



David P. Driscoll
Commissioner of Education

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Commissioner's Update

January 21, 2004

Dear Superintendents, and Leaders of Charter Schools and Collaboratives:

In this update I have three announcements and four items posted at www.doe.mass.edu:

MCAS Updates

The following are important MCAS updates for your information:

1. **November 2003 Retest Results**

Results from the November 2003 retest were shipped to superintendents for receipt on January 16, 2004. If results were not received, please contact MCAS Support Services at (800) 737-5103.

2. **Reporting Discrepancies in Retest Results**

Discrepancies in retest results of misarranged students (e.g., students tested at your school but missing from the reports; students never enrolled at your school but included on reports) must be reported **no later than February 2**. More information is posted at the Department's MCAS web site under the "School Notices" section at www.doe.mass.edu/mcas/notices.html.

3. **March 2004 Retest-Providing Counts of Participating Students**

High school principals will receive a memo with directions on how to estimate the numbers of students from each school who will participate in the March 2004 retest. All high school principals must provide an estimate at www.mcasservicecenter.com of participating students **no later than January 23, 2004**.

4. **Spring and Fall 2003 LAS R/W Results**

Results from the state's spring 2003 administration of the Language Acquisition Scales for Reading and Writing (LAS R/W) for LEP students are now posted to the [Department's Security Portal](#). These data files are posted to the Security Portal in Drop Box Central in the MCAS 2003 Data folder.

To encourage further use of the data, TestWiz has been updated to import the LAS R/W data files. The latest version of TestWiz is available at <http://www.testwiz.com/las/las.html>. If you have any questions, please contact TestWiz at (800) 842-0077.

I am also writing to remind you that districts must provide test results from the fall 2003 local administration of the LAS R/W for newly enrolled LEP students in grades 4-12 and all grade 3 LEP students who did not take that test during the spring 2003 administration. These scores must be provided **between January 5 and 30, 2004** via the [Department's Security Portal](#). Please note that districts must provide total scores and sub-scores into this pre-populated form. For more information, refer to my December 19 Update <http://www.doe.mass.edu/mcas/2003/news/1219las.html>.

Mass Software Council Provides Middle School Math and Science Teaching Awards

The Massachusetts Software Council's Education Foundation announces their annual "Above and Beyond" awards program for middle school math and science teachers. Up to 20 exceptional

Massachusetts teachers will be recognized this spring for innovative teaching of math and science in grades 6-8 and for best practices. The deadline to submit an application is Friday, January 30. Interested educators can get more information and apply at www.masoftware.org.

Here are four items recently listed at www.doe.mass.edu:

1. Title 1 Winter Conference, January 21, 27 and February 5



2. Compass Schools Information-Sharing Sessions



3. Requirements for the Participation of Students with Limited English Proficiency in State-Mandated Assessments



4. Re-Licensure for Educators Planning to Retire



All the best, and

Sincerely,

David P. Driscoll
Commissioner of Education

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Title I

Keeping Up With Title I Conferences

December 31, 2003

Dear Colleague:

The Massachusetts Department of Education is pleased to invite Title I directors, and other interested personnel to participate in a conference entitled, "Keeping Up With Title I." In addition to workshops on the major components of the Title I program, please note that new reading initiatives will be addressed. In an effort to share effective practices, many breakout sessions will be co-presented by Department staff and district Title I administrators and staff.

There will be three concurrent workshop sessions, with 15 presentations, including:

- Schoolwide Programs
- Targeted Assistance Programs
- Neglected or Delinquent Programs
- Fiscal Issues
- Parental Involvement
- Teacher Quality
- Choice and Supplemental Services
- Needs Assessment and Evaluation
- Middle and High School Reading
- Reading First Model
- Title I Services in Private Schools

This conference will be repeated in three different locations:

Wednesday, January 21, at the Sturbridge Host Hotel, Sturbridge
Tuesday, January 27, at Lantana, Randolph
Thursday, February 5, at the Best Western Hotel, Marlboro

Registration is from 8:15 - 8:45 AM and sessions will conclude at 3:00 PM. Space is limited, so register early. Please use the attached form to register your school team. We look forward to seeing you at what promises to be a most worthwhile day. If you have any questions, please contact Amy Sosman, Director, at the Title I Dissemination Project, (781) 979-9100.

Inclement Weather Policy: If schools are closed in the town or city where the conference is being held, the sessions for that day are cancelled. If you have any questions regarding cancellation, please contact the hotel directly that morning.

Sincerely,

Barbara Solomon
State Title I Director



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School and District Accountability

Commonwealth Compass Schools Will Host Information-Sharing Events February through April 2004

The 2003 Commonwealth Compass Schools will open their doors to other Massachusetts school leaders and staff over the next few months to share practical information on how they selected and implemented the programs and practices that they think have made a difference for their students.

Commonwealth Compass Schools are selected based on significant improvement in student performance over the past three years. Their willingness and capacity to share information on the initiatives that helped them achieve those results is also an important consideration. In addition to a variety of school-wide changes targeting the identified learning needs of their students, the Compass Schools all cite hard work and a focus on high quality instruction as key components of their success.

Beginning in February and continuing through April, the Commonwealth Compass Schools will provide opportunities on at least two different dates for scheduled visits by interested school leaders and faculty. Benefit from these elementary and high schools' experience by meeting with the leadership teams involved in making the changes, asking questions, and observing the programs in action in the classroom.

Space at each of these events is limited. Teams of school leaders and faculty interested in participating in any of these information-sharing events must register directly with the Compass School.

View the [Commonwealth Compass Schools Calendar of On-site Information-Sharing Events](#) for dates, descriptions and registration information.

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School and District Accountability

Commonwealth Compass Schools Calendar of On-site Information-Sharing Events

[Academy Avenue Primary School](#)

Grades K-4

Weymouth, MA

February 10, 2004, 9 am-1 pm

March 4, 2004, 9 am-1 pm

March 10, 2004, 9 am-1 pm

Snow Date: March 16, 2004

The Academy Avenue School credits a teacher research project centered on composition writing as an important part of its success in writing across the curriculum. In a morning program, visitors will be given an overview of the project, introduced to the materials developed, and have an opportunity to visit classrooms to see how the resulting initiatives have been implemented at various grade levels. A Q&A lunch session will follow.

Info and Registration: Ann Lane, Principal 781-335-4717 or alane@weymouthschools.org

[Auburn High School](#)

Grades 9-12

Auburn, MA

March 3, 2004, 7:30 am-12:30 pm

March 10, 2004, 7:30 am-12:30 pm

Snow Dates: March 4 and March 11, 2004

Administrators and teachers visiting Auburn High School will have the opportunity to meet with the administration and faculty to observe the teaching approach in the classroom of the cooperatively taught, double-blocked algebra program. The program identifies at-risk 8th grade students and prepares a pathway for students to successfully complete the mathematics curriculum and the MCAS test. [Event Agenda](#)

Info and Registration: Jeff Thoedoss,

Principal 508-832-7711

jtheodoss@auburn.mec.edu

[Blackstone Valley Technical HS](#)

Grades 9-12

Upton, MA

March 16, 2004

March 18, 2004

Snow Date:

Two separate programs will be offered.

3/16: Teams from vocational-technical schools will learn about the modified block schedule and expanded school calendar and how they have effectively increased time on task, and performance, in math and ELA.

3/17: Teams from middle schools and non-vocational schools will learn how integrated learning activities in the technical areas foster motivation, relevancy and success for students. Visitors will see this model in action in the classroom/shop. Lunch will be provided both days.

Info and registration: Richard Brennan, Principal 508-529-7758, x3003

Rbrennan@valleytech.k12.ma.us

[Boston Arts Academy](#)

Grades 9-12

Boston, MA

February 23, 2004, 9 am-11:30 am

April 1, 2004, 9-11:30 am

Snow Dates: February 25 and April 12, 2004

Visitors will hear a presentation on how Boston Arts Academy developed a highly effective model for infusing academic rigor and standards-based teaching into a demanding arts curriculum. Visitors will also have an opportunity to speak to faculty and staff to learn more about this innovative curriculum, as well as receive a tour of the school and speak with students. A pizza lunch will follow.

Info and Registration: Kristen Duffy

617-635-6470

kduffy@boston.k12.ma.us

[Glenwood Elementary School](#)

Grades K-5

Springfield, MA

February 25, 2004, 8 am-2 pm

April 7, 2004, 8 am-2 pm

Snow Date: April 14, 2004

Visitors will hear a detailed description of our data-driven process of planning and support for improvement of our instructional program. Key areas of focus will be on the school's balanced literacy program, use of mathematics instructional guides, sheltered English instruction, and the Service Team that serves at-risk students. Classroom visits will be arranged to allow visitors to observe any or all of these programs in operation. The day will conclude with a roundtable discussion in the Media Center to answer questions, and share strategies and materials.

Info and registration: Dan Warwick,

Principal 413-787-7527

Warwickd@sps.springfield.ma.us

[Hyannis West Elementary School](#)

Grades K-4

Hyannis, MA

February 4, 2004, 8:30 am-12 noon

March 3, 2004, 8:30 am-12 noon

Snow Dates: February 6, and March 5, 2004

Visitors will learn about Hyannis West Elementary School's governance model, which allows staff, parents, and community members to work collaboratively in order to guide the school improvement process. They will also learn how a coordinated effort to improve students' social skills can increase student performance and how student performance data is utilized to adjust curriculum and focus instruction.

Info and registration: Fred Scully,

Principal 508-790-6480

Scullyf@bps.mec.edu

[Indian Head Elementary](#)

Grades 3-5

Hanson, MA

February 12, 2004, 8:30 am-2:30 pm

March 11, 2004, 8:30 am-2:30 pm

April 15, 2004, 8:30 am-2:30 pm

Over the past five years, this elementary school with 500 students has adopted a challenging math program and has designed specialized interventions to address the needs of the struggling learner. Visitors will view their math program in action, talk with teachers and administrators and review lessons and materials.



[Agenda and registration form](#)

Contact: Davida McGonigle, Principal 781-618-7065

Davida.mcgonigle@whrsd.org

[Ipswich High School](#)

Grades 9-12

Ipswich, MA

March 9, 2004, 9 am-1:30 pm

March 15, 2004, 9 am-1:30 pm

Snow Date: March 16, 2004

Visitors will be presented with an overview of current technological capacity at Ipswich High School's new facility and how they use it as an instructional tool. Visitors will have an opportunity to observe teachers and students using technology in the classroom. Visitors can also learn about the school's newly designed curriculum and rubrics and their integration into instruction during their block schedule.

Info and registration: Barry Cahill, Principal 978-356-3137 x162

Bcahill@ipswichschools.org

[George Keverian School](#)

Grades K-8

Everett, MA

February 6, 2004, 8 am-1 pm

March 12, 2004, 8 am-1 pm

Snow Date: March 15, 2004, 8 am-1pm

After observing school day opening exercises, visitors will attend a detailed presentation on the MCAS Action Plan, Test Item Analysis, and School Improvement Plan. Visitors will then visit classrooms to observe instruction, learning centers, and discuss strategies with staff. Lunch and a roundtable discussion in the library will complete the on-site visit.

Info and registration: Hugh Kelleher, Principal 617-394-5020

Hkelleher@everett.k12.ma.us

[Mary O. Pottenger School](#)

Grades K-5

Springfield, MA

February 25, 2004, 9:30 am-1:30 pm

March 3, 2004, 9:30 am-1:30 pm

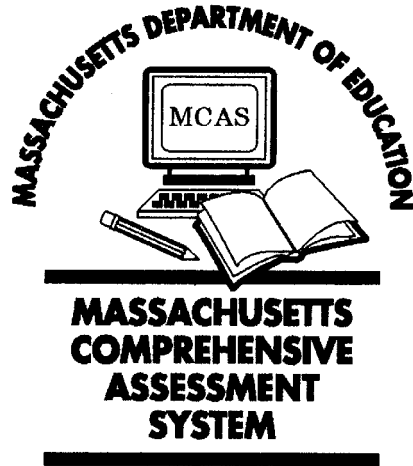
Snow Dates: March 10, 2004, 9:30 am-1:30 pm

Visitors will see how a new story is being written about the achievement of urban students, including teachers' work in study groups with university faculty. Learn more about the Balanced Literacy practices have been evolving in this school for over twenty years and see them in practice in the classroom. Visitors will observe Read Aloud/Think Aloud, Shared Reading, Guided Reading and Independent Reading, and Modeled, Shared, Interactive, Guided and Independent Writing. Lunch will be served, followed by a wrap-up Q&A session.

Info and registration: Jo-Anne Wilson-Keenan, Principal 413-787-7266

Wilson-keenanj@sps.springfield.ma

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Spring 2004 Update

*Requirements for
the Participation of Students
with
Limited English Proficiency
in State-Mandated Assessments*

Massachusetts Department of Education



Massachusetts Department of Education

This document was prepared by the Massachusetts Department of Education
Dr. David P. Driscoll, Commissioner of Education

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Commissioner's Foreword

January 2004

Dear Colleagues:

I am pleased to present an updated version of *Requirements for the Participation of Students with Limited English Proficiency in State-Mandated Assessments*. Within this document, you will find the testing requirements for students with limited English proficiency (LEP).

The Department has recently launched two major initiatives to support English language learners. In June 2003 the Board of Education adopted the *English Language Proficiency Benchmarks and Outcomes for English Language Learners*, which is designed to support the academic instruction of LEP students and to serve as a natural progression to the Massachusetts *English Language Arts Curriculum Framework*. A second initiative is a statewide English Proficiency Assessment that is being developed with assistance from Massachusetts public school teachers and administrators who serve LEP students. This new assessment will be based on the *English Language Proficiency Benchmarks and Outcomes* and will be administered for the first time in fall 2004.

I hope that you have begun to incorporate the new benchmarks and outcomes in your curriculum and instruction. By assisting students from diverse backgrounds to gain proficiency in English and acquire the English language skills they need to be successful, you are making an important contribution in their lives.

Sincerely,

David P. Driscoll
Commissioner of Education

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I. Overview of the Testing Requirements for Limited English Proficient (LEP) Students

A. Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System (MCAS)

The Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System (MCAS) measures the performance of students, schools, and districts on the academic learning standards in the Massachusetts *Curriculum Frameworks*. It was developed to fulfill the requirements of the Education Reform Law of 1993. All students, including LEP students, are required to participate in all standard MCAS tests.

B. English Proficiency Assessments (EPA)

The federal *No Child Left Behind Law* and Question 2, the November 2002 Massachusetts ballot initiative, require the Department to assess the English proficiency of all limited English proficient students on an annual basis. In spring 2003, LEP students in grades 3-12 were assessed in their reading and writing skills using the *Language Assessment Scales in Reading and Writing (LAS R/W)*, a commercial test published by CTB-McGraw Hill. The speaking and listening skills of LEP students in grades K-12 were assessed using the Massachusetts English Language Assessment – Oral (MELA-O), a custom test developed by the Massachusetts Department of Education.

In spring 2004, the LAS R/W will again be administered to all LEP students in grades 3-12, and the MELA-O to all LEP students in grades K-12. In addition, all LEP students will participate in a field test of the questions that will be used on future administrations of the Massachusetts English Proficiency Assessment (MEPA).

Beginning in 2004-2005, the LAS R/W test will be replaced by the Massachusetts English Proficiency Assessment (MEPA). The MEPA will assess the reading and writing knowledge and skills contained in the *English Language Proficiency Benchmarks and Outcomes for English Language Learners*.

C. 2004 Testing Schedule for LEP Students

The following table shows the 2004 testing schedule and required tests for LEP students.¹

Spring 2004	Test	Who Participates?
March 30	ELA Composition	All students in grades 4, 7, and 10
April 1-30	Massachusetts English Language Assessment – Oral (MELA-O)	All LEP students in grades K-12
April 12-16	Massachusetts English Proficiency Assessment Question Tryout	All LEP students in grades 3-12
April 26-30	LAS R/W	All LEP students in grades 3-12
May 13	ELA Composition Make-up	All students in grades 4, 7, and 10 who were absent on March 30
May 17-28	MCAS tests in ELA, Mathematics, and Science and Technology/Engineering	All students in grades 3-10 participate in all content areas for their grades

D. Questions?

For **policy questions** regarding the assessment of LEP students please contact the Office of Student Assessment at 781-338-3625 or mcas@doe.mass.edu.

For questions regarding the **identification and initial assessment of LEP students**, please contact the Office of Language Acquisition at 781-338-3535 or ELL@doe.mass.edu.

¹ Newly-enrolled LEP students (grades 3-12) who were not tested in spring 2003 were administered LAS R/W tests in fall 2003.

II. Participation of LEP Students in MCAS

A. Definition of a Limited English Proficient Student

A limited English proficient (LEP) student is “a student whose first language is a language other than English and who is unable to perform ordinary classroom work in English.”

B. Identification of a LEP Student

Districts are required to have a procedure in place to assess the English proficiency of all students whose home language is not English and determine if they are LEP. In making this determination, the four domains of speaking, listening, reading, and writing should be assessed.

LEP students must receive instruction through a sheltered English immersion program unless a waiver is granted, the student is placed in a two-way bilingual program, or a parent declines services. When a parent declines sheltered immersion or any language support program for a student identified as LEP, the student is still identified as LEP.

C. MCAS Participation Requirements for LEP Students

All LEP students enrolled in Massachusetts public schools, and in private schools at public expense, are required to participate in MCAS tests scheduled for their grade regardless of the number of years they have been in school in the U.S.

Limited English proficient Spanish-speaking students who have been enrolled in schools in the continental United States for **fewer than three years** may take the English/Spanish MCAS tests in Mathematics and Science and Technology/Engineering if they can read and write at or near grade level in Spanish.

Limited Circumstances Under Which a LEP Student May Be Excused from MCAS Tests of Academic Content

School principals may exercise discretion and excuse an LEP student from MCAS testing if the two conditions below apply:

- 1) the student first enrolled in a U.S. school after October 1, 2003; **AND**
- 2) in the judgment of the school principal, the student’s command of English is so limited that he or she could not engage meaningfully in the MCAS test process.

In determining whether a student should be excused from participation, principals must be mindful of the requirement that each school must maintain at least a 95% participation rate in English Language Arts and Mathematics tests as a condition for making Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP). It is important to note that the 95% participation standard applies to students in the aggregate, as well as to students in each of the eight federally-mandated student groups (i.e., LEP, students with disabilities, economically disadvantaged, African-American, Asian, Hispanic, Native American, and White).

A limited English proficient student who is excused from testing based on criteria listed above will not receive a scaled score or performance level score. However, as already stated, a student's non-participation *will* be factored into the school's and district's test participation rate, which must be maintained at 95% or higher in the aggregate and for each subgroup as a condition for making AYP. Therefore, when determining participation rates for AYP, the number will be based on the enrollment in the tested grades on the first day of the testing period. Note: LEP students with disabilities taking the MCAS Alternate Assessment are included in the count of the number of students tested.

D. Participation of LEP Students with Disabilities in MCAS

A student's IEP Team must determine how each student with limited English proficiency who has a disability will participate in 2004 MCAS testing. The student must participate in:

- ◆ the MCAS test(s) with or without accommodations; OR
- ◆ take the MCAS-Alt.

Results of students with limited English proficiency who are also classified as students with disabilities will be included with scores of students with disabilities in standard MCAS reports of results. However, for determining AYP, these students will also be reported as LEP.

For additional information about the assessment of students with disabilities, please refer to the Department publication, *Requirements for the Participation of Students with Disabilities in MCAS, Spring 2004 Update* available on the Department's website at www.doe.mass.edu/mcas.

E. Coding LEP Status on MCAS *Student Answer Booklets*

The principal or designee must complete the LEP status section on the inside back cover of the *Student Answer Booklet* for each student enrolled in the tested grades. If the district considers the student LEP, the student should be coded as LEP on student answer booklets regardless of the services provided.

The principal or designee will fill in circles to indicate each student's:

- ◆ limited English proficient (LEP) status; AND
- ◆ the number of years he/she has attended schools in the U.S.

In rare instances, when the student will not take the MCAS test in this subject based on criteria outlined in section C above, due to his/her LEP status, the principal will fill in the third bubble. **This final bubble should be filled in only in the rare instance of a student who is excused from testing based on criteria outlined in section C.**

F. Allowable Accommodation for LEP Students on MCAS Tests

Any student who **currently is** or **has been** a LEP student may use an approved bilingual word-to-word dictionary on all MCAS tests. Bilingual dictionaries and electronic translators permitted for this purpose are limited to those that provide word-to-word translations, not definitions. A list of approved bilingual dictionaries can be found on the Department's website at http://www.doe.mass.edu/mcas/part_req.html or in the appendices of the 2004 *Principal's Administration Manual*.

G. English/Spanish MCAS Tests

Because approximately 60 percent of the limited English proficient (LEP) students in Massachusetts are native Spanish speakers, English/Spanish versions of MCAS tests will be made available in 2004 to eligible Spanish-speaking LEP students in the following two subjects:

- ◆ Mathematics
- ◆ Science and Technology/Engineering

Only students who have been enrolled in schools in the continental United States for **fewer than three years** may take the English/Spanish MCAS tests.

English/Spanish *Student Test Booklets* are issued in side-by-side English/Spanish format with identical test questions presented on opposing pages in the two languages: left-facing pages present questions in Spanish; right-facing pages present the same questions in English.

Spanish-version *Student Answer Booklets* (in which students mark their answers) and the reference materials issued to students for use during MCAS Mathematics and Science and Technology/Engineering test sessions are presented in Spanish only.

Please note that there are **no** English/Spanish MCAS tests in Reading and English Language Arts. Guidelines for administering the English/Spanish MCAS tests are provided in the English/Spanish *Test Administrator's Manuals*. These contain Spanish-language scripts to be read aloud by test administrators to students, as well as instructions to the test administrator (not to be read aloud) in English. In order to be eligible to administer the English/Spanish tests, test administrators must be fluent in both English and Spanish.

H. Reporting MCAS Test Results and Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) Determinations

District MCAS results will be based on all students who were enrolled in the district at the beginning of the testing period. At the school level, two sets of MCAS results will be reported:

- 1) One set based on all students who took the test
- 2) A second set based only on those students enrolled in the school since October 1, 2003

The set of results listed in #2 above will be used to determine whether schools and districts have achieved performance and/or improvement targets for the purpose of making AYP determinations for all subgroups, including LEP, and for all students in the aggregate. Other information on AYP determinations can be found on the Department's website at www.doe.mass.edu/nclb.

I. High School Competency Determination

Students, including students with limited English proficiency, are required to earn a Competency Determination and meet all local requirements in order to graduate from high school. To earn a Competency Determination, students must receive a minimum score of 220 on both of the grade 10 MCAS English Language Arts and Mathematics tests.

Students who fail one or both tests will have multiple opportunities to take and pass these tests following the initial administration in grade 10. Students eligible to take the English/Spanish grade 10 MCAS Mathematics test can partially meet the Competency Determination requirement through that test, but must also pass the grade 10 English Language Arts test in English.

Since this requirement may present a challenge for LEP students who have recently enrolled in an U.S. school, some LEP students may need to continue their education beyond grade 12 in order to attain the requisite knowledge of and skills in English and/or mathematics. After grade 12, students who need to pass one or more MCAS test(s) required for graduation, can register for a retest(s) at the school in which they were last enrolled.

III. Participation of LEP Students in English Proficiency Assessments

Recently-enacted federal and state laws require that LEP students be assessed annually on their proficiency in English. The assessments discussed below must be administered to all students who are identified by their districts as limited English proficient. No dictionaries of any kind are allowed on the English proficiency assessments.

A. Benchmarks and Outcomes for English Language Learners

In June 2003, the Board of Education adopted the *English Language Proficiency Benchmarks and Outcomes for English Language Learners*. The *Benchmarks and Outcomes* are intended to support the development of LEP students' English skills and to develop effective curriculum and instruction for these students. The document serves as a natural progression to the Massachusetts *English Language Arts Curriculum Framework* learning standards. The Department's new Massachusetts English Proficiency Assessment (MEPA) and the MELA-O (below) are aligned with these benchmarks and outcomes. The document is available online at <http://www.doe.mass.edu/ell/benchmark.pdf>.

B. Language Assessment Scales – Reading/Writing (LAS R/W Tests)

All LEP students in grades 3-12 must be assessed in reading and writing using the Language Assessment Scales (LAS – R/W) during the week of April 26-30, 2004. The Language Assessment Scales for Reading and Writing published by CTB/McGraw-Hill is designed to measure the English reading and writing skills of non-native English speakers. The Department of Education will assume the expense of purchasing and scoring these tests.

C. Massachusetts English Language Assessment – Oral (MELA-O)

The English speaking and listening skills of all LEP students in grades K-12 must be assessed using the MELA-O. The MELA-O is administered by observing a student performing academic and social tasks in a classroom over a period of days or weeks. The MELA-O can be administered to students at any time during the month of April.

Teachers and other school personnel administering the MELA-O must be certified as Qualified MELA-O Administrators (QMA). To be certified as a QMA, an educator must have successfully completed a training program in MELA-O and passed the Department's qualifying test. Please contact the Department at (781) 338-3625 if you wish to determine who from your district is qualified to administer the MELA-O.

D. Massachusetts English Proficiency Assessment (MEPA) Question Tryout

In response to *No Child Left Behind* and Question 2, the November 2002 ballot initiative, the Department of Education is developing a customized English Proficiency Assessment to annually assess the English proficiency of LEP students in grades 3-12. The assessment will be based on the benchmarks and outcomes in the *English Language Proficiency Benchmarks and Outcomes for English Language Learners*. The purpose of the assessment is to measure the extent to which individual limited English proficient students achieve proficiency in English over time and to improve curriculum and instruction for these students.

As part of the development of this new Massachusetts English Proficiency Assessment, the Department will conduct a statewide question tryout in reading and writing for all LEP students in grades 3-12 during the week of April 12, 2004. Details and directions related to the Question Tryout will be provided prior to the question tryout administration. Results will be used only to evaluate test items for possible use in future MEPA tests and will not generate any student, school, or district results. The Massachusetts English Proficiency Assessment will be administered for the first time in fall 2004.



NEWS SEARCH

Keyword:

Target:

Dates:

[Past 30 days](#)[Past 90 days](#)[Date Range](#)

Start:

End:



Wednesday, January 21, 2004

License Renewal (Recertification) Effect on Educators Retiring This Year

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

From: David P. Driscoll, Commissioner of Education

Date: January 20, 2004

With the expected license renewal of some 80,000 educators by June 17, 2004, concerns have risen about the renewal status of those educators retiring at the end of the 2003-04 school year.

Any Massachusetts public school educator who will continue working in the role of his or her Professional level license through the end of this school year and:

- holds a license that is up for renewal; and,
- plans to retire at the conclusion of the 2003-04 school year;

will not be required to submit an application for renewal of his or her Professional level license(s) to the Department of Education.

Rather than renew their license(s), educators may choose to submit a written letter of intent to their school administrator and personnel office detailing their retirement plans. This letter of intent will later ensure that the school district was informed of the educators' plans and will serve to answer any future questions of the educators' inactive renewal status. School districts should maintain a record of these letters of intent.

Should the educator submit a letter of intent and then choose to return for the 2004-05 school year, the educator must hold an active license for the position that he or she will be employed in to be considered legally employable.

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