



David P. Driscoll
Commissioner of Education

- > Update Archive
- > Commissioner's Welcome

 Superintendent's Checklist

Commissioner's Update



October 18, 2006

Dear Superintendents, and Leaders of Charter Schools and Collaboratives:

In this Update I have five announcements and four items recently posted at www.doe.mass.edu for your review.

Update

High School Science and Technology/Engineering Parents Memo

I have prepared a **letter to parents**   of students in the class of 2010 (current grade 9 students) notifying them of the upcoming addition of high school Science and Technology/Engineering to the Competency Determination requirement. Please share this important letter with parents or guardians of grade 9 students to help them understand the significance of this new state graduation requirement.

New FY07 Academic Support Competitive Grant RFP Application Released

The goal of this state-funded competitive program is to provide summer remediation in English Language Arts (ELA) and/or Mathematics for students in the Classes of 2010-2011 who scored in the warning level on the 7th and/or 8th grade English language arts and/or mathematics MCAS tests. This grant opportunity serves as part of a comprehensive intervention plan to help students meet and exceed the Competency Determination standards on their initial try in the spring of their 10th grade year. These services are to supplement currently funded local, state, and federal programs.

Entities eligible to apply for funds include all public school districts and charter schools that have students who will attend school in the district in the fall of 2007 who are from the Classes of 2010-2011 and scored at the warning level on the 7th and/or 8th grade ELA and/or mathematics MCAS tests. **All proposals must be received by 5 p.m. on Wednesday, November 15, 2006.** For more details, review http://finance1.doe.mass.edu/Grants/grants07/rfp/619_592.html or contact the Student Support Unit via achievement@doe.mass.edu or 781-338-3203.

New MTEL Features for 2006-2007

New features have been implemented for the Massachusetts Tests for Educator Licensure (MTEL) for the 2006-2007 school year. Modifications to test score reporting were made so that candidates for educator licensure and the professionals who help prepare them can better understand and use test results, and to prevent misuse of the scores for purposes other than licensure. Key score reporting changes are described below.

- Test results will be reported on a **scale of 100 - 300**, replacing the previous 0 -100 scale. The qualifying score will be a scaled score of 240. By reporting test results on the 100 to 300 scale, it will be more evident that the scores are scaled scores and cannot be misinterpreted as a percentage of test items answered correctly.
- Candidates who **pass a test** will continue to receive a result of "Met the Qualifying Score" for their passing status and **will no longer receive a numerical total test score**. Candidates who do not pass a test will continue to receive a result of "Did Not Meet the Qualifying Score" and a numerical total test scaled score.
- The official MTEL individual score report that is mailed to candidates has been updated to reflect the new 100 - 300 score scale and redesigned to provide a chart that better organizes test results.

Other new features for the 2006-2007 program year include five additional test dates for the Communication and Literacy Skills Test, enhanced customer service, and an updated Faculty Guide that will be posted later this month on the MTEL web site at www.mtel.nesinc.com.





The Concord Review

The Concord Review, the National Association of Scholars, and the Colonial Society of Massachusetts are submitting three proposals for Teaching American History grants for 2008-2010. Any LEA with 20,000 students or group of LEAs with 20,000 students interested in taking part in a Teaching American History grant starting in 2008 should contact Will Fitzhugh at: Fitzhugh@tcr.org.

Student Artwork Wanted

One of the most popular features on our website is the presentation of student artwork. We are inviting public school K-12 teachers and students to submit new samples for the 2006-2007 school year. This unique opportunity showcases students' creativity and the pictures are a welcome sight for more than 12,000 people who visit our home page daily. Instructions for submission are posted at <http://www.doe.mass.edu/resources/kidart.asp>.

Postings at www.doe.mass.edu:

1. Update to the NCLB Highly Qualified Teacher (HQT) Requirements and District Action Steps for the Coming Year

2. New Mercury Legislation Will Affect Schools

3. Resource Guide to the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks for Students with Disabilities (Fall 2006)

4. Fall 2006 MEPA Administration Updates


Sincerely,

David P. Driscoll
Commissioner of Education

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



› NCLB Home

› Federal Grant Programs

Title I
Title II-A
Title II-D
Title III
Title IV
Title V-A

› Goals & Indicators

› Resources

Supplemental Services
Consolidated District Planning
Consolidated State Application
Guidance for Private Schools
NCLB Report Cards
School/District Improvement

Assessment/Accountability › No Child Left Behind ›

Title II-A: Preparing, Training, and Recruiting High Quality Teachers and Principals

Update to the NCLB Highly Qualified Teacher (HQT) Requirements and District Action Steps for the Coming Year

To: Superintendents, Principals and Leaders of Charter School

From: David P. Driscoll, Commissioner of Education

Date: October 13, 2006

As you are aware, the federal NCLB deadline for all teachers of core academic subjects to meet highly qualified teacher requirements was this past June 30, 2006. As of that date, Massachusetts could only report the 93% highly qualified rate ascertained by the October 2005 annual data collection. As you may know, U.S. ED asked all states to submit a Revised State HQT Plan this summer that addressed several issues including how states will work with their school districts to ensure that teachers achieve HQT status as quickly as possible. Those states with accepted plans will have until June 30, 2007 to have all of their teachers designated as HQT.

Our first submission of our Revised State HQT Plan was not approved by the U.S. Department of Education primarily because our state lacks data at the individual educator level. We are joined by 43 other states that have not received approval of their revised plans; the nine states receiving approval submitted individual educator level data. We have made it clear to U.S.ED that we are developing an individual educator database ("EPIMS") that will become operational statewide in October 2007 and have received assurances that the highly qualified data we can provide in the interim will be sufficient.

The Department has recently provided U.S.ED with the second submission of our plan. I believe we are on track for approval by November of this year. I am writing at this time to provide you with as much advance notice as possible of what is likely to be approved in our amended plan. I believe it prudent to plan according to the following information, even though our plan has not received official approval from U.S.ED. In addition, this memo includes additional information about HQT policies that are not included in the plan but will become effective July 1, 2007. The Department is providing you with information about these policy changes now so that you will be aware and plan accordingly for the implementation of these changes during the next academic year.

Memo Table of Contents:

[MA DOE and District 1 Action Steps for the 2006-2007 Academic Year:](#)

- State Equity Plan
- Modifications to the MA HOUSSE Procedures
- Development and Implementation of District Teacher Quality Improvement Plans
- MA DOE Technical Assistance
- MA DOE Monitoring of District Plans and HQT Progress
- HQT Corrective Action Provisions

[Massachusetts HQT Policy Changes Effective July 1, 2007](#)

[Attachment A: District Cohorts](#)

[View All](#)

¹ References to "district(s)" in this document includes charter schools.

[Massachusetts DOE and District Action Steps for the 2006-2007 Academic Year](#) >

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



EVENTS CALENDAR

November 2006

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
29	30	31	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	1	2

NEWS SEARCH

Keyword:

Dates:

 Past 30 days Past 90 days Date Range

Start:

End:



Friday, October 06, 2006

2006 Mercury Management Act

The Department of Environmental Protection describes the 2006 Mercury Management Act and identifies alternative resources for use in schools.

[New Mercury Legislation Will Affect Schools](#)[Fact Sheet: Making Massachusetts Schools Mercury-Free](#)[E-mail this page](#) | [Print View](#)



- › [MCAS Home](#)
 - › [School Notices](#)
 - › [About the MCAS](#)
 - › [Test Schedule](#)
 - › [Test Items](#)
 - › [Scoring Guides/Student Work](#)
 - › [MCAS Results](#)
 - › [MCAS Alternate Assessment](#)
 - › [MEPA](#)
 - › [NAEP](#)
 - › [Publications](#)
 - › [MCAS Performance Appeals](#)
- Parent Information Hotline
1-866-MCAS220



[Assessment/Accountability](#) › [MCAS](#) ›

Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System

Wednesday, October 18, 2006

Resource Guide to the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks for Students with Disabilities (Fall 2006)

October 16, 2006

Dear Colleagues:

I am pleased to announce the revised edition of the [Resource Guide to the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks for Students with Disabilities](#) (Fall 2006).

Educators are encouraged to use this important resource to assist them in aligning instruction with the state's learning standards, and to provide challenging academic instruction to all students with disabilities. The innovative approaches and concrete examples in this guide help teachers identify and use "entry points" to the grade-level standards in order to provide instruction at a level that is challenging and attainable for each student.

The 2001 version of this Resource Guide has been recognized as a national model for the alignment of instruction, particularly for students with significant disabilities who take alternate assessments based on alternate achievement standards. The 2006 version of the guide has been revised and expanded to include information for the new grades tested under NCLB and the most recent updates to the learning standards. The guide is equally suited for use with other students who are not yet performing at grade-level expectations.

Printed copies of this guide will be available in November. Currently, the guide is posted to the Department's Web page at www.doe.mass.edu/mcas/alt/resources.html.

Sincerely,

David P. Driscoll
Commissioner of Education



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



Assessment/Accountability > MCAS >

Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System

Fall 2006 MEPA Administration Updates

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

Copy: Superintendents, District-Level Directory Administrators, and English Language Learner (ELL) Directors

From: David P. Driscoll, Commissioner of Education

Date: October 16, 2006

As a reminder, the fall 2006 MEPA-R/W test administration will be held from October 23 through 31, 2006. MELA-O administration dates are October 3-31.

The following students in grades 3-12 are required to participate in the fall 2006 MEPA R/W:

- All LEP students enrolled in grade 3*
- All LEP students in grades 4-12 who did not participate in the spring 2006 MEPA-R/W

The following students are required to participate in the fall 2006 MELA-O:

- All LEP students enrolled in Kindergarten*
- All LEP students enrolled in grade 3*
- All LEP students in grades 1-2 and 4-12 who did not participate in the spring 2006 MELA-O

* Students who are repeating Kindergarten or grade 3 and have already taken the MEPA tests are not required to participate.

Fall MEPA-R/W Administration Update

To assist you in preparing for test administration, the *MEPA Principal's Administration Manual*, which contains procedures and participation requirements for the fall administration, is now posted online at www.doe.mass.edu/mcas/mepa.

MEPA R/W test materials will be shipped to schools for receipt by Monday, October 16. Principals are advised to carefully inventory materials immediately upon receipt. Please be sure to order additional test materials by October 19.

Fall MELA-O Update

MELA-O scores for students in grades 3-12 are recorded on the students' answer booklets. MELA-O scores for students in grades K-2 must be submitted using an [online form](#) that can be accessed via the Department's

Security Portal. Principals or their designees are responsible for submitting K-2 MELA-O scores using this online form beginning October 30. The deadline for submission is November 28.

If you have questions about the MEPA R/W test administration or submitting MELA-O scores, please contact Student Assessment Services at 781-338-3625.

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

Massachusetts Department of Education

[Search](#) · [Site Map](#) · [Policies](#) · [Site Info](#) · [Contact DOE](#)