoint an interim Superintendent to serve until a new permanent Superintendent assumes leadership of the District.
2. The Commissioner, on behalf of the Board, and after consultation with the Mayor, shall appoint individuals to guide the District's management and governance ("the Commissioner's representatives"). The Commissioner's representatives shall review and advise District officials and administrators on budget, personnel, contract, collective bargaining, and major policy issues, and all improvement plans, for the District. The Commissioner's representatives shall also provide, or assist District officials and administrators in their efforts to secure technical assistance in their formulation and implementation of improvement plans.
3. The Committee shall adopt as the District policy that no permanent appointments to administrative positions in the District's central administration or schools shall be made by an Acting or Interim Superintendent. All permanent personnel appointments shall be approved by the District's new permanent Superintendent and the Commissioner's representatives.
4. One year after a new permanent superintendent assumes leadership of the District, and annually thereafter for as long as the Agreement remains in effect, the Commissioner and Board shall evaluate the District's progress toward making improvements in its governance and management and in the adequacy of the educational programs and services provided to District students ("the evaluation"). If, upon completion of the evaluation, the Board and Commissioner determine that the District has made substantial improvements in its governance and management and is making reasonable progress toward providing an adequate education to all District students, the parties may agree to amend or terminate this Agreement. If, upon completion of the evaluation, the Board and Commissioner find that there continue to be serious deficiencies in the District's governance and management, or that the District has not made reasonable progress toward providing an adequate education to all of the District's students, the Board and Commissioner shall have the option either to renew this Agreement for an additional year, or terminate the Agreement and proceed under G.L. c. 69, §1K to declare the District chronically under-performing and place the District in receivership.
5. The Board and Commissioner, upon thirty days advance notice to the Committee, may terminate this Agreement at any time if the Board determines that there has been a material breach by District officials of the provisions of this agreement. A disregard of the advice and recommendations of the Commissioner's representatives by District officials on any substantial issue may provide the basis of a determination by the Board that a material breach of this Agreement has occurred.
6. Upon execution of this Agreement, the Parties shall file a joint motion to dismiss without prejudice and without costs or attorneys' fees Essex Civil Action No. 97-1349-C with respect to each and every defendant except the Board of Education. The case shall remain open during the term of this Agreement solely to review any action that may be taken by the Board after the signing of the Agreement, pursuant to G.L. c. 69, § 1K, to place the District in receivership. Such review shall not intrude on any educational,

factual, policy or other decisions that are entrusted to the Board or Commissioner by statute. The Committee shall execute a general release of all claims against each and every entity and person named, individually or in an official capacity, as a defendant in Essex Civil Action No. 97-1349-C.

7. The Committee shall not initiate litigation related to the subject matter of this Agreement against the Commissioner, Board or any member thereof, Department of Education or any employee or agent thereof, or any member of the so called Lawrence Fact Finding Team except to obtain the review in Essex Civil Action No. 97-1349-C provided for in paragraph six of this Agreement.

8. For as long as this Agreement is in effect the Board shall not take action pursuant to G.L. c. 69, §1K to declare the District chronically under-performing and place the District in receivership.

9. This Agreement shall remain in effect for a period of two years from the date the new permanent superintendent assumes leadership of the District, unless it is terminated earlier or renewed for an additional year as provided in this Agreement.

Agreed to and executed by the Parties:

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Patricia A. Dowling, Mayor  
Chair, Lawrence School Committee

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Date

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Robert V. Antonucci  
Commissioner of Education

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Date

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John Silber, Chairman  
Board of Education

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Date

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## Public Information Meetings for the Massachusetts Teacher Tests

To: Superintendents of Schools  
Presidents of Colleges and Universities  
Education Deans, Educator Preparation Program Contact Persons

From: Robert V. Antonucci, Commissioner of Education

Date: January 28, 1998

In March 1998 the Massachusetts Department of Education will conduct four public information meetings to provide information about the Massachusetts Teacher Tests. I am sending you this brief notice to advise you of the dates and geographic regions where the meetings will be held. The specific locations will be arranged shortly and I will send you that information as soon as it is available.

The four meetings are scheduled for March 2 (Westfield area), March 4 (Bridgewater and Worcester areas), and March 6 (Boston area). Each meeting will last for around two hours.

The public information sessions will offer an opportunity for answering common questions about the testing program's certification and testing requirements, test design, test administration policies, and score reporting activities.

As you know, the Massachusetts Teacher Tests are part of the state's ongoing implementation of the Education Reform Act. Consistent with that law, teacher certification candidates are required to pass a test of communication and literacy skills and a test of the appropriate subject knowledge for each certificate sought. The first administration of the tests is scheduled for April 4, 1998.

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## Discipline Procedures for Students with Special Needs

### Memorandum

**TO:** Superintendents, Charter School Leaders and Other Interested Parties

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

**DATE:** February 2, 1998

The Massachusetts Department of Education has revised certain special education procedures because of changes in the federal special education law (the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act Amendments of 1997, or IDEA-97). One change eliminates a previous administrative requirement for Massachusetts schools. School districts, including charter schools, no longer need Department of Education approval to place in an alternative education program a student with special needs who has been excluded from school for disciplinary reasons.

As background, Massachusetts law (G.L. Chapter 71B, § 3) indicates that no school district may refuse a special education student admission to or continued attendance in public school without the Department's "prior written approval" and without complying with state regulations and procedures for disciplining special education students, where applicable. To implement this statutory requirement, the Department adopted procedures for disciplining students with special needs, as set forth in Chapter 766 Regulation 338.0. One requirement under this regulation (¶ 338.6) details procedures for school districts to seek the Department's approval to place in an alternative education program any student with special needs who is suspended or otherwise excluded from school for more than 10 cumulative days in a school year.

IDEA-97 adds significant detail, both in process and substance, to pre-existing requirements for disciplining students with special needs, particularly to the requirements for placing them in alternative educational settings. All school districts in Massachusetts and in every state must now meet these new federal standards. As a practical matter, the IDEA-97 standards supersede those in Chapter 71B, § 3 and ¶ 338.6 of our state special education regulations. Therefore, as long as a school district implements the IDEA-97 requirements in removing a student to an interim alternative educational setting, we deem that placement to have the Department's "prior written approval" per Chapter 71B, § 3. No separate approval under ¶ 338.6 is needed. Parents may still seek review of a district's action either through the Department's Problem Resolution System or through Special Education Appeals. The Department will continue to review local implementation of these new requirements through its routine Coordinated Program Reviews.

Each school district should review its written policies and procedures to incorporate the new federal requirements (found at Sec. 615 (k) of IDEA-97), and should train staff regarding these requirements. The Department will issue updated technical guidance on discipline procedures for students with special needs later this year, when the new federal special education regulations are adopted.

The entire IDEA-97 statute is available on the Internet in a downloadable format at:

[http://www.ed.gov/offices/OSERS/IDEA/the\\_law.html](http://www.ed.gov/offices/OSERS/IDEA/the_law.html)

The advisories issued by the Massachusetts Department of Education on IDEA-97 may be found at:

[www.doe.mass.edu](http://www.doe.mass.edu)

If you would like further consultation about implementing these requirements, please contact your Program Quality Assurance Services liaison staff member at (781) 338-3000. Thank you for your leadership.

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## New School-to-Work Director

### Memorandum

**To:** Superintendents and Principals

**From:** Commissioner Robert V. Antonucci

**Re:** New school-to-work director; suggested school-to-work strategies; brochure for parents

**Date:** February 2, 1998

#### New Director

As co-chair of the Massachusetts School-to-Work Executive Committee, I am pleased to let you know that we have appointed a new Massachusetts school to work executive director, Fran Kane. He has been an educator for more than 20 years as teacher, principal, and superintendent and has 15 years of private sector experience as well. These credentials make him well-suited for the job. Fran is located in the Department of Education headquarters, Malden, and can be reached by phone (781-338-3000) or email ([fkane@doe.mass.edu](mailto:fkane@doe.mass.edu)). He will be a great resource for you.

#### Some School-to-Work Suggestions

As you know, the Massachusetts Education Reform Act was driven by both employers and educators concerned about our students' preparedness. With this fifth year of education reform culminating in the first round of new state tests, many districts are looking outside the classroom, using the workplace and community as a learning laboratory to teach the learning standards from the frameworks and strengthen the preparation of students for the world after high school graduation.

School-to-work--called in most communities "school to careers"--offers concrete answers to the challenges and goals set forth by Education Reform. Both are supported by applied learning, interdisciplinary teaching, schools redesigned to meet the needs of all students, occupational proficiency, higher academic standards and college preparation. Through relevant learning experiences tied to the curriculum, school-to-work serves as an effective motivator for students to meet the new high standards. Following are some strategies you may want to consider in your district:

#### **Professional Development**

More than 200 Massachusetts teachers and counselors this year have spent time in a local business to see firsthand the skills needed to achieve success in the workplace and gain ideas to enhance their curriculum. You may wish to have these teachers lead workshops addressing ways to make learning more active and project-based. Your local school-to-work partnership can help develop worksite visits, teacher internships, workshops, classroom speakers, and employer-educator partnerships for curriculum development.

#### **Aligning Curriculum to the Frameworks**

As you align your curriculum to the frameworks, there are many ways to bring context to the lessons. Employers and other community members can help make the curriculum--in all grades--come alive through classroom presentations, worksite visits, and real-life problems and projects.

#### **Time and Learning**

You can apply structured work-based learning toward Time and Learning goals. Also, some schools have found that the flexibility of the school day--particularly in block scheduling--makes easier the scheduling and logistics of workplace experiences.

Communications, problem solving, behaving professionally, interacting with adults, applying math, using technology--these skills often lead to higher class performance for students by connecting class lessons to their lives.

School-to-work creates a natural "feedback loop" between the school which prepares them and the community where they will work, study and live. Furthermore, school-to-work brings community resources to the table. Within the Department of Education we are aligning school to work with our other current activity such as professional development, Partnerships Advancing the Learning of Math and Science (PALMS), Tech Prep, school to employment, and community service learning.

Education reform is not easy. We should not expect to manage reform alone. School-to-work offers us new ways to develop partners in education, and to bring learning to life for students--the ultimate motivator. I urge you to see school-to-work in this light. Thank you for your consideration and support.

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