



David P. Driscoll
Commissioner of Education

-  [Update Archive](#)
-  [Commissioner's Welcome](#)
-  [Commissioner's Checklist](#)








Commissioner's Update

January 9, 2006

Dear Superintendents, and Leaders of Charter Schools and Collaboratives:

In this Update I have 5 items recently posted at www.doe.mass.edu for your review:

1. Preliminary Charter School FY06 Tuition and Enrollment

2. Update on Spring 2006 High School Science and Technology/Engineering MCAS Test Administration

3. Ordering Test Materials for the MCAS March Retest, Spring MCAS (Grades 3-10), and MEPA-R/W (Grades 3-12) Administrations

4. College Board Online Demonstration of AP Potential Program

5. Call for Conference Presenters: Enhancing Alternative Education - State Conference


All the best for the New Year, and

David P. Driscoll
Commissioner of Education

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



- › Finance/Grants
 - Recent Updates
- › Accounting & Auditing
- › Chapter 70 Program (Foundation Budget)
- › Charter Schools
- › Circuit Breaker
- › DOE Budget
- › Federal Renovation Program
- › Grants: Information
- › Nutrition Programs (School Lunch)
- › Per Pupil Expenditure Reports
- › School Building Issues
- › School Choice
- › School Finance Regulations
- › Statistical Comparisons
- › Transportation
- › Vocational Education
- › Key Contacts
- › Links

School Finance: Charter Schools

Preliminary Charter School FY06 Tuition and Enrollment

Below you will find the Department of Education's most recent calculation of preliminary FY06 charter school tuition and reimbursements. These amounts will be used by the Department of Revenue for purposes of certifying the December 30, 2005 local aid distribution. Final FY06 tuition and reimbursements will be calculated in early June 2006.

The second quarter projections include a facilities tuition component of \$1,031 per student. This is a substantial increase over the amount used in the first quarter projections (\$747).

All districts and charter schools are reminded that the second quarter tuition calculations are still estimates. We are still processing the capital spending reports for some districts, and we will continue to update the enrollment and district spending data in the other parts of the formula. We are also having discussions with Administration & Finance and the Legislature regarding the impact of the one-time MSBA payments, to determine whether additional legislative action is needed to address the situation. In the meantime, charter schools are urged to use caution in making budget adjustments based on these second quarter estimates.

The facilities component of the tuition rate is based on the average spending in all districts for capital costs in the prior year. The reported spending for the 2004-2005 school year is significantly higher because of the large number of one-time payments made in FY05 by the Massachusetts School Building Authority (MSBA).

Under the revised charter school tuition formula enacted in 2004, it was expected that the state would reimburse districts for the full amount of the facilities component of the tuition rate. Because of the large increase in this component this year, the amount currently appropriated for this reimbursement will cover approximately 88 percent of each district's costs. Districts are responsible for paying the balance. In nearly all cases, however, this will result in an overall increase in the district's tuition payment, which in turn will trigger a 100% reimbursement under the 100/60/40 reimbursement program. In a few cases, districts are not held completely harmless by the tuition reimbursement (because of declining enrollments or other reasons), but the shortfalls are relatively small. The tuition payments and reimbursements for each district are shown on the accompanying charts.

The data provided herein reflect the fall enrollment as reported by each charter school via a SIMS (Student Information Management System) electronic data transmission.

- [PRELIMINARY FY06 CHARTER TUITION AND REIMBURSEMENT](#): A listing of each district's total enrollment at all charter schools (Column 1); the local tuition assessed, including the facilities component (Column 4); the Commonwealth's reimbursement to districts for the facilities component of their tuition (Column 14); and the amount that the Commonwealth is reimbursing each district for the cost of their charter pupils (Column 13). The portion of the facility component covered by the 100/60/40 reimbursement program may be found in Column 15, with the total reimbursement of the facilities component shown in Column 16.
- [PRELIMINARY FY06 CHARTER PUPILS AND TUITION](#): A listing of the number of pupils at each charter school and the total dollars to be paid.

- [FY06 CHARTER SCHOOL TUITION RATE CALCULATIONS](#): Reports showing the full detail behind the tuition rate calculations.
- [PRELIMINARY FY06 PUPIL ROSTERS](#): Charter school pupil rosters may be downloaded from the Department of Education's [Secure Web Portal](#) via Drop Box Central. To obtain your roster please go to the Claim Form Drop Box and select your organization type, i.e., Public School District or Charter School.

Questions regarding charter school tuition and reimbursements may be addressed to Hadley Brett Cabral in School Finance at (781) 338-6586, or via email, at hcabral@doe.mass.edu.

Print View #160;



- > MCAS Home
- > School Notices
- > About The MCAS
 - Test Schedule
 - Test Items
 - Scoring Guides/Student Work
 - MCAS Results
- > MCAS Alternate Assessment
- > MEPA
- > Publications
- > MCAS Performance Appeals
 - Parent Information Hotline
 - 1-866-MCAS220



Assessment/Accountability > MCAS >

Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System

Update on Spring 2006 High School Science and Technology/Engineering MCAS Test Administration

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

From: David P. Driscoll, Commissioner of Education

Date: January 10, 2006

The purpose of this memorandum is to provide details for districts and schools regarding the participation requirements and administration of the spring 2006 MCAS tests in high school Science and Technology/Engineering. The guidelines provided in this memo refer only to the spring 2006 administration. As the date of the Science and Technology/Engineering Competency Determination requirement approaches, we will communicate further updates on participation requirements. The high school Science and Technology/Engineering MCAS tests will be administered in Biology, Chemistry, Introductory Physics, and Technology/Engineering at grade 9 and grade 10 as indicated in the table below.

High School Science and Technology/Engineering Tests Administered by Grade, Spring 2006

	Biology	Chemistry	Introductory Physics	Technology/Engineering
Grade 9	✓ (optional)	✓ (optional)	✓	✓
Grade 10	✓	✓	✓	✓

Test Participation Requirements for Grades 9 and 10

- All students in grades 9 and 10 must participate in one of the tests that corresponds to the course she/he will complete, or has completed, in the 2005-2006 school year (e.g., a student enrolled in a "semester block" course in fall 2005 must participate in the spring test). Exceptions to this requirement include grade 9 students enrolled in biology or chemistry; participation for these students is **optional**. The principal should decide whether to administer the test to grade 9 students in these two courses based on whether the school plans to administer these tests at this grade when Science and Technology/Engineering testing becomes part of the high school Competency Determination.
- When ordering test materials, the principal should request the appropriate number of tests that match each student's course of study.

For example, the table below shows the number of students enrolled by grade in each science course.

High School Science and Technology/Engineering Tests Administered by Grade, Spring 2006

	Biology	Chemistry	Introductory Physics	Technology/Engineering
Grade 9	0	0	100	100
Grade 10	200	100	0	100

Therefore, the enrollment survey for that school will include the following information.

- Biology - 200
 - Chemistry - 100
 - Introductory Physics -100
 - Technology/Engineering - 200
- A student who is enrolled in two of the listed science and technology/engineering courses should participate in only one test. While the Department has not yet made a final determination regarding who should make the decision about which test a student should take, we believe that the parent(s)/guardian of the student, with guidance provided by the principal, teachers, and guidance counselor, are in the best position to act in the student's interests. If you wish to provide comments to the Department about this decision, please send an e-mail with your recommendations to mcas@doe.mass.edu.
 - A student who took either the Introductory Physics test or the Technology/Engineering test at grade 9 in spring 2005 must also participate in the spring 2006 MCAS Science and Technology/Engineering tests if he/she is enrolled in or has completed a course in one of the tested disciplines in the 2005-2006 school year.
 - A student who is **not** enrolled in a course of study in any of the four disciplines listed should not participate.

Please Note: When the Science and Technology/Engineering tests become part of the high school Competency Determination, all students will be required to take at least one of the four tests by the completion of grade 10. Therefore, it is expected that all students will have completed at least one of the four courses on which the tests are based.

Participation Requirements for Students with Disabilities and LEP Students

Students with disabilities who require one or more accommodation(s), including Braille tests, large-print tests, or electronic text readers, are required to participate in the spring 2006 administration. LEP students in their first year of enrollment in U.S. schools are also required to participate.

Content, Schedule, Format, and Reporting Results

- The Science and Technology/Engineering tests are scheduled for May 25-June 2, 2006, and will be administered in two sessions. Each session should take approximately 60 minutes; however, these tests are not timed.
- All four tests in Science and Technology/Engineering share a common format. Each test includes a total of 52 multiple-choice and 7 open-response items.
- Results will be based on 40 multiple-choice and 5 open-response items for each test. These items will be aligned with the high school standards in the Massachusetts Science and Technology/Engineering Curriculum Framework (May 2001), and will not be based on the proposed revised high school science and technology/engineering standards being brought to the Board for approval in January 2006.
- Results will be reported as aggregated item analysis results at the student, school, district, and state levels. Results from these tests will not be used as part of the high school Competency Determination.
- Test items on which 2006 results are based will be released on the Department's Web site following the test administration.

Please contact Katie Bowler, Administrator for Science and Technology/Engineering Test Development, at cbowler@doe.mass.edu or (781) 338-3464 if you have further questions.



- > MCAS Home
- > School Notices
- > About The MCAS
 - Test Schedule
 - Test Items
 - Scoring Guides/Student Work
 - MCAS Results
- > MCAS Alternate Assessment
- > MEPA
- > Publications
- > MCAS Performance Appeals
 - Parent Information Hotline
 - 1-866-MCAS220



Assessment/Accountability > MCAS >

Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System

Ordering Test Materials for the MCAS March Retest, Spring MCAS (Grades 3-10), and MEPA-R/W (Grades 3-12) Administrations

Deadline to Respond: January 27, 2006

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

Copy: Superintendents

From: David P. Driscoll, Commissioner of Education

Date: January 5, 2006

In order to ensure that your school will receive sufficient materials for the upcoming MCAS and MEPA testing, you will need to complete the following online order forms:

- MCAS March Retest
- MCAS Grades 3-10 Tests (including MCAS-Alt)
- MEPA-R/W Grades 3-12 Tests

To access the MCAS and MEPA Web order forms, you will need to use the password sent in your shipment of spring 2005 MCAS reports. During the week of January 9, 2006, your school's password will be re-sent to you via hard copy.

Please note that the deadline for completing your online order for materials is **5:00 p.m., January 27, 2006.**

The steps for completing your order for materials are outlined in the table below.

Step	Instructions	Responsible Party
1a.	Review school contact information Review your school's contact information posted on the forms listed below. These forms will be posted at www.mcasservicecenter.com beginning January 17.	Principal
1b.	Update/correct any inaccurate school contact information Access the Department's Directory Administration via the Security Portal. Provide necessary updates to shipping address, telephone and fax numbers, and e-mail addresses for principal and MCAS test coordinator (where applicable).	District-level Directory Administrator
2.	Order test materials Access the forms posted at www.mcasservicecenter.com beginning January 17.	Principal

Order Form 1. March Retest*

Click on MCAS, then click Enrollment Verification, and then click March Retest.

Order Form 2. Spring Grades 3-10 Tests

Click on MCAS, then click Enrollment Verification, and then click MCAS Spring Grades 3-10 Tests.

Order Form 3. MEPA-R/W Grades 3-12 Click on

MEPA, and then click Enrollment Verification.

* **Note:** Before ordering March Retest materials, high school principals are encouraged to contact all eligible students, including former students, to inform them of the opportunity to participate in this retest.

Please contact the MCAS Service Center at (800) 737-5103 if you have any questions about accessing the Web site to order test materials. As always, please direct policy questions and questions about the guidelines for participation to the Student Assessment Services Unit at (781) 338-3625.

Thank you for your assistance, and for understanding that ordering test materials by January 27 is critical to ensuring that you will receive all necessary materials in time for test administration.

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



EVENTS CALENDAR

January 2006						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31	1	2	3	4

NEWS SEARCH

Keyword:

Dates:

Past 30 days

Past 90 days

Date Range

Start:

End:

College Board Online Demonstration of AP Potential Program

To: Superintendents, High School Principals

From: David P. Driscoll, Commissioner of Education

Date: January 9, 2006

On January 12, the College Board will offer a free, interactive, online demonstration of their AP Potential Program, presented by Debbie Stolting, assistant director of operations for the Advanced Placement Program. The demonstration will be held from 3 to 4:30 p.m. EST.

AP Potential is a Web-based tool that uses correlations between PSAT/NMSQT scores and AP Exam results to create rosters of students who may be successful in AP.

College Board online events and workshops are presented using Elluminate Live! software. Participants need to download and install Java Web(tm) Start to

access the event on Elluminate. For instructions for this free download and for system requirements, go online to: <http://click.collegeboard.com:80/2153986.36429.0.16634>.

After installing Java Web Start, join the event by clicking on this link: <http://click.collegeboard.com:80/2153986.36429.0.17129>.

For any questions regarding an existing registration, call (800) 787-7477. For all other questions regarding online events, call Rashida Koroma at (212) 373-8788.

E-mail this page | Print View



- > AltEd Home
- > AltEd News
- > About AltEd
- > Grants
- > Resources

Family & Community > Alternative Learning >

Alternative Education

Call for Presenters

For a state conference: Enhancing Alternative Education

April 13, 2006

Hogan Center, College of the Holy Cross, Worcester

To expand and strengthen Alternative Education for "at-risk" students in Massachusetts, the Massachusetts Department of Education is sponsoring a conference to provide the opportunity to network and gain knowledge of strategies and innovative ideas to increase the success of Alternative Education. The daylong conference will include three blocks of breakout sessions with a variety of presentations.

The Department of Education invites you to share your knowledge and expertise with your colleagues as a presenter at a breakout session. Example presentation topics include: using technology-based instruction, handling support service referrals, innovative techniques for engaging students, partnering with community based organizations, and fostering parent/family involvement.

All proposals will be seriously considered. Depending on the final number of session topics, presenters may address one or multiple breakout sessions. Breakout sessions will be 75 minutes long and held at 11:00, 12:45, and/or 2:15.

If you are interested in presenting, please complete both pages of the attached proposal form and email it to Jenny Caldwell, State Coordinator of Alternative Education, at jcaldwell@doe.mass.edu by February 3, 2006. For questions, please contact Jenny via email or phone (781-338-6839). Notification to the primary presenter will be made no later than February 24, 2006.

We look forward to hearing from you.



Proposal Form

E-mail this page | Print View