



David P. Driscoll
Commissioner of Education

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Commissioner's Update

May 20, 2005

Dear Superintendents, and Leaders of Charter Schools and Collaboratives:

I have 9 announcements and 8 items for your review in this update.

Graduation Ceremonies for The Class of 2005

In a few weeks, high school seniors will be attending activities and ceremonies marking the end of their high school years. This is the third year that the high school diploma will be awarded to students who have met two conditions: they have achieved the state standards in English language arts and mathematics (the competency determination) and they have met local graduation requirements as well. I want to be certain that all of you are clear on the official Department of Education position regarding students who will be receiving certificates of attainment or local certificates participating in graduation activities and ceremonies.

In a recent hearing with the Legislature's Joint Committee on Education, there was keen interest and encouragement for all twelfth grade students in good standing, whether they will be receiving state-endorsed certificates of attainment, diplomas or local certificates, to be allowed to participate fully in graduation ceremonies and activities with their peers. The only limitation by Massachusetts law is that students may be awarded diplomas only if they have earned the competency determination and fulfilled local graduation requirements.

I want to emphasize that this office has no objections to students attending and participating in graduation ceremonies even if they will not be receiving diplomas. To the contrary, I hope that all students who are concluding their twelfth grade year will be recognized at a memorable and positive event at which they are acknowledged for their accomplishments and encouraged to continue pursuing educational opportunities and success.

For students who have not yet met the competency determination standard, my hope is that they will receive the appropriate certificate at graduation ceremonies in June, take the MCAS retest in August (see <http://www.doe.mass.edu/news/news.asp?id=2404> for details), and subsequently receive a diploma from your high school. Further, I hope you are ensuring that your high school personnel are discussing plans with each and every student who still needs to earn a diploma. There is help available through local one-stop career centers; community college MCAS study programs; district and regional summer schools; and re-test opportunities. I urge you to help students and their parents take advantage of the resources that the Department of Education has identified.

Effective Practices in High School and Middle School Reform

The nonprofit Mass Insight Education and Research Institute will host its fifth annual Building on Success Conference on Monday, June 6, at the Boston Hyatt-Regency Hotel. These statewide conferences have been productive and compelling in the past and I encourage school districts to strongly consider sending a leadership team.

This year's conference and the 2005 round of Vanguard research focuses primarily on effective high schools, along with a middle school and K-8 school. Teams from the Vanguard models will

discuss a range of effective-practice strategies including how to bring at-risk ninth-graders to proficiency in ELA and math; organizing school leadership teams into effective agents for improvement; and using data in targeted, systematic ways to improve instruction. The day will start with a keynote from Ray Simon, Assistant Secretary for Elementary and Secondary Education for the U.S. Department of Education.

Urban, suburban, voc tech, and charter schools are all represented among the 11 Vanguard models. For a list of the models, brief descriptions of their strategies, and information on the conference, go to www.massinsight.org. To learn from effective-practice strategies gleaned from past years of Mass Insight's Vanguard research, go to www.buildingblocks.org. Deadline for early conference registration is Friday, May 27.

Film Literacy Content Institute Opportunity

We are lucky to have among our Boston partners Walden Media, a major movie studio focused on turning great children's books into great children's films. They are the people who have made *Holes* and *Because of Winn-Dixie*, and are currently at work on adaptations of *Charlotte's Web* and *The Lion, The Witch and the Wardrobe*.

In addition to making movies, Walden's education side works regularly with teachers to help them see and understand the link between children's films and literacy. This summer they will offer a special free content institute for 30 Massachusetts elementary and middle school educators on the uses of film in school. Randy Testa, the group's Vice President of Education and Professional Development, will run the two-day course, during which participants will view films and discuss film adaptations, how a film can be used to meet state and national standards, and the importance of media literacy.

This content institute will be held on July 19 and 20 at Cambridge Rindge and Latin High School, and will meet for a third follow-up day up in November. Participants who attend all three sessions will be eligible for PDPs. For more information and to register, contact Janet St. Don at the Department of Education at jstdon@doe.mass.edu or by phone at 781-338-6234.

Draft Massachusetts Model for Comprehensive School Counseling Programs Released for Public Comment

The Department of Education, in partnership with the Massachusetts School Counselor's Association (MASCA), and the National Center for School Counseling Outcome Research at the University of Massachusetts, Amherst, has spent two years developing the state's first model for school counseling programs, K-12. On April 4 I endorsed the Model to be released for public comment at the annual MASCA conference in Hyannis.

The Massachusetts Model is intended to: (1) guide school administrators and counselors in the development of measurably effective school counseling programs; and (2) help counselor education programs to align their curriculum with the priorities of education reform and career development education.

I encourage you to read this draft, distribute it to your staff and to provide feedback to help ensure that the final version of the *Massachusetts Model for Comprehensive School Counseling Programs* is a valuable document for Massachusetts school counselors. A response form is included with the Model.

Feedback should be sent by November 10, 2005 to MASCA c/o: *Katie Gray, President, Massachusetts School Counselors Association (MASCA), Blackstone Valley Technical High School, 65 Pleasant Street, Upton, MA 01568 (FAX 508 529 2403, kgray@valleytech.k12.ma.us)*.

To obtain a copy of the draft, please visit the MASCA website at www.masca.org.

School Finance Advisory

We have received several questions from Superintendents lately about municipal charges to the school budget. We have not changed the rules, but to help clarify the details we have developed an advisory explaining the basic facts. We would encourage Superintendents and District Business Managers to refer to this document on our school finance page: http://finance1.doe.mass.edu/account/adv05_1.html.

Summer Reading Programs

The Department of Education is strongly committed to achieving national and state literacy goals for our children. With the help of our federal Reading First grant and the Reading Leadership Team that guides and drives Reading First in the Commonwealth, we are making great progress. However, when children don't practice their reading over the summer, they can regress up to five months in their reading skills.

This year First Lady Ann Romney has agreed to assist the Department of Education and the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners in getting young people and their families across the Commonwealth to participate in summer reading activities.



The 2005 Summer Reading Adventure, Going Places @ Your Library, is being sponsored by several groups, including the Massachusetts' Regional Library Systems, and the Massachusetts Teachers' Association summer reading program (<http://www.readingmatters.org/>). Mrs. Romney will help kick off the 2005 Summer Reading Challenge in June.

To learn more about the many activities taking place across the state, look at the 2005 On-line Summer Reading Adventure Manual (www.nmrls.org/sum/2005/index.html).

Grants and Other Financial Assistance Programs

There are a number of FY2006 competitive grant opportunities currently posted on the Grants Management web site. To access these Requests for Proposals, please visit <http://finance1.doe.mass.edu/grants/>.

Summer 2005 MCAS Retest Opportunity Flyer

Attached is a flyer   that you may wish to distribute to students from the classes of 2003, 2004, and 2005 to encourage their participation in the summer 2005 MCAS retests.

Dads Make a Difference

The Department of Education has been actively involved in the Governor's Commission on Fatherhood for the past seven years. The role of fathers has become more crucial than ever because of the growing number of absent fathers and the increasing realization of the importance of an active father-figure in the lives of the children.

As part of that, we participate in the Annual Dads Make A Difference Day each year on the Boston Common. This year's event is Sunday, June 19, from 1-5 p.m. Last year we were able to distribute hundreds of pieces of information on topics ranging from Title I to MCAS to Nutrition to Family Literacy. In addition, we helped more than 450 children create cards in their native language to give to their fathers, or to the other significant male in their lives.

Please let your teachers and students know about this important event. In addition, if anyone knows of a "Super Dad" who deserves recognition, they can go to www.dadsmakeadifference.com and click under SUPER DAD AWARDS to learn more about the Super Dad award. All entries

must be complete and received by June 3rd to qualify.

Here are 8 new items posted at www.doe.mass.edu:

1. Summer 2005 MCAS Retest Administration: Student Registration and Test Administrator Application Procedures



2. Test Administrator's Application



3. Advisory on Test Accommodations for the Summer 2005 MCAS Retest



4. Summer 2005 MCAS Retest Schedule



5. Statewide Leadership Forum



6. New Free Content Institutes in the Arts and Humanities



7. Knowing My Eight Rules for Safety and Other Child Safety Resources



8. Recruitment for Board of Education Advisory Councils



Thank you for the great work that you do every day for our children.

Sincerely,

David P. Driscoll
Commissioner of Education

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Summer 2005 MCAS Retest Administration: Student Registration and Test Administrator Application Procedures

To: High School Principals and Directors of Charter Schools, Approved Private Special Education Schools, Institutional Schools, Collaboratives, Alternative Adult/External Diploma Programs, and Evening High Schools

Copy: Superintendents

From: David P. Driscoll, Commissioner of Education

Date: May 13, 2005

As I announced in my May 5 update, the summer 2005 MCAS retest administration is scheduled for August 2-4. This memo provides information about the following topics related to the summer retest:

1. important dates related to the summer retest administration
2. testing sites
3. student eligibility to participate
4. pre-registration procedures (responsibility of high school principals)
5. students' responsibilities
6. schedule for reporting results
7. application procedures for test administrators

An [advisory](#) regarding modifications to selected test accommodations is included with this memo. Also enclosed is a detailed schedule for the summer retest administration.

1. Important Dates Related to the Summer Retest Administration

Below is a summary of important dates for the summer administration.

- | | |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thursday, May 26 • Tuesday, May 31 • Thursday, June 30 | <p>Deadline for high school principals to register students</p> <p>Deadline for receipt of test administrator applications</p> <p>Deadline for receipt of test accommodation materials for approval (for accommodations 20, 25, and 32; refer to the attached advisory for instructions)</p> |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tuesday, Aug. 2 • Wednesday, Aug. 3 - Thursday, Aug. 4 | <p>Mathematics retest administration</p> <p>English Language Arts retest administration</p> |

2. Testing Sites

The retest will be administered at the following five sites:

- Madison Park High School, Boston
- B. M. C. Durfee High School, Fall River
- South Lawrence East School, Lawrence

- Van Sickle Middle School, Springfield
- Forest Grove Middle School, Worcester

3. Student Eligibility to Participate

Students from the following high school classes who have not yet met the Competency Determination standard are eligible to participate in the summer 2005 MCAS retest:

- class of 2003
- class of 2004
- class of 2005

We ask for your support in reaching out to students from the classes of 2003 and 2004 to provide them with information about this opportunity. We recommend that you also provide students with a contact person at your high school to answer any of their questions and to register them.

Students who participate in the summer retest are not eligible to participate in the November retest. Beginning this year, students will be required to sign an acknowledgment of this requirement prior to testing. We encourage you to provide guidance to students on which retest opportunity is most suitable for them.

4. Pre-Registration Procedures

Online Registration

High school principals (or their designees) are responsible for pre-registering eligible students for the summer retest using the registration Web site at www.mcasservicecenter.com. Registration begins **Monday, May 16**, and closes on **Thursday, May 26**.

We encourage you to submit your registrations as soon as possible to increase the likelihood that students will be assigned to their preferred testing site. Walk-ins are discouraged. The Department maintains the right to refuse admission and will handle walk-ins on a case-by-case basis.

[NOTE: The original memo contained unique passwords to access the registration Web site. Principals should contact the MCAS Service Center at (800) 737-5103 for assistance in ordering registering students for the summer MCAS retest administration.]

For each student, you will indicate his or her preferred testing site and test forms required (i.e., standard, Braille, large-print, English/Spanish for mathematics, Typed Response Forms). You will also be asked to indicate test accommodations needed for students with disabilities. More information about registering students with disabilities is provided in the section below.

Students with Disabilities

When registering students with disabilities who will be tested with accommodations, you must provide the test accommodation numbers from the [MCAS Principal's Administration Manual, Spring 2005](#).

New for 2005: To assist you in submitting students' registrations, the online registration is pre-filled with accommodations used by students during the March 2005 retest administration. Accommodations may be added or deleted as appropriate in the online registration tool.

If you are registering students with disabilities, please refer to "[Attachment A: Advisory on Test Accommodations for the Summer 2005 MCAS Retest](#)." This advisory provides information on the following items:

- accommodations that are not available for the summer retest
- modifications to specific accommodations that must be made for the retest administration
- requirements related to specific accommodations for students to bring their own equipment to the testing sites

Requests for approval of ELA graphic organizers and math checklists and individualized reference sheets

(accommodation 20) and requests for other standard or non-standard test accommodations (accommodations 25 and 32) must be submitted to the Department for approval **no later than June 30**, according to the instructions on the attached [advisory](#).

Registration Confirmations

Registration confirmations and logistical information will be provided to principals in early June. Please schedule staff accordingly so that this information will be provided to registered students in a timely manner. We encourage you to follow up with pre-registered students over the next few months to support their participation later this summer.

5. Students' Responsibilities

Students will need to provide their own transportation to and from testing sites. Driving directions will be provided upon confirmation of registration.

Students must bring the following items to their testing site:

- **picture identification** (valid driver's license, school identification card, or passport)
- **#2 pencils**
- **calculators**
- **bilingual word-to-word dictionaries** (optional for LEP students; for information on the use of bilingual word-to-word dictionaries as an accommodation for LEP students, refer to "Appendix G: Bilingual Dictionaries Approved for Use on MCAS Tests by LEP Students" in the [MCAS Principal's Administration Manual](#))
- **copies of IEPs or 504 plans** with required test accommodations identified (**new for 2005** for students with disabilities who require test accommodations)

More information on materials that will be allowed and prohibited at testing sites will be provided in students' registration confirmation materials sent to you in early June.

Upon request, the Department will provide participating students with a letter asking their employers to excuse the students' absence on testing days.

Cancellation of Registration

To help us in planning, please ask registered students who later choose not to participate in the summer retest to call MCAS Support Services at (800) 737-5103 to cancel their registration.

6. Schedule for Reporting Results

Retest results will be provided in mid-September to districts that registered students, along with spring MCAS test results.

7. Application Procedures for Test Administrators

Experienced MCAS test administrators who wish to serve as test administrators for the summer retest are encouraged to complete the application posted to the Department's Web site at www.doe.mass.edu/mcas/2005/news/retest_ta_app.doc. Applications must be received **no later than May 31**. Applicants will be notified of the status of their applications in mid-June. Test administrators will be reimbursed at a rate of \$35 per hour worked.

New for 2005: Please advise interested applicants that we are requesting certification from principals and/or superintendents (i.e., the local hiring authority) that applicants meet local and state hiring requirements.

Please contact the MCAS Service Center at (800) 737-5103 if you have any questions regarding the summer retest administration.

Enclosures:

- [Attachment A](#): Advisory on Test Accommodations for the Summer 2005 MCAS Retest
- [Attachment B](#): Summer 2005 MCAS Retest Schedule

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Summer 2005 MCAS Retest Administration: Student Registration and Test Administrator Application Procedures

Attachment A: Advisory on Test Accommodations for the Summer 2005 MCAS Retest

NOTES:

1. Students who require **accommodations 2, 7, 18, and 28** should be advised to participate in the November 2005 retest administration, since these accommodations will **not** be provided for the summer retest.
2. The following test accommodations will be modified as described below for the summer 2005 MCAS retest administration. All other test accommodations will be administered according to the [MCAS Principal's Administration Manual, Spring 2005](#).

Accommodation 2. Time of Day:

This test accommodation will not be provided for the summer retest administration.

Accommodation 7. Familiar Test Administrator:

This test accommodation will not be provided for the summer retest administration.

Accommodation 8. Noise Buffers:

Students must bring their own equipment for the summer retest administration.

Accommodation 9. Magnification or Overlays:

Students must bring their own equipment for the summer retest administration.

Accommodation 15. Amplification:

Students must bring their own equipment for the summer retest administration.

Accommodations 18 and 28. Electronic Text Reader:

This test accommodation will not be provided for the summer retest administration.

Accommodation 20. Graphic Organizer, Checklist, Reference Sheet, or Abacus:

Students requiring this test accommodation must bring their **pre-approved** graphic organizer, mathematics checklist, or individualized reference sheet for the summer retest administration. These materials must be submitted for approval to the Department by fax (781-338-3630) or e-

mail (mcas@doe.mass.edu) **no later than June 30.**

Accommodation 21. Student Reads Test Aloud (to himself or herself):

Students using a tape recorder for this test accommodation must bring their own equipment for the summer retest administration.

Accommodation 23. Word Processor:

Students using this test accommodation must be advised that the computers at the summer testing sites may differ slightly from those used at their own school.

Accommodations 25 and 32. Other Accommodations:

Prior approval of other test accommodations not listed in Appendix B of the [MCAS Principal's Administration Manual, Spring 2005](#) must be requested by the Department **no later than June 30** by contacting the Student Assessment Services Unit at (781) 338-3625.

Accommodation 31. Spell- or Grammar- Checking Device or Word Prediction Software for the ELA Composition:

Students using this test accommodation must be advised that these features and software at the summer testing sites may differ slightly from the features and software on computers at their own school.

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Summer 2005 MCAS Retest Administration: Student Registration and Test Administrator Application Procedures

Attachment B: Summer 2005 MCAS Retest Schedule

Summer 2005 MCAS Retest Schedule

The summer retest will be administered according to the schedule below. Since each test session must be completed according to this schedule, you may wish to recommend to students who require additional time for any test session that they participate instead in the November retest administration.

New for 2005: We will provide participating students with information about programs at the Commonwealth's community colleges and One Stop Career Centers. Scheduling information will be provided upon confirmation of registration.

A final testing schedule will be provided upon confirmation of registration.

Tuesday, August 2 Mathematics

| | |
|-------------------------|---------------------------------|
| 8:00 a.m. | Sites open. |
| 8:00 - 8:45 a.m. | Breakfast (provided) Sign-In |
| 8:45 a.m. | Student sign-in closes. |
| 9:00 - 11:30 a.m. | Mathematics Session 1 |
| 11:30 a.m. - 12:15 p.m. | Lunch (provided) |
| 12:30 - 3:00 p.m. | Mathematics Session 2 |

Wednesday, August 3 English Language Arts Day 1

| | |
|-------------------|---------------------------------|
| 8:00 a.m. | Sites open. |
| 8:00 - 8:45 a.m. | Breakfast (provided) Sign-In |
| 8:45 a.m. | Student sign-in closes. |
| 9:00 - 10:30 a.m. | ELA Composition Session A |

| | |
|-----------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| 10:30 - 10:45 a.m. | Break (snack provided) |
| 10:45 a.m. - 12:15 p.m. | ELA Composition Session B |
| 12:15 - 1:00 p.m. | Lunch (provided) |
| 1:15 - 3:45 p.m. | ELA Language and Literature Session 1 |
| Thursday, August 4 English Language Arts Day 2 | |
| 8:00 a.m. | Sites open. |
| 8:00 - 8:45 a.m. | Breakfast (provided) Sign-In |
| 8:45 a.m. | Student sign-in closes. |
| 9:00 - 11:30 a.m. | ELA Language and Literature Session 2 |
| 11:30 a.m. - 12:15 p.m. | Lunch (provided) |
| 12:30 - 3:00 p.m. | ELA Language and Literature Session 3 |

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| June 2005 | | | | | | |
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NEWS SEARCH

Keyword:

Target:

Dates:

Past 30 days

Past 90 days

Date Range

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End:

Educator Services

Statewide Leadership Forum

To: Policy-makers, Superintendents, Charter School Leaders, Principals, and Teachers

From: David P. Driscoll, Commissioner of Education

Date: May 12, 2005

As we work with school districts to develop strategies that will help all students reach proficiency, strong leadership will be critical. Developing leaders with the skills to sustain a relentless focus on improving teaching and learning will require an aligned agenda and strong partnership between policy-makers and practitioners. To achieve that partnership, I am pleased to invite you to participate in the Massachusetts State Action for Education Leadership Project (SAELP) interactive Statewide Leadership Forum.

The first annual SAELP Statewide Leadership Forum will be held on Wednesday, June 8 at the Omni Parker House in Boston from 8:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m. We are expecting nearly 150 policy-makers, Superintendents, Charter School Leaders, Principals, Teachers, and other stakeholders to join the day's discussion.

The agenda will feature Superintendents from urban districts presenting their work to distribute leadership and develop effective principals and assistant principals. Superintendent Tom Payzant will provide an overview of Boston's successful school improvement initiatives in the Boston Public Schools, including the Boston Principal Fellowship, a district-based principal development and preparation program.

Following the presentations, Forum participants will react to the presentations and discuss the elements of leadership needed to improve student achievement. At the end of the morning, policy-makers and practitioners will have articulated the local and regional leadership needs. This will help inform state plans for leadership activities in the year ahead.

For the program agenda or to register please visit <http://www.doe.mass.edu/conference/?ConferenceID=122>. For more information, please contact either [Nathan Makdad](#) or [Elizabeth Pauley](#) at the Department of Education. I hope you will be able to take part in this important discussion.

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Keyword:

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Educator Services

New Free Content Institutes in the Arts and Humanities

To: Superintendents, Principals, Charter School Directors, and Collaborative Directors

From: David P. Driscoll, Commissioner of Education

Date: May 20, 2005

I am pleased to announce six new summer content institutes in the arts and humanities. Sponsored by the National Endowment for the Arts, the Massachusetts Cultural Council, and a consortium of the six New England states education departments and arts agencies, the free five-day institutes will help participants develop and refine the skills necessary to teach students the artistic, cultural, and historical contexts of outstanding works of art. The institutes will also provide training in related disciplines, such as history, geography, science, and literature, and in assessment of student learning. The institutes are open to teachers in all of the New England states, and will be held in Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Maine and New Hampshire.

During the institutes, teachers will develop curriculum units to implement after they return to their classrooms in the fall. In December, each institute will reconvene its participants for a full day to share their experiences in implementing the curriculum units, and to evaluate the success of the institute itself. All of the institutes offer PDPs and optional graduate credit and may be particularly useful for teachers seeking to become "highly qualified" in the subjects they teach.

The six institutes now open for registration are:

**Shakespeare & Company: Re-Imagining Shakespeare in the Classroom (Lenox, MA)
July 31 - August 5, 2005**

Shakespeare & Company will assist teachers in developing dynamic approaches to teaching *Macbeth* through scholarly inquiry, experiential activities, and the creation of strategies and curriculum units that challenge students intellectually and emotionally. Teachers will learn how to make Shakespeare come alive for students in grades 4-12.

To register or for more information, contact Mark Woollett at 413-637-1199 ext. 131 or education@shakespeare.org.

**Boston Public Library Foundation: Art, Architecture and the Public Square (Boston, MA)
August 1-5, 2005**

The Boston Public Library, in partnership with the Massachusetts Studies Project at UMass-Boston, will present the Library as a model of how public buildings function, not just as monuments to the collective memory, but as constantly evolving works of art. Teachers will learn from the institute how to use local cultural resources to enliven the social studies curriculum for grades 3-12.

To register, contact MSP at 617-287-7654 or k12.msp@umb.edu. For more information, contact Christine Baron at (978) 927-5432 or Christine@BaronEducationConsulting.net

**DeCordova Museum and Sculpture Park: Kinetic Sculpture and the Art of Wind Dynamics
August 8-12, 2005 (Lincoln, MA)**

The museum will focus on the artistic, historical, social, and scientific significance of artist George Rickey's outdoor kinetic sculpture, Three Lines, and examine other kinetic sculptures on exhibit in the sculpture park. Educators will discover strategies to use these works as tools to underscore art and science curricula for grades 6-12.

To register or for more information contact Donna Berube at 781-259-3603 or dberube@decordova.org.

**The Arts Literacy Project at Brown University: Summer Institute (Providence, RI)
July 11-15, 2005**

The Arts Literacy Project Summer Institute will explore Whitman's Song of Myself through multiple media, imparting curriculum development, documentation, and assessment skills to its participating teachers. Teachers will learn how to choose a masterpiece for study in the classroom and how to engage students in grades 7-12 through the use of hip-hop poetry and theater.

To register or for more information contact Nancy Hoffman at 401-863-7017 or Nancyh@brown.edu.

**Portland Museum of Art: Winslow Homer's Weatherbeaten and the Role of Place in Art
(Portland, ME) July 25-29, 2005**

Winslow Homer's 1894 oil painting Weatherbeaten will serve as an anchor work through which participants will explore the role of "place" in works of art. Teachers will learn from experts in arts education and art historians, and meet with contemporary Maine artists for whom Maine's setting plays an important part. Teachers will learn how to use the study of local artists to enliven art and history for high school students.

To register or for more information contact Stacy Rodenberger, Coordinator of School Programs at (207) 775-6148 ex. 3226 or srodenberger@portlandmuseum.org.

For an application, go to www.portlandmuseum.org.

Arts Alliance of Northern New Hampshire: Exploring Persian Culture through the Book of Kings (Littleton, NH)

July 25-29, 2005

This institute will study the epic poem Shahnameh, a Central Asian literary classic written by the 10th century Persian bard Ferdowsi. Teachers will better understand how to engage students in grades 1-12 in the study of an ancient text through art and poetry.

For more information contact Kelly Bryer, Member Services Coordinator, AANNH, 603-726-8843 kelly@aannh.org.

More information about the National Endowment for the Arts Teacher Institutes project is available online at www.massculturalcouncil.org.

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District/School Administration

Knowing My 8 Rules for Safety and Other Child Safety Resources

To: Superintendents, K- 8 School Principals, Charter School Leaders

From: David P. Driscoll, Commissioner of Education

Date: May 20, 2005

As required by Chapter 377 of the Acts of 2000 "**An Act Relative to Child Safety**," the Department of Education recently mailed to all elementary schools in the Commonwealth several copies of the poster "Knowing My Eight Rules For Safety," published by the National Center for Missing & Exploited Children (NCMEC).

Original copies of the poster in English and other languages, as well as the Reprint Policy for NCMEC Publications, can be downloaded at the following online at:

- <http://www.missingkids.com/>
- http://www.missingkids.com/en_US/publications/NC28.pdf

We urge you to download and display the posters in classrooms and other common areas in your schools. Up to 50 copies of the posters can be ordered for free online from NCMEC.

Also enclosed in the mailing was information about the NetSmartz Workshop, an interactive, educational safety resource from NCMEC and Boys & Girls Clubs of America. This web-based program uses age-appropriate, 3-D activities to teach children and teens how to be safer when using the Internet. NetSmartz is available to the public at www.NetSmartz.org and www.NetSmartzKids.org. In the near future, the Department and other state agencies will provide a direct link to these websites from their homepages.

Additionally, the Massachusetts Children's Trust Fund (CTF) has a brochure entitled "10 Ways to Keep Children Safer," available in English, Spanish, Portuguese and Chinese that may be helpful to parents of school-aged children.

Thank you in advance for being our partner in continuing to keep children in the Commonwealth safe.

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