



**David P. Driscoll**  
Commissioner of Education

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## Commissioner's Update

March 5, 2003

Dear Superintendents, and Leaders of Charter Schools and Collaboratives:

### Retest Results

The results of the December MCAS retest show that 90 percent of the students in the Class of 2003 have met the state standard in English and mathematics. This is a great accomplishment, and I commend you, your principals and teachers, the students and their parents for all of the hard work that went into it.

While we celebrate the good news, we must not give up on the students who have not yet met the standard, and they should not give up on themselves. Every student who is willing to put in the effort will have the opportunity to get extra help and earn a diploma. Several pathways are available for students to strengthen their knowledge and skills in English and mathematics and earn a diploma. I have posted a news release along with a Q & A about the support services and other educational opportunities at [www.doe.mass.edu/news.asp](http://www.doe.mass.edu/news.asp). An accompanying informational flyer should be distributed to guidance counselors, students and parents.

I urge you to share this information with your school communities and to reach out to the students who need our help. Please encourage students to stay in school and take advantage of the educational assistance that is available for them.

### Fall 2002 Retest Data Questions

The Department has received questions from some school superintendents about possible discrepancies in the state and local data on the number of students who have met the state standard and earned the competency determination. We welcome the opportunity to correct any errors. When you review the data for your school district, please note that the district report includes students whom the district is educating in day or residential special education programs and educational collaboratives as well as students who take the MCAS alternate assessment. This may explain some apparent discrepancies.

### MCAS Performance Appeals

If you intend to submit MCAS performance appeals you may do so at any time throughout the year. If you are awaiting answers on appeals already submitted, I will be notifying you of my decisions early in the week of March 17. For appeals you plan to file this spring, I will be making additional determinations in mid-April and mid-May. Regarding portfolio appeals for students in the Class of 2003, reviewing portfolios requires a lengthy and intensive evaluation by trained teachers. Please submit portfolios by March 14 if you wish to have decisions on the portfolio appeals by the end of April.

### NCLB Report Cards: To Be Released during the Week of April 7, 2003

A key provision of the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 is that all states and school districts in receipt of Title I assistance must publish and send home school and district "report cards" to parents. Workshops on report card preparation were held last month with additional training sessions offered during the week of March 3rd for school principals. Districts and schools will be using the month of March to enter the appropriate information into report card templates prepared by the Department. In order to avoid confusion about this new initiative required by federal law, we ask all schools and districts to release the report cards to parents and the public during the week of April 7, 2003.

## **Question 2: Proposed Regulations on English Language Learner Programs**

Question 2 is the new Massachusetts law governing the education of students who are English learners. On February 25, the Board of Education voted to seek public comment on proposed Regulations on English Language Learner Programs under Question 2. These regulations would replace the current regulations on transitional bilingual education. In addition to inviting comments on the proposed regulations (603 CMR 14.01 through 14.05), the Board invites suggestions for an additional section to be promulgated as 603 CMR 14.06, which would address Section 6 of Question 2, entitled "Legal Standing and Parental Enforcement." Specifically, the Board intends to adopt a regulation specifying the conditions and procedures under which parents and guardians may sue for enforcement under Question 2, and welcomes suggestions on that issue. To review and respond to the proposed regulations, please go to [www.doe.mass.edu/lawregs/](http://www.doe.mass.edu/lawregs/). The deadline for comments is Friday, April 4, 2003.

Additionally, we are soliciting public comment on proposed amendments to 603 CMR 7.00, *Regulations for Educator Licensure and Preparation Program Approval*. These proposed amendments will lay a stronger foundation for preparing teachers to teach both English language skills and subject matter to students whose first language is not English. The proposed amendments and a comment form are available at [www.doe.mass.edu/lawsregs/](http://www.doe.mass.edu/lawsregs/) or 781-338-3271. Written comments may be sent to Judy Winters, Massachusetts Department of Education, 350 Main Street, Malden, MA 02148 or [2003LicensureRevisions@doe.mass.edu](mailto:2003LicensureRevisions@doe.mass.edu); or by fax to 781-338-3317. The deadline for submission of public comment is Monday, March 31, 2003. The Board is expected to vote on both of these sets of regulations at its regular meeting on April 29, 2003.

## **Governor's FY 04 Budget and Chapter 70**

For updates on the FY04 budget process and Chapter 70 information, please see <http://finance1.doe.mass.edu/>.

### **Educator Licensure: Customer Service**

The Department's Office of Academic Standards and Educator Licensure is taking steps to provide a higher level of customer service for educators seeking information about obtaining and renewing licenses:

#### **Online Applications and Help**

Educators can find the answers to many questions about educator tests (MTEL) as well as to questions about applying for or renewing licenses at [www.doe.mass.edu/educators/](http://www.doe.mass.edu/educators/). In most cases, this is the most efficient way to find out about licensure. In addition to applying online, educators can check the status of an individual application, review letters that have been sent to them from the Department, and determine the requirements for particular license areas. Using this web site, superintendents and human resource directors can also obtain licensure information for all educators in their districts and apply for waivers.

#### **Phone Service**

Beginning on Monday, March 31, educators will also be able to get information over the phone on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays from 2:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. by calling 781-338-6600. Superintendents may continue to call the Commissioner's hotline, 781-338-3065, for licensure assistance.

#### **Walk-In Service**

Educators will be assisted in person from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Monday through Friday at the Educator Licensure Service Office on the third floor of the Department of Education, 350 Main Street in Malden.

## Email Service

The following electronic mailboxes have been set up, effective March 3:  
Massachusetts Test for Educator Licensure (MTEL): [testhelp@doe.mass.edu](mailto:testhelp@doe.mass.edu)  
Licensure: [licensurehelp@doe.mass.edu](mailto:licensurehelp@doe.mass.edu). Technical help for logging into the Educator Licensure and Recruitment (ELAR) system: [loginhelp@doe.mass.edu](mailto:loginhelp@doe.mass.edu)  
License renewal: [licenser renewal@doe.mass.edu](mailto:licenser renewal@doe.mass.edu)  
Adult Basic Educator voluntary licenses: [licenseabe@doe.mass.edu](mailto:licenseabe@doe.mass.edu)  
Vocational educator licenses: [licensevocational@doe.mass.edu](mailto:licensevocational@doe.mass.edu)  
License revocation: [license revocation@doe.mass.edu](mailto:license revocation@doe.mass.edu)  
Private proprietary schools: [proprietaryschools@doe.mass.edu](mailto:proprietaryschools@doe.mass.edu)

## Presentations

On a limited basis, representatives from the Office of Academic Standards and Educator Licensure will be available to speak to groups of educators about licensure issues. Please contact Marion Gillon, 781-338-6624, or [mgillon@doe.mass.edu](mailto:mgillon@doe.mass.edu), approximately one month in advance of your proposed meeting.

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Here are 6 items recently posted:

1. Nominations for Distinguished Secondary Educators



2. Public Comment on Proposed Amendments to 603 CMR 7.00, Regulations for Educator Licensure and Preparation Program Approval



3. Public Comment on Proposed Amendments to 603 CMR 14.00, English Language Learner Program Regulations



4. Invitation to Conferences for Aspiring Teacher Leaders



5. Compass Schools Host On-Site Events



6. Virtual Education Space (VES) Notice of Workshops



All the best, and

Sincerely,

David P. Driscoll  
Commissioner of Education



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## Educator Recognition Programs

### Distinguished Secondary Educators

To: Superintendents, Principals, Teachers and Other Interested Parties


From: David P. Driscoll, Commissioner of Education

Date: March 2003

The Department of Education would like to identify distinguished secondary (6-12) teachers and principals throughout the Commonwealth. These educators may be considered for membership on advisory boards and task forces, as well as candidates for special recognition programs.

We are fortunate to have a rich base of veteran educators represented in our current talent pool, who have been and continue to be a valuable resource. What is particularly lacking at this time is representation from educators relatively new to the profession who demonstrate unusual instructional ability. Such educators exhibit strong potential for professional leadership and inspiring presence that impacts students, colleagues, and the community.

Please identify one to three educators whom you would consider a candidate. I encourage you to recommend educators who are outstanding but have not received recognition, as well as those who have previously received recognition (e.g. Teacher of the Year, Christa McAuliffe Fellows, Presidential Award winners, Principal of the Year). Please recommend educators in their early to mid careers (5-18 years for teachers and first 10 years as an administrator for principals).

Please provide CONFIDENTIAL, specific information about your candidate(s) on the [enclosed form](#)  (3 pages). Additionally, please submit a one-page letter with this form that addresses how the candidate meets the criteria mentioned in the attached recommendation form. Completed forms must be sent by **Friday, May 2, 2003**, to the Massachusetts Department of Education, Attn. Deborah J. Walker, 350 Main Street, Malden, MA 02148.

If you prefer, you may fax this information to 781-338-3396, Attn. Deborah Walker, or email [djwalker@doe.mass.edu](mailto:djwalker@doe.mass.edu).

I urge you to take the time to recommend candidates so educators in your district can be considered for these programs.

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## Education Laws and Regulations

### Notice of Public Comment Proposed Amendment to 603 CMR 7.00

Pursuant to its authority under M.G.L. c. 69, § 1B and c. 71, § 38G, and in accordance with the Administrative Procedure Act, M.G.L. c.30A, the Massachusetts Board of Education is soliciting public comment on proposed amendments to 603 CMR 7.00, Regulations for Educator Licensure and Preparation Program Approval.

The proposed amendments will respond to the requirements of Ballot Question 2, which was approved by Massachusetts voters in November 2002. The proposed amendments to the licensing regulations will lay a stronger foundation for preparing teachers to teach both English language skills and subject matter to students whose first language is not English.

Copies of the [proposed amendments](#) and a [comment form](#) are available on the Department's website or by calling 781-338-3271. Written comments on the proposed amendments may be submitted to Judy Winters, Massachusetts Department of Education, 350 Main Street, Malden, MA 02148; by e-mail to [2003LicensureRevisions@doe.mass.edu](mailto:2003LicensureRevisions@doe.mass.edu); or by fax to 781-338-3317. The deadline for submission of public comment is **Monday, March 31, 2003**. The Board is expected to vote on the proposed amendments at its regular monthly meeting scheduled for April 29, 2003.

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**Proposed Amendments to the  
Regulations for Educator Licensure and Preparation Program Approval  
603 CMR 7.00  
2/27/03**

On February 25, 2003, the Board of Education voted to disseminate the following proposed amendments to the licensing regulations for public comment.

The deadline for submission of public comment is **Monday, March 31, 2003**.

Board of Education final action anticipated at its April 29, 2003 meeting.

New text is indicated in **bold** type and deleted text has been ~~struck out~~.

1. The following license will replace the current English as a Second Language teacher license in 603 CMR 7.06 (10). The endorsement will replace the current Transitional Bilingual Education specialist license, which will be deleted from 603 CMR 7.07 (4):

**(10)English Language Learners (Levels: PreK-6; 5-12)**

**(a) The following items will be assessed on a subject matter knowledge test:**

1. **Theory and research in second language acquisition at different age levels**
2. **Linguistics (phonology, morphology, syntax, semantics, and pragmatics) of English as well as of other languages and language variations**
3. **Theories and sheltered strategies for developing English language skills in speaking, reading, and writing for English language learners in bilingual or multilingual classrooms from the primary grades on**
4. **Strategies for teaching sheltered subject matter and for assessing student learning**
5. **English language assessment procedures and instruments: selection, administration, and interpretation**
6. **Reading theory, research, and practice in general classrooms**
  - a. **Knowledge of the significant theories, practices, and programs for developing reading skills and reading comprehension**
  - b. **Phonemic awareness and phonics: principles, knowledge, and instructional practices**
  - c. **Diagnosis and assessment of reading skills using standardized, criterion-referenced, and informal assessment instruments**
  - d. **Development of a listening, speaking, and reading vocabulary**
  - e. **Writing process and formal elements of writing**
  - f. **Approaches and practices for developing skill in using writing tools**
  - g. **Diagnosis and assessment of reading skills using standardized, criterion-referenced, and informal assessment instruments**
7. **Knowledge of the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks for mathematics, science, English language arts, and history and social science at the appropriate level**
8. **Oral/aural fluency in English at a level of proficiency set by the Board**

**(b) The following shall be included in an approved program but will not be addressed on the subject matter test: evidence of knowledge or study of a language other than English**

**(c) For PreK-6, a passing score on the General Curriculum test**

**(d) For an endorsement in Transitional Bilingual Learning (Levels: PreK-6; 5-12):**

1. **For PreK-6:**
  - a. **Teacher of English Language Learners license for PreK-6**

- b. **Passing score on a test of reading, writing, speaking, and listening skills in a language other than English at a level of proficiency set by the Board, or on the subject matter test for the PreK-6 Foreign Language license**

2. **For 5-12:**

- a. **Teaching license in a core academic subject for 5-12**
- b. **Teacher of English Language Learners license for 5-12**
- c. **Passing score on a test of reading, writing, speaking, and listening skills in a language other than English at a level of proficiency set by the Board**

2. The following changes will be made to the Professional Standards for Teachers, 603 CMR 7.08:

(2) Standards for All Teachers Except Library and Speech, Language, and Hearing Disorders Teachers

- (a), 2. Draws on results of formal and informal assessments as well as knowledge of human development to identify teaching strategies and learning activities appropriate to the specific discipline, age, **level of English language proficiency**, and range of cognitive levels being taught.
  
- (b), 2. Communicates high standards and expectations when carrying out the lesson:
  - e. **Employs appropriate sheltered English or subject matter strategies for English learners.**
  - ef. Uses questioning...
  - fg. Uses instructional technology...

(3) Standards for Library Teachers

- (c) Plans and uses the pedagogy appropriate to the specific discipline and to the age, **level of English language proficiency**, and cognitive level of the students in the classroom.

3. 603 CMR 7.04 (4) will be revised as follows to require an English Language Learners teacher to complete a 150-hour practicum or practicum equivalent:

- (e) Teacher, Grades **PreK-6 or PreK-8** 150 hours

**Massachusetts Department of Education**

**Comment and Review Form  
Proposed Amendments to the *Regulations for Educator Licensure and  
Preparation Program Approval* in Massachusetts**

Name and Title of Person Completing this Form: \_\_\_\_\_

Position and/or Discipline: \_\_\_\_\_

School District or Affiliation: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Street

City/Town

State

Zip

Tel #: \_\_\_\_\_ Fax #: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

This Review was Completed by a(n):  Individual  Group (Please specify):

Your Primary Role:

Higher Education (Please specify):

PreK-12 Administrator (Please specify):

Elementary or Middle School Teacher (Please circle grades) PreK K 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8

High School Teacher (Please circle grades) 9 10 11 12

PreK-12 Library Media Specialist (Please specify grades):

Other PreK-12 Educator (Please specify):

Other (Please specify):

Please feel free to add or duplicate pages so that you have enough room for your comments. The edited version of the proposed amendments and this comment form can also be found on our web site at: <http://www.doe.mass.edu>.

**The Department of Education is interested in your feedback and will consider all comments.**

Please mail, email, or fax your response by Monday, March 31, 2003 to:

Judy Winters

Massachusetts Department of Education

350 Main Street, Malden, MA 02148

Email: [2003LicensureRevisions@doe.mass.edu](mailto:2003LicensureRevisions@doe.mass.edu)

Fax: 781-338-3317

***THANK YOU!***

## Overview of Proposed Amendments

On February 25, 2003 the Board voted to send proposed amendments, addressing issues raised by the enactment of Ballot Question 2 in Fall 2002, out for public comment. They are highlighted in the text by “over-striking” (deletions) and “bolding” (new language). These amendments would do the following:

- Create a new Teacher of English Language Learners (TELL) license to replace the current English as a Second Language license.
- Enable candidates to earn an endorsement to the TELL license in order to become qualified as a Teacher of Transitional Bilingual Learning in place of the Transitional Bilingual Education license.
- Amend the Professional Standards for Teachers to include additional language addressing the teaching of students whose first language is not English.
- Specify the number of hours required for the practicum/practicum equivalent for PreK-6 licenses which will include Teacher of English Language Learners.

The deadline for submission of public comment is **Monday, March 31, 2003**. The Board is expected to vote on the proposed amendments at its regular monthly meeting scheduled for April 29, 2003.

*Please use this form to provide your comments on these proposed revisions:*

**Comments:**



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## Education Laws and Regulations

### Notice of Public Comment

#### Proposed Amendment to 603 CMR 14.00

Pursuant to its authority under M.G.L. c. 69, § 1B and c. 71A, as amended by c. 386 of the Acts of 2002, and in accordance with the Administrative Procedure Act, M.G.L. c. 30A, the Massachusetts Board of Education is soliciting public comment on the proposed amendments to 603 CMR 14.00, the Transitional Bilingual Education Regulations. The proposed amendments will rename 603 CMR 14.00, as Education of English Learners Regulations.

The proposed amendments address the requirements of the recently amended M.G.L. c. 71A regarding the provision of education to students who are limited English proficient. Pursuant to the initiative petition known as "Question 2," the voters amended M.G.L. c. 71A to require school districts to provide English language education to limited English proficient students. The proposed 603 CMR 14.00 addresses these new requirements, including school districts' annual obligation to identify and classify limited English proficient students.

In addition to comments on the proposed amendments, the Board invites suggestions for an additional section under 603 CMR 14.00. The additional section would be promulgated as 603 CMR 14.06 and would address Section 6 of the amended c. 71A, entitled "Legal Standing and Parental Enforcement." Specifically, the Board is interested in language for a proposed 603 CMR 14.06 that would specify the conditions and procedures under which parents and guardians may sue for enforcement under Question 2.

Copies of the [proposed amendments](#) are available on the Department's website, or by calling 781-338-3400. Written comments on the proposed amendments may be submitted to Question 2 Comments, Massachusetts Department of Education, 350 Main Street, Malden, MA 02148, or to [www.question2@doe.mass.edu](mailto:www.question2@doe.mass.edu). The deadline for submission of public comment is **Friday, April 4, 2003**. The Board is expected to vote on the proposed amendments at its regular monthly meeting scheduled for April 29, 2003.

**[Public Comment Period for Draft Framework of Benchmarks and Outcomes for English Language Learners in Massachusetts](#)**

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## **PROPOSED AMENDMENT TO TRANSITIONAL BILINGUAL EDUCATION REGULATIONS**

**Released for Public Comment by the Board of Education – February 25, 2003**

**Comments accepted through - April 4, 2003**

**Final action by the Board of Education anticipated - April 29, 2003**

**Proposal to amend 603 CMR 14.00, Transitional Bilingual Education Regulations, and rename 603 CMR 14.00 as Education of English Learners Regulations.**

### **CMR 14.00 Regulations Governing the Education of English Learners**

#### 14.01: Authority, Scope and Purpose

- (1) 603 CMR 14.00 is promulgated by the Board of Education pursuant to M.G.L. c. 69, § 1B, and M.G.L. c. 71A.
- (2) 603 CMR 14.00 applies to publicly funded elementary and secondary education programs, including all Massachusetts public school districts, charter schools, and collaborative education programs.
- (3) The requirements set forth in 603 CMR 14.00 are in addition to, or in some instances clarify or further elaborate, those contained in M.G.L. c. 71A, which governs the provision of education to public school students who are English learners, as that term is defined in M.G.L. c. 71A.

#### 14.02: Identification and Assessment of Students who are English Learners

- (1) Each school district shall establish procedures, as prescribed by the Department of Education, to identify those students who may be English learners and assess their level of English proficiency upon their enrollment in the school district.
- (2) The parent or guardian of any student resident in the school district may request that the school district assess the child's level of English proficiency.
- (3) The district shall place in the student's school record its determination as to whether the student is an English learner and the student's placement in any English learner program.

#### 14.03 Census

- (1) Each school district shall report annually to the Department of Education, the following information as of the last day of the school year for each student who is an English learner:

- (a) the school in which the student is enrolled;
  - (b) the student's grade level;
  - (c) the language in which the student possesses a primary speaking ability; and
  - (d) the type of English learner program in which the district has enrolled the student.
- (2) When reporting information under 603 CMR 14.03(1)(d), the district shall specify whether the English learner is enrolled in a sheltered English immersion program or in one of the programs or services specified in 603 CMR 14.04.

14.04: Placement of Students with Parental Waivers

- (1) A school district shall provide a student who is an English learner with sheltered English immersion instruction and place the student in an English language classroom, as those terms are defined in M.G.L. c. 71A, unless the district has granted the student a waiver in accordance with M.G.L. c. 71A, § 5.
- (2) A school district may place English learners who are granted parental waivers under M.G.L. c. 71A, § 5, in one or a combination of the following programs and services until such time as they are no longer classified as English learners:
- (a) English as a second language services;
  - (b) transitional bilingual education program; or
  - (c) two-way bilingual program.

14.05: English Fluency Requirements for Teachers of English Language Classrooms

A teacher of an English language classroom, as that term is defined in M.G.L. c. 71A, shall demonstrate fluency in English through:

- (a) a written assurance by the district's superintendent that the teacher is fluent in English, in accordance with the Department's guidelines; or
- (b) a test that is accepted by the Commissioner of Education, if the superintendent cannot make such an assurance.

[RESERVED: 14.06 Parental Right of Enforcement]

[This section is reserved for a section that will specify the conditions and procedures under which parents may sue for enforcement of M.G.L. c. 71A, as amended by c. 386 of the Acts of 2002].



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## Commonwealth School Leadership Project

### Leadership Conferences

To: Superintendents, Charter School Leaders, Principals, and Teachers

From: David P. Driscoll, Commissioner of Education

Date: March 5, 2003


I write to invite your participation in three after-school Aspiring Leader events. Last year, the Department sponsored five regional career development days for aspiring school leaders. This April, we plan to sponsor three follow up events designed to introduce prospective administrators to the rewards and challenges of educational leadership and to provide the opportunity to learn more about school leadership from superintendents, principals, and teacher leaders.

The dates of the meetings are: April 7 at the Boxborough Holiday Inn, April 8 at the Mansfield Holiday Inn, and April 9 at the Springfield Marriott, from 3:00 -8:00. Four concurrent sessions will be offered and repeated throughout the afternoon. Discussion topics include:

- Teachers in Leadership Roles;
- The Realities of the Principalship;
- Licensure Regulations and Routes; and,
- Finding the right position.

Superintendents, principals, or their designees are invited to attend along with potential leaders. Potential leaders could be teachers interested in becoming administrators, teachers planning to remain in the classroom but interested in assuming greater leadership roles and responsibilities within the school, or current administrators interested in changing their role within the district. I urge you to notify and encourage representatives from your districts to attend, especially those who attended one of last year's Aspiring Leader meetings.

We are expecting 200 potential leaders at each site, many of whom will be actively seeking a leadership position. If you know you will be hiring, please feel free to share the job postings at the event.

To respond, please fax your response to Deborah Walker or Elizabeth Pauley in the Office of Educator Quality (fax: 781-338-3396). For your convenience, a [faxback sheet](#)  is attached to this letter; please respond by April 1. For more information about the events, participation, or how to share your job posting, please email either [Deborah](#) or [Elizabeth](#).

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## School and District Accountability

### 2002 Commonwealth Compass Schools Host On-site Events

Beginning in February, the 2002 Commonwealth Compass Schools are opening their doors to teams from area schools and districts for two information-sharing events at their schools. The activities range from workshops on using data to guide instructional improvement to seeing programs in action in the classroom. See the Calendar of On-Site Events posted on the DOE Web site for details and contact and registration information: <http://www.doe.mass.edu/ata/compass/2003/events/calendar.html>

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## NEWS SEARCH

**Keyword:****Target:****Dates:**

Past 30 days

Past 90 days

Date Range

Start:

End:



Wednesday, March 05, 2003

## Virtual Education Space (VES) Update

We have reached a number of important milestones with the Virtual Education Space project.

The [Virtual Education Space](#) (VES) is the Commonwealth's educational intranet. It is a free resource for Massachusetts educators and students which provides a secure and personalized portal with a set of online tools and resources designed to support preK-12 standards based education. The primary objective of the VES system is to improve student learning by collaboratively designing and implementing an educational information management system that provides for the effective use and exchange of information among educators and school systems. VES is the system that brings together the Commonwealth's preK-12 stakeholders and enables them to communicate and collaborate in a safe and secure online environment that makes available the tools and information needed to be successful

The VES project has finalized its successful transition into the Department of Education. As part of this transition plan, Collaborative Consulting was awarded a contract to evaluate the VES project with respect to promoting statewide adoption of the VES tools and services. The purpose of the assessment was to establish high level strategies supported by recommendations, and a framework for implementation. That framework is currently being used to assist the VES team to set short and long-term VES project goals.

The Online MCAS Tutorial continues to provide high school students, grades 9-12, with unlimited access to the practice tests and skill building assignments by logging into VES. The programs are designed to assess, enrich and enhance the student's academic strengths and weaknesses in Math and English Language Arts. The tutorial program includes educational resources that have been aligned to state standards and state test objectives to ultimately improve the student's performance on the MCAS exams.

The Department is offering regional training sessions every Monday and Wednesday from March until the end of May to provide an overview of how the VES system can be used in classrooms, schools and districts, and to transfer the skills necessary to administer VES.

I would encourage you to take advantage of the resources and services that VES now provides. Should you have any questions regarding the VES project, please contact Jeff St. Germain at [jstgermain@doe.mass.edu](mailto:jstgermain@doe.mass.edu) or (781)338-3015.

Sincerely,

David P. Driscoll

Commissioner of Education