

[Commissioner's Update Archive](#)

Commissioner's Update

November 6, 2000

Dear Superintendents, and Leaders of Charter Schools and Collaboratives:

I have 4 updates for you, and several items recently posted on our [website](#).

Letter to Parents of All 10th graders

Last week, I sent to you copies of a letter enclosed in stamped envelopes, and asked that you mail them to all parents of tenth-graders in your districts. I hope you have had the opportunity to distribute them. The letter, from Governor Cellucci, Lt. Governor Jane Swift, Chairman of the Board James Peyser and me, discusses the graduation requirement and includes helpful tips for parents to use at home to help their children succeed. If you need additional materials, please let me know. I am pleased to let you know that within the week, a Spanish version of the letter will be posted on our website, as well.

National Board for Professional Teaching Standards

A recent study from the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards states that teachers who earn national certification possess greater content knowledge and are better able to meet the individual learning needs of their students. In Massachusetts, teachers who earn this prestigious credential are designated as Master Teachers and can earn a bonus of up to \$50,000 over ten years if they agree to mentor an apprentice teacher. I have set a goal of having 1,000 Master Teachers in the Commonwealth by 2003. Massachusetts is proud to have 75 teachers who have earned this prestigious certification and 200 more awaiting notification of their certification. I invite all public school teachers who are interested in becoming nationally certified to apply to the Department of Education's Candidate Subsidy Program.

Newsletter Announcement 2001 Secretary's Award For Excellence in Environmental Education

I am pleased to announce two programs offered by Secretary of Environmental Affairs, Bob Durand: notification of the Outdoor Classroom Development Funding Program; and the 2001 Secretary's Award for Excellence in Environmental Education. I hope you will take advantage of these opportunities.

Listed below are items recently posted on our [website](#):

1. [MCAS Information](#)
 - [Spring 2001 Question Tryouts in Science and Technology/Engineering in Grades 9 & 10](#)
 - [NCS Mentor for Massachusetts Training Workshops](#)
 - [High School Science and Technology/Engineering 2000-2002 Assessment](#)

[Development Committee Member Recruitment](#)

2. [FY 2001 Special Education Loan Program](#)
3. [Board of Education Forum on School Interventions and Turnaround Strategies - November 14th - Public Invited](#)
4. [Information on District-wide Student Success Plans](#)
5. [Announcement of Early Childhood Grant Opportunity: Community Partnerships for Children](#)
6. [Technology Information](#)
 - [Literacy Challenge Grant 5: Project MEET School Sites](#)
 - [Grant Applications for Teaching State Standards with Technology \(TSST\)](#)

7. **Advanced Placement Information**
 - [Examination Fee Subsidy](#)
 - [AP Incentive Program 2000-2001 Income Eligibility Guidelines](#)
 - [AP Incentive Program Fee Reduction Form](#)

8. **Notice of Public Comment Period - Proposed amendments to the Charter School Regulations**
[No longer available]
9. **Teacher Recognition Announcements**
[No longer available]
10. [Notification of Grant Awards for Outdoor Environmental Education](#)

11. [Announcement of 2001 Secretary's Award for Excellence in Environmental Education](#)

All the best, and

Sincerely,

David P. Driscoll
Commissioner of Education

[E-mail this page](#) | [Print View](#)



- > [MCAS Home](#)
- > [School Notices](#)
- > [About The MCAS](#)
- [Test Schedule](#)
- [Test Items](#)
- [Scoring Guides/Student Work](#)
- [MCAS Results](#)
- > [MCAS Alternate Assessment](#)
- > [Publications](#)
- > [Links to Related Resources](#)
- [MCAS Performance Appeals](#)
- [Parent Information Hotline](#)
1-866-MCAS220



[Assessment/Accountability](#) > [MCAS](#) >

Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System

Memoranda Related To MCAS Included In The November Coordinated Mailing

Memorandum

To: Superintendents
From: David P. Driscoll, Commissioner of Education
Date: November 6, 2000

There are four memoranda regarding MCAS in this mailing. The purpose of each of the memoranda is summarized below.

1. A memorandum [[HTML](#) | | [PDF](#)] requesting you to designate one teacher or administrator from your district to attend an afternoon workshop to familiarize participants with NCS Mentor for Massachusetts, a software application designed to train individuals to score student compositions using MCAS scoring criteria.
2. A copy of a memorandum [[HTML](#) | | [PDF](#)] that I am sending to high school principals, describing plans for implementing new tests in science and technology/engineering at the high school level. Question tryouts will be administered this spring to initiate development of the new tests. Accordingly, I have requested high school principals to report the 2000-2001 enrollment of students in grades 9 and 10 in various science and technology/engineering courses. Information from the reports will be used to ship appropriate question tryout materials to high schools this spring. The enrollment report is **due November 17, 2000**.
3. A memorandum [[HTML](#) | | [PDF](#)] inviting classroom teachers to apply for a limited number of memberships on the Earth Science and Technology/Engineering MCAS Assessment Development Committees. Applications are **due by November 14, 2000**.

Thanks for your help in seeing that this information is shared with appropriate staff in your district.

[E-mail this page](#) | [Print View](#)



- > [MCAS Home](#)
- > [School Notices](#)
- > [About The MCAS](#)
- [Test Schedule](#)
- [Test Items](#)
- [Scoring Guides/Student Work](#)
- [MCAS Results](#)
- > [MCAS Alternate Assessment](#)
- > [Publications](#)
- > [Links to Related Resources](#)
- [MCAS Performance Appeals](#)
- [Parent Information Hotline](#)
1-866-MCAS220



[Assessment/Accountability](#) > [MCAS](#) >

Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System

Spring 2001 Question Tryouts in Science and Technology/Engineering in Grades 9 & 10

Memorandum

To: High School Principals
Charter School Directors
Directors of Educational Collaboratives
Directors of 766 Schools

From: David P. Driscoll, Commissioner of Education

Date: November 6, 2000

Purpose

The purpose of this memorandum is to: (1) inform you about plans to administer question tryouts in Spring 2001 in various science disciplines and technology/engineering in grades 9 and 10 this spring, and; and (2) request that you complete and return the attached Science and Technology/Engineering Enrollment Report.

Background

For the past three years the Department has administered an integrated Science and Technology test at grade 10, with questions based on the 1995 Science and Technology Curriculum Framework. While a number of high schools have aligned their science programs with the 1995 Framework by developing integrated science and technology courses for students in grades 9 and 10, most continue to offer year-long, discipline-specific science courses (e.g., earth science, biology, chemistry, technology, etc.).

In response to the preference expressed by many high schools to offer discipline-specific science courses, the June 30, 2000 Science and Technology/Engineering Curriculum Framework Draft includes high school learning standards for each of the four science disciplines and technology/engineering in separate sections. The final version of the Framework will also contain a section with standards from all four science disciplines designating a two-year integrated science sequence for grades 9 and 10.

Plans for New High School Science and Technology/Engineering Tests

To support integrated, discipline-specific science, and technology/engineering curricula at the high school level, the grade 10 MCAS Science and Technology test will be suspended in the Spring 2001. In its place, the Department will administer question tryouts for new tests in the following areas:

- Biology
- Chemistry
- Earth Science
 - Engineering/Technology

- Integrated Science
- Introductory Physics

As in the past, the purpose of an MCAS question tryout is to gather information to evaluate the quality of newly developed test items, so no results for students, school, or districts will be reported. In preparation I ask that you complete and return the enclosed survey by November 21, 2000. Please see details below.

All students in grades 9 and 10 will participate in a question tryout in one of the aforementioned areas, according to the science and/or technology/engineering course they are enrolled in this year. For example, grade 9 and 10 students who are taking biology this year will participate in the biology question tryout. Students not enrolled in any of the aforementioned courses will not be required to participate in the tryout. The question tryout for integrated science will only be administered to students who are completing the second course in an integrated science sequence.

It is anticipated that these new tests will be fully operational until the spring of 2003. I also recognize that there are many policy-related questions that need to be addressed. I plan to discuss these issues with the Board of Education this winter and invite your comments and suggestions.

Enrollment Report

Attached please find the 2000-2001 High School Science and Technology/Engineering Enrollment Report [[PDF](#) | [MSWORD](#)]. Information you provide in this report will determine the number and types of question tryout forms that will be sent to your school this spring. When completing the report, please note the following:

- Integrated Science refers to a two-year course that covers biology, chemistry, earth science, and physics. In a small number of schools, this sequence is taught in grades 8 and 9.
- Physical Science refers to a one-year course that covers chemistry and physics only.
- Other combination science includes any combination of science disciplines not included under Integrated Science or Physical Science.
- Biology, Chemistry, Earth Science, Introductory Physics, and Technology/Engineering refer to discipline-specific courses.

This form is designed to account for all of your grade 9 and 10 students; please note that it is not a survey of science course options.

Please complete the report **by November 21, 2000**, and return it in the enclosed envelope to:

Pamela Schleicher
Harcourt Educational Measurement
555 Academic Court
San Antonio, Texas 78204

Thank you for your help.

c: Superintendents

[E-mail this page](#) | [Print View](#)



- > [MCAS Home](#)
- > [School Notices](#)
- > [About The MCAS](#)
- [Test Schedule](#)
- [Test Items](#)
- [Scoring Guides/Student Work](#)
- [MCAS Results](#)
- > [MCAS Alternate Assessment](#)
- > [Publications](#)
- > [Links to Related Resources](#)
- [MCAS Performance Appeals](#)
- [Parent Information Hotline](#)
1-866-MCAS220



[Assessment/Accountability](#) > [MCAS](#) >

Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System

NCS Mentor for Massachusetts Training Workshops

To: Superintendents
 From: David P. Driscoll, Commissioner of Education
 Date: November 6, 2000

You will soon receive the new CD-ROM NCS Mentor for Massachusetts: Scoring MCAS Compositions. When you receive your package of disks, please distribute one to each school in your district in a timely fashion. We are also including a disk for your district office. These disks can be used with either Windows or Macintosh systems.

NCS Mentor for Massachusetts is a professional development tool designed to familiarize Massachusetts educators with the criteria used to score MCAS compositions. Users will be able to review the MCAS Composition Scoring Guide and Anchor Papers, practice scoring student compositions, and gauge their understanding by comparing their scores to those assigned by MCAS writing assessment specialists.

While some will find the NCS Mentor for Massachusetts CD-ROM relatively easy to use, we are offering workshops for educators who are interested in a hands-on training. Since the workshop will focus on the features and potential uses of NCS Mentor for Massachusetts only student compositions from one of the grade levels (4, 8, or 10) will be selected for familiarizing participants with the software program. Participants should not expect to receive training at a particular grade level. The Department of Education will offer regional workshops on NCS Mentor for Massachusetts at the following locations:

Region	Location	Date	Time
Central	Blackstone Voc Tech High School, Upton	Thurs., Nov. 30	3:30 - 5:00 p.m.
South	Southeastern Voc Tech High School, South Easton	Mon., Dec 4	3:30 - 5:00 p.m.
West	Dean Voc Tech High School, Holyoke	Tues., Dec 5	3:30 - 5:00 p.m.
North	Northeast Metro Voc Tech High School, Wakefield	Wed., Dec 6	3:30 - 5:00 p.m.

We encourage you to designate one person from your district who is interested in attending one of these workshops to help other educators in your district to use NCS Mentor for Massachusetts. Please have that person complete the registration form attached [[MSWORD](#) | [PDF](#)] and return it no later than **November 21, 2000**. Due to space restrictions, all district contact persons must receive a confirmation to attend.

For further information regarding staff development uses for NCS Mentor for Massachusetts: Scoring MCAS Compositions, please contact Tom O'Toole at (781) 338-3620.



- > [MCAS Home](#)
- > [School Notices](#)
- > [About The MCAS](#)
- [Test Schedule](#)
- [Test Items](#)
- [Scoring Guides/Student Work](#)
- [MCAS Results](#)
- > [MCAS Alternate Assessment](#)
- > [Publications](#)
- > [Links to Related Resources](#)
- [MCAS Performance Appeals](#)
- [Parent Information Hotline](#)
1-866-MCAS220



[Assessment/Accountability](#) > [MCAS](#) >

Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System

High School Science and Technology/Engineering 2000-2002

Assessment Development Committee (ADC) Member Recruitment

To: Superintendents, Principals, and Other Interested Parties
 From: David P. Driscoll, Commissioner of Education
 Date: November 6, 2000

The Department of Education is seeking classroom teachers for a limited number of memberships on the Earth Science and Technology/Engineering Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System (MCAS) Assessment Development Committees. Committee members work with the Department of Education and its testing contractor to develop, review and refine MCAS test questions. Participation on an Assessment Development Committee is an excellent professional development opportunity.

Committee members must have content expertise, understanding of and direct experience with the Massachusetts Science and Technology/Engineering Curriculum Framework, and experience at the grade level(s) being tested. We are looking specifically for teachers from the following grade levels and subjects:

Grades 9/10 Earth Science 4-8 members
Grades 9/10 Technology/Engineering 4-8 members

Earth Science and Technology/Engineering Committee members are required to attend at least four one-day meetings during the school year and a three-day summer meeting. Whenever possible, meetings are held in the central part of the state. The dates for meetings are listed below. Other meetings may be called as necessary.

November 29-30, 2000
 March 21-22, 2001
 July 24, 25, 26, 2001
 August 14, 15, 16, 2001

The Department will reimburse districts for substitute teacher expenses for meetings during the school year. Meals and mileage are provided by the Department of Education. In addition, lodging for members living 70 miles or more from the meeting site is provided. Committee members will receive an honorarium for participation in the summer meetings.

Please notify eligible staff and encourage them to complete and submit the enclosed application [[MSWORD](#) || [PDF](#)]. The Department must receive completed applications by 5:00 p.m., Tuesday, November 14. Applicants will be notified of their status by Monday, November 20.

The Department is also seeking applicants for ADC memberships 2001-2002 in English language arts, mathematics, science and technology and history and social science. Details on this recruitment will be sent to you shortly.

[E-mail this page](#) | [Print View](#)

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[Search](#) · [Site Map](#) · [Privacy](#) · [Site Info](#) · [Contact DOE](#)



- › [Finance/Grants](#)
- › [Recent Updates](#)
- › [Accounting & Auditing](#)
- › [Chapter 70 Program \(Foundation Budget\)](#)
- › [Charter Schools](#)
- › [DOE Budget](#)
- › [Federal Renovation Program](#)
- › [Grants: Information](#)
- › [Nutrition Programs \(School Lunch\)](#)
- › [Per Pupil Expenditure Reports](#)
- › [School Building Assistance](#)
- › [School Choice](#)
- › [School Finance Regulations](#)
- › [Special Education](#)
- › [Statistical Comparisons](#)
- › [Transportation](#)
- › [Vocational Education](#)
- › [Key Contacts](#)
- › [Links](#)

School Finance: Special Education

FY 2001 Special Education Loan Program

PURPOSE: To provide financial loans to local school districts, regional school districts, and Commonwealth charter schools facing extraordinary special education costs in FY'01.

AVAILABLE FUNDING: \$1,000,000 appropriated in line item 7061-0025 of the FY 01 general appropriation act.

LOAN REPAYMENT TERMS: Funds will be awarded in the form of five-year, no interest loans payable annually to the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, with one-fifth payable on March 31, 2002 and one-fifth each succeeding March 31, through 2006. Repayments will be deducted from quarterly local aid distributions, or from quarterly tuition payments for Commonwealth charter schools.

ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS: Districts may borrow up to the amount by which the current year's estimated special education expenses exceed 110% of the district's average special education expenses for the last three years. Eligible expenses include instructional costs and private special education school tuition as described in the Department's [Guidelines for Student & Financial Reporting](#) but **do not include transportation costs**. The [three-year average expenses](#) by district are posted on the DOE School Finance web site.

APPLICATION PROCESS: Applications should be in the form of a letter from the superintendent or director sent to:

Jay Sullivan
Director, School Business Services
Massachusetts Department of Education
350 Main St.
Malden, MA 02148

Applications will not be accepted by e-mail or facsimile.

Please indicate in the application letter: (a) the district's total estimated special education expenses (as defined above) for FY'01; and (b) the requested loan amount. Applications must be accompanied by a certified copy of the vote of the school committee, or board of trustees for Commonwealth charter schools, approving the application.

Eligible applicants will receive preliminary approval from the Department within fourteen days of receipt. For final approval and disbursement of funds, the municipality or regional school district must obtain and document all necessary local approvals, as described below.

LOCAL APPROVALS OF DEBT OBLIGATIONS: Applicants must comply with all requirements established by statute, local charters, and regional agreements with respect to the authorization of debt. Within 90 days following the Department's preliminary approval of the application, the applicant shall provide to the Department of Education notes certified by the director of accounts in the Department of Revenue. No funds will be disbursed until the receipt of such notes. The Commissioner of Education may extend the 90-day deadline when needed to accommodate town meeting schedules.

APPLICATION DEADLINE: None. Applications will be considered and approved on a first-come, first-served basis as long as funds are available.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION: Contact Jay Sullivan at 781-338-6594 or jsullivan@doe.mass.edu.

[Print View](#)

**Directions to the
Boston School Department
26 Court Street**

AGENDA

*Forum on
School Interventions
and
Turnaround Strategies*

Tuesday, November 14, 2000
Boston School Department
26 Court Street
Boston

- 4:00 Introductions
Remarks by the Chairman
Remarks by the Commissioner
- 4:15 Remarks by the Panelists
- 5:15 Discussion
- 6:30 Adjourn

**No registration is required.
If you have questions, please
call (781) 338-3316**

From the North:

Take Route 93 South to the Haymarket exit. At the end of the ramp, turn right onto New Chardon St. At first set of lights at Congress St., take left. Follow Congress St. past three traffic lights. Take right at fourth light onto State St. The building is 100 yards on the left past Old State House.

From the South:

Take Route 93 North to Dewey Square/South Station Tunnel. Exit tunnel at Atlantic Avenue (Exit 22). Follow Atlantic Ave. to India St./State St. cutoff. Take left onto India St. Follow to State St. Turn left onto State St. at Old State House (on left). Pass Old State House and the building is 100 yards on the left.

From the West:

Take Mass Pike to Route 93 North. Follow directions above "From the South."

Parking:

Parking is available at Center Plaza (at second set of lights beyond the building, take left up the hill).

From the T:

Take the Green Line to Government Center. Exit the station onto City Hall Plaza. Take right turn upon exiting the station. Court Street is approximately 100 feet from the station. Cross over State Street to the building.

**Massachusetts Board of Education
and
Department of Education**

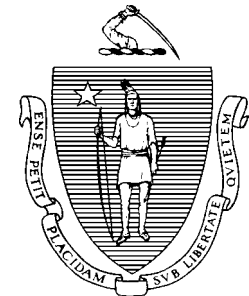
Invite school leaders
and the public
to attend

*The Second in a Series
of
Forums on Education Reform*

**School Interventions
and
Turnaround Strategies**

Tuesday, November 14, 2000
4:00-6:30 p.m.

Boston School Department
Winter Chambers, 1st Floor
26 Court Street
Boston



OVERVIEW

As Massachusetts enters the second phase of Education Reform, the top priority of the Board of Education and the Department of Education is raising student achievement by implementing a system of accountability for results and by creating conditions for effective schools. As the accountability process is implemented, the next step will be to identify the actions and strategies which are most effective in improving student performance when a school or district is determined to be “underperforming” as defined in Massachusetts regulations.

Massachusetts has defined the characteristics of high and low performing schools and districts, and has begun to implement an accountability system. The Commonwealth’s accountability system will track the progress of each school and district in improving the performance of students. In upholding its responsibility to ensure that each child has access to a high quality education, the Commonwealth must be prepared to intervene in cases where schools or districts fail to improve and are declared chronically underperforming.

This forum brings together state and local officials who have experience in school and district takeovers, and policy analysts who have studied the effects of state intervention in public schools in recent years.

PANELISTS’ PROFILES

Leo Klagholz, former Commissioner, New Jersey Department of Education

As Commissioner of Education from 1994-1999, Dr. Klagholz supervised the takeover of Newark Public Schools, pursuant to the state’s education reform provisions. During his five year tenure as Commissioner, the Jersey City district, the first to be run by a state-appointed administration, improved to the point that the State Board of Education was able to begin the process of restoring local control. Currently, Dr. Klagholz is a Distinguished Scholar of Educational Policy Studies at The Richard Stockton College in New Jersey.

Thomas Payzant, Superintendent, Boston Public Schools

As Superintendent of the Boston Public Schools since 1995, Dr. Payzant has been working towards the goal of achieving 130 schools of excellence with quality teaching and high expectations for learning for every Boston student. For the past five years, Dr. Payzant has led the Boston Public Schools through various reform initiatives including development and implementation of Citywide Learning Standards that are aligned with state curriculum frameworks, new attendance and performance policies to eliminate social promotion, and restoration of full accreditation to many of the city’s high schools. Most recently, he has re-configured several of Boston’s high schools with the lowest performance, including new staff and smaller learning communities.

William Slotnik, Executive Director, Community Training & Assistance Center, Boston, MA

The Community Training and Assistance Center (CTAC) is one of the leading educational reform organizations in the United States. Under Mr. Slotnik’s direction, CTAC has assisted numerous districts to successfully increase student achievement; created the Comprehensive District Accountability system to determine district, school and classroom effectiveness; and founded and guided the National Urban Reform Network. CTAC recently conducted a comprehensive study of the state takeover in Newark, New Jersey. The study, *Myths and Realities: Impact of the State Takeover on Students and Schools in Newark*, was released in May 2000.

Todd Ziebarth, Policy Analyst, Education Commission of the States, Denver, CO

As Policy Analyst at the recently created National Center for Innovation in Governing Education at the Education Commission of the States (ECS), Mr. Ziebarth has updated the ECS policy brief, *State Takeovers and Reconstitutions*. The Brief examined all of the state takeovers and reconstitutions of schools and districts. Mr. Ziebarth has coordinated the development of, and has written, several reports on a variety of governance issues, including state takeovers, school choice, and vouchers. He has also coordinated the work of the ECS-sponsored National Commission on Governing America’s Schools, and wrote the National Commission’s report, *Governing America’s Schools: Changing the Rules*, that was released in November 1999.



- › [Finance/Grants](#)
- › [Recent Updates](#)
- › [Accounting & Auditing](#)
- › [Chapter 70 Program \(Foundation Budget\)](#)
- › [Charter Schools](#)
- › [DOE Budget](#)
- › [Federal Renovation Program](#)
- › [Grants: Information](#)
- › [Nutrition Programs \(School Lunch\)](#)
- › [Per Pupil Expenditure Reports](#)
- › [School Building Assistance](#)
- › [School Choice](#)
- › [School Finance Regulations](#)
- › [Special Education](#)
- › [Statistical Comparisons](#)
- › [Transportation](#)
- › [Vocational Education](#)
- › [Key Contacts](#)
- › [Links](#)

Grants and Other Financial Assistance Programs: FY2001

Academic Support Services Program (Fund Code: 632 Addendum)

-- Revised October 18, 2000

To: Superintendents/Leaders in Districts/Charter Schools Who Received Notice of Eligibility for Academic Support Services Program Grants (Fund Code 632) in April 2000

From: David P. Driscoll, Commissioner of Education

Date: October 20, 2000

Subject: [District-wide Student Success Plans](#)

All school districts and charter schools awarded Academic Support Services funds (fund code 632) in FY2001 are required, as a condition of the receipt of these funds, to submit a district-wide [Student Success Plan](#) to the Department of Education. Section 137 of the Acts of 2000 requires that all districts in which more than 20% of the students score below level two on the MCAS submit a district-wide Student Success Plan to the Department. The Board of Education and I have directed that this new legislative requirement be implemented in connection with the review of this year's Academic Support Services grant applications.

The district-wide Student Success Plan will document the district's strategies, including but not limited to Academic Support Services, for raising the academic performance of students who score at level one on the MCAS. The district-wide Student Success Plan must identify how schools will communicate with students, family members and teachers about the individualized supports for students. An addendum to the Academic Support Services RFP is attached that details the required elements and the timelines for submission of the district-wide Student Success Plan.

The Department of Education is holding four regionally based training/technical assistance sessions on extended time programs between October 30 and November 9, 2000. Information and guidance on the district-wide Student Success Plan will be provided during the morning plenary at each session. These technical assistance sessions on Academic Support Services and After-School and Other Out-of-School Time Programs will also provide opportunities to learn about promising programs that have been delivered by districts over the past two years. Training dates, locations and registration materials have been mailed under separate cover to Academic Support Services Program contacts in your district.

If you have questions about the increase in Academic Support Services funds referenced in my September 15, 2000 memorandum, the grant application process, or are

interested in discussing ideas for program design and delivery, please contact a member of the Academic Support Services team: Peg Helgaard (781-338-3524), Mary Mader (781-338-6246), Pam Spagnoli (781-338-3544), or Kim Stinnette (781-338-3556)

Questions about the district-wide Student Success Plan should be directed to Mary Mader at 781/338-6246, mmader@doe.mass.edu.

[Attachment: Academic Support Services RFP and Addendum](#)

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[Search](#) . [Site Map](#) . [Privacy](#) . [Site Info](#) . [Contact DOE](#)

[Early Learning Services Home](#)

Announcement of Early Childhood Grant Opportunity: Community Partnerships for Children

Memorandum

To: Superintendents, Head Start Directors, and Child Care Resource and Referral Directors

From: David P. Driscoll, Commissioner of Education

Date: November 1, 2000

I am pleased to announce that the Governor and the Legislature demonstrated their continued support for young children and their families by increasing the Community Partnerships for Children program. Many early care and education programs work with scarce resources to provide quality programs. Appropriation of these additional funds demonstrates recognition of the important work you do and provides opportunity to expand on that work.

An additional \$5.7 million dollars are available this year. These new funds can be used to expand existing programs and to create new programs in communities that do not currently have a program. I hope these funds will allow more towns to join the CPC initiative as well as to serve additional children in the communities already participating.

In response to the limited increase in funds and the competitive nature of the grant, it is estimated that three out of four proposals will be funded. In contrast to past years, the FY 2001 expansion funds **are limited to a maximum of two program objectives**. Of the two objectives, providing direct services is required. The selection of one other program objective may be chosen based on documented needs.

A notice of the [Request for Proposals](#) for Community Partnerships for Children has been sent out to all licensed child care centers and family child care providers to inform them that new funds are available (see next page). In this memorandum, I recommend that they contact their local school system, the nearest Head Start, or a Child Care Resource and Referral Agency for a copy of the application, and to find out who the lead agency is in the community and/or when meetings are being scheduled to draft a proposal. I would appreciate your assistance in making sure that all interested parties receive the information they need to participate in developing a system of early education and care in your community.

An original and three copies of each proposal are due by **5:00 p.m. on December 12, 2000**. Please mail or deliver proposals and copies to:

Massachusetts Department of Education
Early Learning Services
350 Main Street
Malden, MA 02148

If you need assistance, please consult *A Guide to Community Partnerships for Children*. The *Guide* provides information on key topics associated with the program, such as implementing sliding fee scales and developing subcontracts. To request a copy of the *Guide*, or if you have any other questions, please call your Early Learning liaison or the general information number for Early Learning Services (781) 338-6364. Thank you for your efforts on behalf of young children and families.

Enclosures:

The Community Partnerships for Children Grant [Application](#) for high quality, comprehensive early care and education programs for preschool-age children.

[Commissioner's Letter to Child Care Providers](#)

[E-mail this page](#) | [Print View](#)

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[Search](#) · [Site Map](#) · [Privacy](#) · [Site Info](#) · [Contact DOE](#)

[Commissioner's Update Archive](#)

Commissioner Announces Two New Technology Grant Programs

November 6, 2000

Dear Superintendents and Charter School Leaders:

We are pleased to announce an opportunity for you to participate in two new technology grant programs:

**1. Technology Literacy Challenge Grant 5: Project MEET School Sites
(Fund Code: 613)**

This is a two-year grant program for districts to form school-based teams to participate in Project MEET activities. Project MEET (Massachusetts Empowering Educators with Technology) is a federally funded technology professional development program. Through this grant program educators in selected districts will join their colleagues from other school districts to become leaders in technology integration. Working closely with Project MEET partners, they will learn to help other educators use technology to motivate students and produce real improvement in teaching and learning.

**2. Teaching State Standards with Technology (TSST)
(Fund Code: 617)**

This is a multi-year state funded matching grant program. The purpose of this program is to support district adoption of scalable practices in using technology to enhance the teaching and learning of local curriculum aligned with the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks. Districts may apply for up to a total of \$35 per student within four years to develop a four-year plan to use technology, particularly the Internet, to align classroom instruction with local and state curriculum standards. This is a competitive grant program. Applicants that are not selected in the first year will have an opportunity to re-apply in subsequent years. School districts will receive the full \$35 per student grant in subsequent years if they re-apply and meet the criteria set by the program.

To assist you with the grant applications, we are conducting three technical assistance workshops across the state. They will be held on November 29 at the Minuteman Technical Regional High School, November 30 at the Millis Middle School, and December 8 at the Hampshire Educational Collaborative. Please contact Baiba Ozols at 781-338-6831 or email her at bozols@doe.mass.edu for directions and details regarding these workshops.

Enclosed is a grant application packet with information. I am committed to ensuring that the Department provides support and assistance so that you can take advantage of these grant opportunities to advance education reform.

Sincerely,

David P. Driscoll
Commissioner of Education



- > [Finance/Grants](#)
- > [Recent Updates](#)
- > [Accounting & Auditing](#)
- > [Chapter 70 Program \(Foundation Budget\)](#)
- > [Charter Schools](#)
- > [DOE Budget](#)
- > [Federal Renovation Program](#)
- > [Grants: Information](#)
- > [Nutrition Programs \(School Lunch\)](#)
- > [Per Pupil Expenditure Reports](#)
- > [School Building Assistance](#)
- > [School Choice](#)
- > [School Finance Regulations](#)
- > [Special Education](#)
- > [Statistical Comparisons](#)
- > [Transportation](#)
- > [Vocational Education](#)
- > [Key Contacts](#)
- > [Links](#)

Grants and Other Financial Assistance Programs: FY2001

Technology Literacy Challenge Grant 5: Project MEET School Sites (Fund Code: 613B)

Purpose:

The purpose of this grant program is to provide funding to selected school districts to become Project MEET School Sites. Project MEET is a federally funded technology professional development project that aims to improve student learning consistent with the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks and the Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System (MCAS). It uses a three-tiered model of teaching, support, and policy to create systemic change in technology professional development. In particular, the grant provides 2 years of funding for teacher training, starting with summer institutes in 2001, for teachers and "Technology Professional Development" specialists (TPD specialists) and for on-going training for the TPD specialist at each Project MEET school. (See attached description of Project MEET.)

Priorities:

Priority will be given to school districts that:

- have a strong school-based team, consisting of 5 to 7 certified educators, with demonstrated experience using technology in their classes, ready to participate in all Project MEET activities. This commitment means that all team members will participate in a 5-day Teacher Summer Institute and will meet monthly to design, develop, and implement good models of teaching with technology based on the standards of the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks;
- have made a commitment to support the TPD specialist who is a member of the team. This commitment means that 50% of the TPD specialist's job is to focus on supporting members of the Project MEET school-based team and working with other teachers to design, develop, and implement good models of teaching with technology based on the standards of the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks. This person will participate in:
 - a 5-day TPD specialist institute starting June 25, 2001;
 - a 5-day teacher summer institute with his/her school-based team;
 - 2 days per month in additional professional development activities during the 2001/2002

	<p>school year; and</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a week to provide professional development support to new Project MEET participants or their colleagues in their districts during the summer of 2002. • have a firm commitment from administrators, including the district's superintendent, curriculum director, professional development director, special education director, library/media director, and principal of the school to participate in Project MEET activities and other state leadership initiatives (e.g. the Massachusetts Technology Leadership Consortium (MA-TLC) Program funded by the Gates Foundation, etc.). At a minimum, these administrators will attend one leadership forum in FY2001 and two additional forums in FY2002 sponsored by Project MEET. In addition, principals will attend one day of the TPD summer institute and one day of the teacher summer institute to work with their teams; • have ALIGNED its proposal to the district's professional development plan, Local Technology Plan Benchmark Standards, and local and state technology initiatives (e.g. Lighthouse, CLASP/VES, etc.); and • have a commitment to maintain and continue the work beyond the grant funding. <p>In addition, priority will be given to projects from school districts that have a greater percentage of disadvantaged students than the state average.</p>
Eligibility:	School districts must have updated their technology plans online in order to apply for the funding. Applicants must consult with appropriate private school officials to provide an opportunity for staff and personnel to participate on an equitable basis in this program.
Funding:	Approximately \$675,000 will be awarded for this two-year grant program. Up to 15 grants will be awarded. Each grant award is up to \$15,000 for Year 1 activities and \$30,000 as a continuation grant for Year 2 activities.
Fund Use:	<p>Funding for the first year may be used for instructional materials and resources, travel, and substitutes to support project activities through August 2000. Funds may be used for stipends for teachers to develop curriculum but may not be used as stipends to attend the free summer institutes sponsored by Project MEET. Funds may also be used to purchase hardware and software if they are related to implementing Project MEET activities. In year 2, funding may be used to complement the salary of the TPD specialist.</p> <p>For this application, please identify expenditures for Year 1 only when you complete Part II -Line Item Budget A and Project Expenditures B. If selected the district will be asked to complete a continuation grant application in June 2000. Year 2 will take place from 9/1/2001 to 8/31/2002.</p>
Project Duration:	Approval - 8/31/2001 for Year 1

Contact:	For scoring rubric or question contact Joan Ciampa at jciampa@doe.mass.edu
Phone Number:	(781) 338-6826
Due Date:	Friday, December 22, 2000
Forms Required:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Application Cover Page: WORD PDF 2. District & School Commitment Form: WORD PDF 3. Standard Application Signature Page: WORD PDF 4. Consolidated Budget: WORD PDF 5. Budget Detail Page: WORD PDF

PART III - REQUIRED PROGRAM INFORMATION

1. Using no more than five pages, please respond to the following:
 - Describe how your school/district will use the school-based team and the TPD specialist to support technology professional development and good models of teaching with technology in your school/district.
 - Describe how your school and district leaders will support the school-based team and the TPD specialist.
 - Describe how this program will ALIGN with the district's professional development plan, Local Technology Plan Benchmark Standards, and local and state technology initiatives (e.g. Lighthouse, VES/CLASP, etc.).
 - Describe how the district will sustain the program after funding ends.
 - Describe anticipated budget expenditures as they relate to grant activities, include any matching funds or additional resources that the district intends to use for these purposes.
2. To demonstrate that the school and district are committed to this project, please complete the commitment form. [[WORD](#) | [PDF](#)]

PROJECT MEET: MASSACHUSETTS EMPOWERING EDUCATORS WITH TECHNOLOGY

Project MEET (Massachusetts Empowering Educators with Technology) is a five-year (1998-2003) \$10 million program, funded by the U.S Department of Education through a Technology Innovation Challenge Grant. This is a technology professional development project aimed at improving all student learning through the use of good models of teaching. The Project emphasizes the use of online technology for teaching and learning, bringing to bear the best practices and most creative thinking across the Commonwealth and the nation.

Project MEET includes three main components: Teaching, Support, and Policy. The interdependence of these components creates an environment for a successful professional development model.

1. Teaching

Project MEET offers professional development for teachers through summer institutes. The Teacher Summer Institute is a required one-week institute designed for school-based teams of teachers. Teacher teams will design and develop an instructional unit ALIGNED to district curriculum guidelines and the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks. They will use online tools and the

Internet for standards-based curriculum development, teacher and student research, project-based instruction, and publication of teacher and student work. Teachers will meet throughout the year with the Technology Professional Development (TPD) Specialist to continue the work started during the summer institute. The WGBH Teacher Center provides the services for the Teacher Summer Institute.

Project MEET will offer 4 Teacher Summer Institutes in the summer of 2001. Teachers should come to the institute with basic technology literacy skills. The institutes will be held on:

- July 9 - 13, 2001 Springfield Professional Development Center
- July 16 - 20, 2001 Springfield Professional Development Center
- August 6 - 10, 2001 Bridgewater State College
- August 13 - 17, 2001 Bridgewater State College

2. Support

Each school-based team will consist of one Technology Professional Development (TPD) specialist, who will participate in a 14-month training program to develop the leadership, curriculum integration, and planning skills needed to support their fellow teachers and to nurture technology programs in their schools and districts. These skills will enable them to understand and use models of technology professional development that support school reform and ALIGN to the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks. Topics include principles of curriculum development, universal design, and effective technology integration, co-teaching, coaching, and effective workshop skills. These topics are intended to meet the varied backgrounds, skills, and school environment of TPDs. The services for this part of the project will be provided by TERC.

The TPD 14-month training program includes the following activities.

- 1 week TPD Summer Institute: June 25 - 29, 2001 (Kasparian Center in Springfield)
- 1 week Teacher Summer Institute (with your team): Summer, 2001 (see dates above at the Kasparian Center in Springfield or Bridgewater State College)
- 2 days per month: Seminar Day and Site Based Consultation during 2001/2002
- 1 week of providing professional development to new Project MEET participants or to colleagues in local district during the summer of 2002.

3. Policy

The goals of the Project MEET policy strand are to:

- facilitate discussion among district leaders and other people to identify policies which enable or obstruct technology-oriented professional development and the integration of technology into classroom practice;
- serve as a conduit to bring ideas to Project MEET districts and to spread information about best practice technology-supportive policies from those districts to other educators and decision-makers; and
- help district leaders identify the actions needed for Project MEET to have the maximum value in their districts and statewide.

Superintendents and principals are urged to join their school teams in a number of Project MEET events. Principals are requested to participate in a one-day event at the TPD Summer Institute and again at the Teacher Summer Institute. Superintendents, principals, and other administrators are also requested to participate at three statewide events: the kick-off event in the spring of 2001, the mid-year event in early January 2002, and the year-end event in the spring of 2002.

It is recommended that administrators participate in the following services provided by Mass Networks and other statewide initiatives. They will include the following activities.

- Massachusetts Technology Leadership Consortium (MA-TLC) Program supported by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation
- Technology & Curriculum Integration Leadership Program (TCI-LP) sponsored by Mass Networks and free for Project MEET leadership teams
- Massachusetts Superintendents' Technology Leadership Conference
- CLASP/VES Online - spring 2001, fall 2001 and winter 2002 free for Project MEET leadership teams

CAST, Inc. and the Institute for Community Inclusion at Children's Hospital work with the other partners to provide information and training about universal design and assistive technology in order to accommodate the needs of all learners. Services provided by Project MEET are free to all Project MEET participating schools selected through the Technology Literacy Challenge Grant 5: Project MEET School Sites (Fund Code: 613)

For more information on Project MEET contact:

Joan Ciampa 781-338-6826, or email jciampa@doe.mass.edu, or go to

Project MEET website: www.doe.mass.edu/edtech/teacher/projectmeet

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- > [Recent Updates](#)
- > [Accounting & Auditing](#)
- > [Chapter 70 Program \(Foundation Budget\)](#)
- > [Charter Schools](#)
- > [DOE Budget](#)
- > [Federal Renovation Program](#)
- > [Grants: Information](#)
- > [Nutrition Programs \(School Lunch\)](#)
- > [Per Pupil Expenditure Reports](#)
- > [School Building Assistance](#)
- > [School Choice](#)
- > [School Finance Regulations](#)
- > [Special Education](#)
- > [Statistical Comparisons](#)
- > [Transportation](#)
- > [Vocational Education](#)
- > [Key Contacts](#)
- > [Links](#)

Grants and Other Financial Assistance Programs: FY2001

Teaching State Standards with Technology (TSST) (Fund Code: 617)

Purpose:	The purpose of this multi-year competitive grant program is to provide matching grants to school districts/charter schools to support district adoption of scalable practices in using technology to improve student achievement on curriculum ALIGNED with the Massachusetts standards. Also, this program will support school districts whose technology plans meet the Department's Benchmark Standards by 2003 in the areas of student to computer ratio, classroom access to the Internet, availability of user support, administrative systems, and out of school access.
Priorities:	<p>Priority will be given to those proposals in which the district submits a four-year plan that includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the use of technology, particularly the Internet, that will scale to provide access to the majority of educators and students at a sustainable cost to the district; • explicit, concrete, and practical strategies to use the technology to ALIGN classroom instruction with state and district curriculum standards; • concrete and sustainable professional development activities on the use of technology to link classroom instruction with state and district curriculum standards that will reach the majority of educators in the district; • full commitment from the superintendent, administrators (curriculum, technology, media, library, etc.), principals, teachers, and other staff to support and implement the plan; • a detailed schedule with an explanation on how it is progressing towards meeting the Department's "Local Technology Plan Benchmark Standards by 2003" in the areas of student to computer ratio, classroom access to the Internet, availability of user support, administrative systems, and out of school access; • a realistic budget schedule that is spread out over several years that will support program activities in the four-year plan; and • a well-designed collaborative plan with other districts if it has a small student enrollment.

Eligibility:	<p>School districts must have updated their technology plans online in order to apply for the funding. In subsequent years, to be eligible to apply for continuation funding, districts must complete and update their technology plans online annually and show progress in meeting the Local Technology Plan Benchmark Standards set by the Department.</p> <p>School districts must provide 3:1 matching funds for each year of the program.</p>
Funding:	<p>Approximately \$35 million will be awarded for this program with the following budgeted tentatively for each year:</p> <p style="text-align: center;">2001-2002 - \$ 8 million 2002-2003 - \$ 8 million 2003-2004 - \$ 9 million 2004-2005 - \$10 million</p> <p>Eligible districts/charter schools may apply up to a total of \$35 per student within the four years based on the FY 2000 student enrollment count to implement its plan. A district may apply to receive funding in different configurations within the four years. However, it is highly recommended that there be a realistic schedule that is compatible with the state's appropriation (i.e. spread out over several years, see Appendix A).</p> <p>Applicants that are not selected in the first year will have an opportunity to re-apply in subsequent years. School districts will receive the full \$35 per student grant in subsequent years if they re-apply and meet the criteria set by the program.</p> <p>Small districts are encouraged to collaborate with other school districts to pool their resources to develop and implement a unified plan. Collaborating districts will receive an additional 5% of their total funding for a well-designed and cooperative plan.</p>
Fund Use:	<p>Acceptable expenditures include payment for consultants, teacher substitutes for professional development, project coordination, curriculum materials and supplies, and travel to workshops. Funds can be used to purchase hardware and software if they are related to implementing the grant. Consultant fees may be no more than \$100/hour or \$500/day; project coordination may be no more than 10% of the total grant. Grant funds may not be used for the purchase of food, meals, space, out-of-state travel, and conference registrations. All anticipated costs must be outlined in the detailed budget expenditure section (Part IIB) of the application. In addition, applicants must provide a budget narrative that gives further information about how funds will be used.</p>
Project Duration:	7/1/2001 - 6/30/2002 for year 1
Contact:	For a scoring rubric or questions: Connie Louie(clouie@doe.mass.edu)

Phone Number:	(781) 338-6865
Due Date:	Wednesday, February 28, 2001
Forms Required	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Application Cover Page: WORD PDF 2. Standard Application Signature Page: WORD PDF 3. Consolidated Budget: WORD PDF 4. Budget Detail Page: WORD PDF

PART III - REQUIRED PROGRAM INFORMATION

Each applicant must submit a detailed four-year plan using scalable technology to increase student achievement on curriculum ALIGNED with the Massachusetts standards. If several districts are pooling their resources to submit a consolidated four-year plan, they must submit Schedule C (Statement of Participation and Support). The plan must include the following components.

1. Describe what technology will be used, how it will scale to provide access for the majority of educators and students at a sustainable cost to the district. Provide a detailed description for technology accessibility for each year, linking it with the Local Technology Plan Benchmark Standards.
2. Describe how the technology will be used to ALIGN classroom instruction with state and district curriculum standards. Provide a detailed description identifying milestones and a tentative timetable of reaching the milestones for activities that ALIGN local curriculum with the state's learning standards.
3. Describe in detail how the district(s) will provide sustained professional development on the use of technology to ALIGN classroom instruction with state and district curriculum standards that will reach the majority of educators in the district(s). Identify the milestones and include a tentative timetable of reaching the milestones during the four years. Provide the name(s) of the individual(s) and/or group(s) (in-house and/or consultants) with whom the district(s) intends to work to provide the professional development activities. Describe their qualifications, types of services, and experience in using the proposed technology to increase student achievement on curriculum ALIGNED with the state and district standards.
4. Submit a commitment letter from the superintendent(s) to indicate the staff who will implement the plan. Provide their names, email addresses, job titles and schools. Include administrators (curriculum, technology, media library, etc.), principals, teachers, and other support staff.
5. Provide a detailed schedule with an explanation on how the district(s) is progressing towards meeting the Department's "Local Technology Plan Benchmark Standards by 2003" in the areas of student to computer ratio, classroom access to the Internet, availability of user support, administrative systems, and out of school access.
6. Describe in detail each year's budget expenditures as they relate to program activities, referencing each line item in the budget and providing justification. Also describe in detail how the applicant provides 3:1 matching fund for each year of the program. Demonstrate how the matching fund will create the conditions recommended by the state's Benchmark Standards to support and implement the four-year plan.

[Appendix A](#)

An eligible district/charter school may apply for up to a total of \$35 per student within

the four years based on the FY2000 student enrollment count. The district may apply to receive funding in different configurations within the four years. Based on the tentative budget for each year, below is a [proposed schedule](#) for applicants.

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Advanced Placement Examination Fee Subsidy

Memorandum

To: Advanced Placement Coordinators and Guidance Counselors

From: David P. Driscoll, Commissioner of Education

Date: November 1, 2000

For the third consecutive year, the Federal Government has awarded Massachusetts grant monies through the Advanced Placement Incentive Program (formerly, the Advanced Placement Fee Reduction Program). The purpose of these monies is to reduce the cost of an Advanced Placement Examination for income eligible public high school students enrolled in Advanced Placement courses.

Because Federal funding for the May 2001 round of Advanced Placement testing has been substantially increased, the cost of an Advanced Placement examination for income eligible students has been reduced from \$77 to \$15. In situations of severe hardship, the cost has been reduced to \$0.

High school students may be reluctant to apply for this assistance because it requires providing documentation of their family's financial status; therefore, it is important that you assure your students that all family income information will remain confidential. Consequently, you will need to maintain a secure file to prevent such information from leaving the guidance office. A sample memo to be used in the secure file which has the documentation of a student's income eligibility (e.g., family's 1999 Form 1040 Income Tax Return) is attached.

Student eligibility for the Advanced Placement Fee Reduction Program is 150% of poverty as defined by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS). Please note that the HHS definition of poverty is more inclusive than the poverty guidelines for Free or Reduced Lunch established by the Department of Agriculture. On the following page is the chart you should use to determine a student's eligibility.

Later this school year, the Educational Testing Service (the College Board) will send you the form to order the Advanced Placement exams for your students. That form will also include instructions on how to order the Advanced Placement exams at a reduced fee for your income eligible students.

In the meantime, if you have any questions, please contact Richard Salus at (781) 338-6252 or by e-mail at: rsalus@doe.mass.edu

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The U.S. Department of Education Advanced Placement Incentive Program

2000-2001 Income Eligibility Guidelines

Size of Family Unit	Family Income
1	\$12,525
2	\$16,875
3	\$21,225
4	\$25,575
5	\$29,925
6	\$34,275
7	\$38,625
8	\$42,975

For family units with more than 8 members, add \$4,350 for each additional family member.

The figures shown under family income represent amounts equal to 150% of the poverty guidelines as established by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. The poverty guidelines were published for the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services in the Federal Register, Vol. 65, No. 31, February 15, 2000, pages 7555-7557.

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Outdoor Classroom Development Funding Program

**Internet Site Address - <http://www.comm-pass.com>
Select Environmental Services**

For more information call Melissa Griffiths, 617-626-1114.

The Executive Office of Environmental Affairs (EOEA) announces the 2000-2001 Outdoor Classroom Program. This funding opportunity is designed to support efforts at the Commonwealth's schools and public spaces to utilize the nearby outdoor natural environment to teach students the principles and ethics of environmental protection.

This program will provide resources to teachers, parents and school officials to utilize natural areas nearby the school as an environmental teaching resource.

Through the development of guided trails, site restoration, activities, biological inventories and outdoor curriculum development, teachers can better utilize the natural environment, however limited, that lies nearby their school. By developing these natural classroom environments, the teaching of environmental education and ethics can be greatly enhanced.

Individual contracts will be awarded \$2,500 on a competitive basis. Funding available from now to January 31st, 2001 on a monthly rolling basis. Please contact Melissa Griffiths at 617-626-1114 for more information.

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Newsletter Announcement

2001 Secretary's Award For Excellence in Environmental Education

In recognition of Earth Day, April 22, 2000, the Secretary of Environmental Affairs, Bob Durand, and the Secretary's Advisory Group on Environmental Education (SAGEE), in cooperation with the Massachusetts Department of Education, will honor individual schools, teachers, and students across the Commonwealth who have distinguished themselves in environmental education efforts at an award ceremony at the State House.

Nominations are currently being solicited. **Applications are encouraged from teachers, students or classrooms, which have planned, designed and/or implemented environmental education programs for grades K-12.** Applications for Higher Education are eligible for certificates of honor.

The **deadline for nominations is Monday, February 26 at 4 p.m.** For more information or to receive an application, please contact:

Melissa Griffiths
Executive Office of Environmental Affairs
251 Causeway Street, 9th Floor
Boston, MA 02114
617.626.1114
Fax- 617.626.1180
Email- melissa.griffiths@state.ma.us

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