



David P. Driscoll  
Commissioner of Education

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## Commissioner's Update

July 7, 2004

Dear Superintendents, and Leaders of Charter Schools and Collaboratives:

I have five announcements in this letter for your review.

### NCLB: A Toolkit for Teachers

United States Education Secretary, Rod Paige, has released "*No Child Left Behind: A Toolkit for Teachers*." The booklet includes an overview of the NCLB law, questions and answers about the law's effect on teachers, and information for teachers of English language learners and for teachers of students with disabilities. The booklet can be downloaded at <http://www.ed.gov/teachers/nclbguide/nclb-teachers-toolkit.pdf> where multiple copies may be ordered, as well. I encourage you to notify your educators about this useful resource.

### Directory Administration

This is the time of year when there are many changes in your district personnel. To ensure that you receive all notices and important announcements from the Massachusetts Department of Education, I wanted to remind you that you should update your key personnel name and contact changes using the Department of Education's on-line application, "Directory Administration." This is the only way to ensure that you will maintain timely and critical electronic contact with the Department of Education. For more information, please call 781-338-DATA. I appreciate your attention to this matter.

### MCAS Performance Appeals

Now that senior year GPAs have been finalized, it may be of benefit to some students in the Class of 2004 who did not receive diplomas in June to have performance appeals submitted or resubmitted on their behalf, using their grade 12 GPAs. Performance appeals are accepted at any time of the year and are reviewed on a monthly basis. I encourage you to file appeals for students from the Classes of 2003, 2004 and 2005 who meet the eligibility criteria. When preparing performance appeals please review the filing guidelines and use the application that was revised in June at [www.doe.mass.edu/mcasappeals/filing/](http://www.doe.mass.edu/mcasappeals/filing/).

For students who are registered to take the grade 10 MCAS retest in July, here is some important information:

### MCAS Summer Retest Location Change

Please be advised that South Lawrence East School will not be serving as a site for the summer 2004 retest administration. Students who selected this school as their first choice were assigned their second choice. The four remaining test locations are Madison Park High School in Boston, Van Sickle Middle School in Springfield, Taunton High School in Taunton and Forest Grove Middle School in Worcester. There may be some limited room to accept walk-in students. Please contact Student Assessment Services at (781) 338-3625 if you have questions.



## Recruitment for the MCAS Performance Appeals Review Board

Massachusetts public high school educators are invited to submit letters of interest to serve on the MCAS Performance Appeals Board. This Board is established by regulation for the purpose of reviewing MCAS performance appeals on behalf of high school students who can demonstrate knowledge and skills in English and mathematics at the passing level on the grade 10 MCAS tests even though they have been unable to pass the tests on numerous attempts. Participation on the performance appeals board is an outstanding professional development opportunity and I encourage all who are interested to write to me in care of the MCAS Performance Appeals Office. The appointment is for a three-year term and appeals review sessions are held on a monthly basis throughout the year. A small stipend and PDPs are offered for participation. I want to particularly encourage minority educators in English and mathematics and secondary school guidance counselors and principals to apply.

I look forward to seeing many of you at the annual MASS summer workshop next week.

All the best, and  
Sincerely,

David P. Driscoll  
Commissioner of Education