



David P. Driscoll
Commissioner of Education

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Commissioner's Update

July 11, 2005

Dear Superintendents, and Leaders of Charter Schools and Collaboratives:

I have 1 announcement and 3 items for your review in this update.

2005 Summer Content Institutes

The Department of Education's **free** content institutes are rapidly filling to capacity. There is still time to register for the institutes listed below, all of which offer PDPs and optional graduate credit. Please see the brochure posted online at <http://www.doe.mass.edu/frameworks/cinstitute/> for information about how to register. I hope you will take advantage of these high quality professional development opportunities.

History and Social Science

#11: Viewing the People and Places in the Commonwealth through an Economic Looking Glass (begins August 8)

Mathematics

#19: BRIDGES Mathematics for Elementary School Teachers (begins July 11)

Science and Technology/Engineering

#33: Renewable Energy (begins July 14)

#34: Energy and Environment (begins July 25)

#37: Climate Change and the Ocean: Earth and Physical Science (begins July 28)

The following items have been recently posted for your review at www.doe.mass.edu:

1. Final FY06 Chapter 70 Aid and Net School Spending Requirements



2. Final FY05 Charter Tuition and Reimbursement Calculations



3. Final FY05 School Choice Tuition and Pupils



I hope you're all having a pleasant summer.

Sincerely,

David P. Driscoll
Commissioner of Education

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School Finance: Chapter 70 Program

Chapter 70 Aid and Net School Spending Requirements for FY06

July 5, 2005

The FY06 state budget includes a \$105.6 million increase in Chapter 70 aid for public school districts. Aid rises from \$3.183 billion in FY05 to \$3.289 billion in FY06, a 3.32 percent increase.

The following links provide summary charts showing proposed foundation budgets, Chapter 70 aid, required local contributions and net school spending requirements for [school districts](#) and [regional school members](#). The detailed calculations are available by downloading the [formula spreadsheet](#).

Summary

- Foundation budgets rise by an average of 3.79 percent. Statewide foundation enrollment decreased from 959,287 on October 1, 2003 to 955,493 on October 1, 2004, a decline of 0.4 percent. The annual inflation adjustment is 3.74 percent.
- Because of the new charter tuition rate law, the [low-income increments](#) for pupils at Commonwealth charter schools are now credited toward their sending districts' foundation budgets. This results in \$6.7 million in additional Chapter 70 foundation aid for 43 districts.
- Cities and towns' municipal revenue growth factors raise their required local contributions by an average of 5.18 percent.
- Chapter 70 "foundation aid" fills the gap between each district's foundation budget and its required local contribution. Foundation aid accounts for \$2.995 or 91 percent of the entire aid distribution.
- The remaining \$293 million of the aid distribution ensures that every district receives an increase in aid of at least \$50 per pupil.
- This is the second year of a four-year phase in of a new methodology that allocates communities' total required contributions among the school districts to which they belong. The goal is to equalize the contribution as a percentage of foundation budget for each of a community's local and regional districts.
- For six non-operating districts (towns that are fully regionalized or that rely upon tuitioning to educate their pupils) Chapter 70 is capped at the districts' foundation budgets.

Questions about the Chapter 70 program should be addressed to either:

Roger Hatch rhatch@doe.mass.edu 781-338-6527

Rob O'Donnell rodonnell@doe.mass.edu 781-338-6552



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School Finance: Charter Schools

Final FY05 Charter School Tuition and Reimbursements

During the 2004 - 2005 school year Massachusetts' 48 Commonwealth charter schools served a total of 18,249 pupils. Below you will find several links to final FY05 charter school tuition and reimbursement data. These amounts will be used by the Department of Revenue for the purpose of certifying the June 30, 2005 local aid distribution.

The data provided below reflect the spring enrollment as reported by each charter school via the claim form.

- [FY05 Charter Tuition and Reimbursement](#). This page details each district's total full-time equivalent pupils at all charter schools (Column 1); the amount of local tuition, transportation and facilities aid being assessed (Column 5); the amount of direct state subsidy for pupils who were in private or home school settings in FY04 (Column 9); and the amount the Commonwealth is reimbursing each district for the cost of their charter pupils (Column 16).
- [FY05 Charter Pupils and Tuition](#). This page details the number of pupils at each charter school and the total dollars to be paid - including the Commonwealth's subsidy for previously private or home-schooled pupils. It was necessary for the Department to cap the enrollment at four charter schools, in accordance with the charter school statute. Although these reductions are minor in their impact, it is pointed out as a reminder that this provision does exist and is enforced.
- [FY05 Charter School Tuition Rate Calculations](#). On September 17, 2004, Governor Romney signed into law Chapter 352 of the Acts of 2004. Section 31 of this law amends the charter school statute and creates a new method of calculating tuition for Commonwealth charter schools. In addition, it provides that no charter school will receive less tuition in FY05 than it would have under the old law. With this hold harmless mandate, both rate formulas are being used to determine tuition. This link provides access to both rate formulas.
- **FY05 Charter School Pupil Roster**. The pupil rosters provide the detail underlying the charter school assessments. They may be obtained via download from the secure web portal at www4.doemass.org.

If you have any questions please contact Hadley Brett Cabral at the Department of Education at (781) 338-6586 or by email at hcabral@doe.mass.edu.

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School Finance: School Choice

FY05 School Choice Tuition, June 2005

The school choice assessment and tuition amounts due to be incorporated into the June 30, 2005 local aid distribution have been finalized. On June 30, 2005 the State Treasurer's office will process the remaining portion of the assessments and tuition, net of the amounts paid in the December, 2004 and March, 2005 quarterly local aid distributions.

By the end of June, superintendents of sending and receiving districts will be able to obtain their final school choice rosters and tuition amounts for each pupil. The information will be placed in the "outbox" area of the DOE security portal's school choice claim form dropbox. These spreadsheets will show each school choice pupil's name, address, enrollment dates, program, tuition and other information.

A [district summary](#) shows the number of full-time equivalent pupils and tuition amounts for the 149 receiving districts and 265 sending districts involved in this program. During FY05 there were 9,284.91 full-time equivalent pupils participating, with total tuition amounting to \$51,582,920.

[School Choice Tuition Rates](#) are calculated for regular and vocational programs. FY05 school choice tuition rates are set at 75 percent of the FY04 operating cost per full-time equivalent pupil for the receiving school district, with a cap of \$5,000. In addition, the actual special education cost for each special education pupil is paid in full by the sending district. That amount is determined using the same rate methodology for specific services as is used in the special education circuit-breaker program.

If you have any questions about this information, please contact Phyllis Rogers of the Office of School Finance, at (781) 338-6534 or via email at progers@doe.mass.edu.

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