



David P. Driscoll
Commissioner of Education

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Commissioner's Update

September 5, 2003

Dear Superintendents, and Leaders of Charter Schools and Collaboratives:

I have four announcements and eight items in this letter.

MCAS Results

The statewide [2003 MCAS results](#) released this week show a very impressive picture of improvement by public school students of every ethnic group in all grades and subjects in schools and districts across the Commonwealth. The progress is a direct result of your efforts and your educators' hard work in helping students to learn and achieve at levels higher than ever before. I am encouraged to see that more minority students are passing the grade 10 tests on the first try and I would like to see that rate continue to rise. The path is not easy and I want to commend you for your continuing commitment.

During the week of September 15, you will receive local MCAS results. Included in the materials will be customized letters for the parents and guardians of students in the Classes of 2003 through 2005. These letters that will be accompanying the parent/guardian reports will provide information about options for students who have not yet met the Competency Determination standard. Please distribute these letters to high school principals and ask them to include them with student results.

No Child Left Behind Technical Assistance Workshops This Fall

I invite you and members of your administrative teams to attend one of the [four Fall NCLB Workshops](#) scheduled for September-October. The purpose of these workshops is to provide you with new and updated information on what will be needed to implement the provisions of NCLB in the 2003-2004 school year. The workshops are intended for district leaders who did not participate in the Consolidated Planning Process offered last year, and who need additional information on Titles IA, Titles IIB and D, and Title III.

Registration must be submitted by email or telephone by September 24, 2003. If you have any questions, please contact Barbara Solomon, Title I Administrator at 781-338-6262.

Federal Immigration Procedures for Foreign Students

If you have foreign students attending local high schools under student visa (F-1) status please be advised about the recent changes in federal immigration procedures. School districts must obtain user IDs and passwords for the Student and Exchange Visitor Information System (SEVIS). Additionally, all student information must be entered online. For more information, see the federal government's SEVIS web site at <http://www.bcis.gov/graphics/shared/sevis/index.htm>.

Prudential Spirit of Community Awards

The National Association of Secondary School Principals and Prudential Financial announce that

nominations are being accepted for the 2004 Prudential Spirit of Community Awards honoring young people in grades 5 through 12 for outstanding community service. The deadline for applications is October 31. For details go to www.principals.org/awards/prudential.cfm, or call 1-888-450-9961.

The eight items in this update are:

1. Mandatory Assessments for Limited English Proficient (LEP) Students



2. Registering Students from the Classes of 2003-2006 for the Fall Retest



3. Fall Schedule of MCAS Workshops



4. Supplemental Services Bidders' Conference



5. Statewide History Conference on September 26 Registration



6. National Board Certification Application Subsidies



7. Master Teacher Program for 2003-2004



8. No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Fall Workshops



I hope that your school openings are proceeding smoothly and safely.

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

2003-2004 State-Mandated Assessments for Limited English Proficient Students

To: Superintendents, Principals, and Directors of Charter Schools, Approved Special Education Private Schools, and Educational Collaboratives

From: David P. Driscoll, Commissioner of Education

Date: September 5, 2003

As you know, recently enacted federal and state laws require that we annually assess the English proficiency of all limited English proficient students enrolled in public schools. The purpose of this memorandum is to inform you of assessments that will be administered to LEP students in response to these legal mandates, and to share with you other related activities that will take place during the upcoming school year. [A calendar of testing dates for LEP students is attached](#) for your convenience. Thank you in advance for sharing this memorandum with your faculty and staff, and for your cooperation and support with these very critical initiatives.



Assessments of the English Proficiency of LEP students in 2003-2004

1. Language Assessment Scales-Reading/Writing (LAS-R/W)

All LEP students will be assessed in reading and writing using the Language Assessment Scales (LAS-R/W) published by CTB/McGraw-Hill during the last week of April 2004. More details about the spring 2004 administration will be provided to you later during the school year.

Results of the LAS R/W will be used to measure LEP students' English proficiency and to measure their progress in acquiring English. To do this, we will compare the performance of LEP students tested on the LAS-R/W in spring 2003 to their performance on the LAS R/W in spring 2004. LEP students who are new to your district this fall, and who did not participate in the state-mandated administration of the LAS R/W last spring, must be tested this fall. The results for students tested this fall will be used to evaluate their progress when tested again the last week of April 2004. All newly-enrolled LEP students who do not have LAS R/W scores from spring 2003 must be tested on the LAS R/W (Form A) by **October 31, 2003**.

Ordering LAS R/W Materials for Newly-Enrolled LEP Students

LAS R/W tests are to be purchased by your district directly from CTB McGraw-Hill using the  |  attached order form. Tests will be shipped with administration directions, guidelines for scoring student responses locally, and information on recording student scores for later submission to the Department. Districts should cover the costs associated with the purchase of the fall LAS R/W tests and the scoring of student responses. State funds or federal Title I or Title III funds may be used by districts to cover these costs.

If your district has any newly-enrolled LEP students, please complete the attached order form and submit it to Rachel Riehn at CTB/McGraw-Hill by **Friday, September 29** to order the appropriate test materials.

2. Massachusetts English Language Assessment-Oral (MELA-O)

Districts will be required to use the MELA-O to test all LEP students on their listening and speaking skills in English in April 2004. The Department will offer additional opportunities this fall and winter for educators to be trained to use the MELA-O to evaluate LEP students' listening/speaking

skills. The Department will offer training opportunities to districts based on current capacity to administer the MELA-O and on LEP enrollment within the district. I will announce details about these training opportunities in my next update to Superintendents later this month.

3. Statewide Question Tryout for New Massachusetts English Proficiency Assessment (MEPA) in Reading and Writing

As reported to you last year, the Department has recently launched its initiative to develop a custom English Proficiency Assessment in reading and writing based on the English Language Proficiency Benchmarks and Outcomes for English Language Learners. Many of you have supported this effort by making it possible for members of your faculty to work with the Department of Education on the development of these assessments. As part of the development process, this spring the Department of Education will conduct a statewide question tryout that will be administered to all LEP students in grades 3-12. The question tryout will take place April 12-16, 2004. The new Massachusetts English Proficiency Assessment will be administered for the first time in Fall 2004.

4. Benchmarks and Outcomes for LEP Students

In May 2003, the Massachusetts Board of Education adopted the English Language Proficiency Benchmarks and Outcomes for English Language Learners to support the development of LEP students' English skills. The document serves as a stepping stone to the Massachusetts English Language Arts Curriculum Framework learning standards. Copies of this document will be distributed to districts this month. Meanwhile, it is now available online at <http://www.doe.mass.edu/ell/benchmark.pdf>. Please share this document with all staff members who provide academic instruction to limited English proficient students.

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

Registering Students from the Classes of 2003 - 2006 for the Fall Retest

During the week of September 8, 2003, high school principals will receive a memo providing instructions on how to access and complete the online enrollment survey for the November 2003 retest administration. I encourage you and your high school principals to make contact with all students from the class of 2003 who have not yet met the Competency Determination standard. As the deadline to submit enrollments for the November 2003 retest is September 26, it is essential that these students and out-of-school youth be contacted as soon as possible. Although you will not receive your school and district results until the third week in September, you can use the preliminary test item analysis results that were shipped to you in mid-August to determine which students should be contacted.

Out-of-school youth from the class of 2003 who did not participate in the summer retest are eligible to participate in the November 2003 and/or March 2004 retest at the school they last attended. Those who participated in the summer retest will be eligible to participate in the March 2004 retest. Please notify high school principals that students and out-of-school youth must inform the high school they last attended of their intent to participate in the November retest no later than September 26.

Students in the class of 2004 and 2005 who have not yet earned a scaled score of 220 on the grade 10 mathematics and English language arts tests or retests should be strongly encouraged to participate in the November retest. Also eligible are students in the class of 2006 who took the spring 2003 grade 10 tests, failed either or both of them, and are still in grade 10.

[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

Announcement of Fall 2003 MCAS Workshops

To: Superintendents and Directors of Charter Schools, Educational Collaboratives, Approved Special Education Private Schools, and Institutional Schools

From: David P. Driscoll, Commissioner of Education



Date: September 5, 2003

I invite you and members of your staff to attend one of the fall 2003 MCAS Workshops. The purpose of these workshops is to provide you with new information and answer any questions you may have.

The **morning sessions** are designed for **central office/elementary/middle school teams** that will share the information and materials with district and school staff. Topics that will be addressed include: changes in *School and District Reports*; the 2003-2004 testing schedule; and Accountability reporting.

The **afternoon sessions** will focus on topics of interest at the **high school level**. In addition to addressing the topics listed for the morning sessions, the afternoon workshops will include information on **administering the November retest** and an **update on the MCAS Performance Appeals process**. Superintendents are encouraged to attend along with a team that includes the principal or designee and test coordinator for each high school in the district.

Below is a list of dates, locations, and times for the workshops. Driving directions are linked from each of the locations on the list. Please plan to arrive 30 minutes early for registration.

Enclosed is a  |  **registration form** for these workshops. Registration must be submitted by mail or fax **by September 26, 2003**. You will receive confirmation of your registration by fax within five working days of receipt of the registration form.

Date	Location	Time
October 7	Crowne Plaza, Pittsfield Directions	1:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m. (one workshop for all grade levels)
October 8	Holiday Inn, Holyoke Directions	8:30 a.m. - 11:30 a.m. 1:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.
October 9	Holiday Inn, Worcester Directions	8:30 a.m. - 11:30 a.m. 1:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.
October 14	Sheraton Hotel & Resort, Hyannis Directions	8:30 a.m. - 11:30 a.m. 1:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.
October 15	Wyndham Andover Directions	8:30 a.m. - 11:30 a.m. 1:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.
October 16	Hilton Hotel, Dedham Directions	8:30 a.m. - 11:30 a.m. 1:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.

October 17 Hilton Hotel, Dedham
[Directions](#)

8:30 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.
1:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.

If you have questions, please contact the MCAS Service Center at 1-800-737-5103.

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

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



- > SES Home
- > General Information
- > Approved Provider List
- > Find a Provider
- > For Parents
- > For Districts
- > For Providers
- > Contact Info

Family & Community > Student Support

Tutoring and Mentoring

Supplemental Educational Services

Supplemental Educational Services Announcement

[1\) Two upcoming Bidders' Conferences \(9/23 and 10/16\)](#)

[2\) Three due dates for inclusion in upcoming RFR reading/scoring rounds \(9/19, 10/1, 10/29\).](#)

1) Two upcoming Bidders' Conferences (9/23 and 10/16).

The Department of Education has scheduled two upcoming Bidders' Conferences for Supplemental Educational Services to be held at *the Department of Education, 350 Main Street, 3rd Floor, Malden, Massachusetts.*

Conference times are as follows:

1. **Tuesday, September 23rd - 8:00 a.m. to 10:00 a.m.**
2. **Thursday, October 16th - 2:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.**

At these optional meetings, the Procurement Manager and/or other DOE staff will:

- Give an overview of the procurement and the Supplemental Services program
- Review the RFR documents
- Hear questions from the public regarding the procurement

The DOE staff will offer answers to many of the questions asked by the public. Answers to certain questions may need to be published subsequently on <http://www.comm-pass.com> under RFR #03osere1a. Directions to the Department of Education can be found at www.doe.mass.edu/.

2) Three due dates for inclusion in upcoming RFR reading/scoring rounds (9/19, 10/1, 10/29).

To be included in these rounds, responses must be received at the Department of Education location specified in the RFR by 5:00 P.M. EST on the following dates:

- **Friday, September 19, 2003 for the late September round**
- **Wednesday, October 1, 2003 for the early October round**
- **Wednesday, October 29, 2003 for the early November round**

Responses received after the above noted times and dates will be read and scored in a subsequent round of reading and scoring, the date of which has not yet been scheduled. There is a rolling application and review process, and applications can be submitted at any time and may be read before or in between scheduled reading rounds.



- > Frameworks Home
- > Current Frameworks
- > Order Frameworks
- > Drafts and Updates
- > Supplements
- > Content Institutes
- > Contact Information
- > Frameworks Archives

[Educator Services](#) > [Teaching & Learning](#) > [Curriculum Resources](#) >

Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks

Registration for the History Conference on September 26, 2003

To: Superintendents, Principals, and Grades 5 to 12 U. S. History Teachers

From: David P. Driscoll, Commissioner of Education

Date: August 20, 2003

Please join me at the Massachusetts Department of Education History Conference on Friday, September 26, 2003 from 8:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. at the Centrum in Worcester. [Registration material is now available on our website.](#)

Designed to highlight the new History and Social Science Curriculum Framework, the program will feature an opening talk by Professor Gordon Wood of Brown University, a luncheon talk by Professor Allen Weinstein, and an update on initiatives at the National Endowment for the Humanities by Michael Poliakoff.

Concurrent sessions will be presented by the Massachusetts recipients of the federal Teaching of Traditional American History grants and by staff members of museums and archives such as the John F. Kennedy Library and Museum, the Massachusetts Historical Society, the Commonwealth Museum and State Archives, the Paul Revere House, Boston African-American National Site, Old South Meeting House, Old Sturbridge Village, and the American Antiquarian Society.

The day will be a wonderful opportunity for all of us to join together to build a strong role for history, civics and government, geography, and economics in our schools and to learn about the resources Massachusetts offers for teaching these subjects.

I look forward to seeing you in Worcester on September 26.

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



- › Master Teacher Home
- › 03-04 Master Teacher Program
- › National Board Certification
- › Existing Users: Login In
- › New Users: Create Account
- › Retake Candidates for 02-03

Educator Services › Career Advancement ›

The Master Teacher Program

The National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS)

Application Subsidies for National Board Certification

The Department has received federal funds from the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards to subsidize the \$2,300 application fee for certification. The Department is able to subsidize 131 candidate application fees at \$1,150 each for individuals who meet the National Board application requirements. Please note that the remaining \$1,150 will be the responsibility of the candidate.

I encourage districts to continue supporting the Master Teacher program as well as the National Board certification process at the local level. Your district's NCLB Title II, Part A funds may be used to cover the remainder of the application fee to provide release time for the purpose of candidate support and salary increases for individuals who have completed the certification process.

Individuals who are interested in the subsidies must apply online with the Department at <http://www.doe.mass.edu/eq/mt> and submit their National Board application with a \$300 check made payable to the National Board by 2:00 p.m. on Friday, December 19, 2003 to:

The Department of Education
Attention: Kristin LaMonica
350 Main Street
Malden, Massachusetts 02148

All questions and information about the subsidies should be directed to Kristin LaMonica (781-338-3237 or klamonica@doe.mass.edu).

E-mail this page | Print View



- › Master Teacher Home
- › 03-04 Master Teacher Program
- › National Board Certification
- › Existing Users: Login In
- › New Users: Create Account
- › Retake Candidates for 02-03

Educator Services › Career Advancement ›

The Master Teacher Program

The National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS)

2003-2004 Master Teacher Program

The Department is pleased to support another year of the Master Teacher Program. This year's state budget repealed the Endowment fund that provided the financial resources for the Master Teacher Program as well as other state initiatives. In place of the Endowment, the budget includes a one-time line item that can be used to fund the outstanding financial obligations of these programs in the coming year. Barring a line item in next year's budget or other legislative actions, this will be the final year of the Master Teacher Program.

The Master Teacher Program recognizes individuals who are National Board certified and who choose to mentor by providing a \$5,000 bonus and Master Teacher status. Districts should note that the Department has expanded the mentoring options for the program. In past years, individuals seeking Master Teacher status and the \$5,000 bonus have had three mentoring options that they could pursue: mentoring a beginning (first year) teacher; assuming a leadership role in the district's mentoring program; or participating in a seminar group of three or more National Board candidates.

This year the mentoring options have been expanded to include: mentoring one or more apprentice teachers who are in at least their second year of teaching and who possess an initial license and are pursuing a Professional license; mentoring an apprentice teacher in an initial license district-based licensure; and mentoring candidates for NBPTS certification through a seminar group of two or more candidates. Master Teachers who are not able to select one of the aforementioned mentoring activities due to a lack of opportunity may submit a request to the Department that outlines the alternate mentoring activity in which they would like to participate.

Currently, this year's program is open to all teachers in Massachusetts who received National Board certification prior to September 2003. Candidates who will receive notification about their certification in November will be notified at that time should funds be available to support their participation in the Program.

For additional information about program procedures, deadlines and expanded mentoring options, please refer to the Department's [Master Teacher Program webpage](#).

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David P. Driscoll
 Commissioner of Education



Mark McQuillan
 Deputy Commissioner

No Child Left Behind

Fall NCLB Workshops: Technical Assistance for Districts

Theme: Implementing NCLB Year 2

I. General Assembly: 8:30 AM

A. Progress Report on Statewide Activities

1. Consolidated Planning Initiatives
2. SNIC
3. NCLB Toolkit

B. Fall Initiatives: Overview

1. ELL Proficiency Testing
2. Cycle III Mid-Year Assessment
3. Teacher Quality Data Collection
4. Paraprofessional Assessment

C. C. Looking Ahead: Planning Schedule for 2003-2004 School Year

(Coffee Break)

II. Breakout Sessions: 10:00 AM (to be repeated at 1:00 PM)

Session	Topic	Presenters	Location*
1.	Highly Qualified Teachers, Paraprofessionals and Staffing Data Collection	Holly Grzeskowiak, Rebecca Holmes, Helene Bettencourt	Breakout Room 1
2.	"High Quality" Professional Development and an Update on Science, Mathematics, and Instructional Technology Initiatives under Titles IIB and IID	Connie Louie Barbara Libby	Breakout Room 2
3.	Defining AYP under Cycle III Accountability System	Jim Neary Paula O' Sullivan Robert Lee	Breakout Room 3
4.	English Language Proficiency Benchmarks and English Proficiency Assessments under Title III and Question 2	Kathy Riley Claire White	Breakout Room 4

5. Title IA Distribution
Formulas, Set Asides,
Transferability, and
Monitoring

Barbara Solomon
Rob Curtin
Tom Chin

Breakout Room 5

*** All Rooms TBA**

III. Lunch: 12:00 Noon

IV. Breakout Sessions: 1:00 PM

V. Wrap Up and Adjournment :3:00

Registration Information

Workshop Dates	Times	Meeting Locations
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September 30	8:30- 3:30	Lantana, Randolph
October 1	8:30- 3:30	Holiday Inn, Worcester
October 7	8:30- 3:30	Sheraton, Danvers
October 10	8:30- 3:30	Clarion, Northhampton

Directions

Who Should Attend?

Assistant Superintendents, Title I Directors, Curriculum Coordinators
Human Resource Directors, ELL Program Directors

How Many Should Attend?

Districts Teams of 3-4 Administrators

How to Register

To register send the information below to judi_titlei@yahoo.com or fax 781/322-1368

District
Registrants' Names
Workshop Location
Alternative Choice if Overcrowded
Breakout Session Selections **1 2 3 4 5**

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