



David P. Driscoll
Commissioner of Education

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Commissioner's Update

June 19, 2007

Dear Superintendents, and Leaders of Charter Schools and Collaboratives:

In this Update I have three announcements and two items for your review.

New Information and Tools from Charter School Dissemination Projects Now Available

The Massachusetts Department of Education has funded Charter School Dissemination Grant projects through a federal award for more than 8 years. These competitively awarded projects support the sharing of innovations from successful charter schools as required by Massachusetts law.

Information about the 2006-2007 round of Massachusetts Charter School Dissemination Grant projects is now available at <http://www.doe.mass.edu/charter/dissemination/default.asp>. Projects include the continuation of governance trainings by Sturgis Charter Public School and the "Making Learning Visible" Collaboration by Conservatory Lab Charter School. In addition, new projects underway are:

- *Exponential Growth: High-Impact Practices to Raise Mathematics Achievement*, a project by Prospect Hill Academy Charter School to share its successes in high school math instruction with the Somerville Public Schools and other districts;
- A project by North Central Charter Essential School to share its grades 7 - 12, inquiry based, "Essential Science" program; and
- A collaboration led by Boston Day and Evening Academy to create tools to evaluate school impact on student development for at-risk youth.

In addition, final products, tools, and results from the 2005-2006 round of this grant program-including a high school literacy project by Codman Academy Charter Public School and a differentiated learning project by Martha's Vineyard Public Charter School are now posted at <http://www.doe.mass.edu/charter/dissemination/default.asp?section=7>.

Water Safety Reminder

As the warm weather season begins, please be mindful of children swimming in pools, beaches and lakes. It is important that everyone - especially parents, guardians and recreational leaders - take extra measures to ensure all children are safe when they are in or near water. Swimming is an excellent way to cool off, great exercise and a lot of fun, but if children are not properly supervised tragic accidents can occur. For specific tips on water safety, please check this link on the Department of Public Health's website: <http://www.mass.gov/dph/fch/injury/watersafe03.htm>.

Advisory on School Nurses and Eligibility for Professional Teacher Status

The Department of Education's legal staff has prepared an advisory addressing questions we have received about Chapter 267 of the Acts of 2006, *An Act Granting School Nurses Eligibility for Professional Teacher Status*. The advisory is posted on the Laws and Regulations page of our website under Advisory Opinions at: <http://www.doe.mass.edu/lawsregs/advisories.html>. We hope you will find it helpful.

Items Posted at www.doe.mass.edu:

1. [March 2007 MCAS Retest ELA Student Compositions](#)
2. [2008-2009 Statewide MCAS and MEPA Test Administration Schedule](#)

Congratulations to you all on another successful school year. Thank you again for the great work that you do for the children of the Commonwealth.

Sincerely,

David P. Driscoll
Commissioner of Education

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Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System

March 2007 MCAS Retest ELA Student Compositions

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

Copy: Principals

From: David P. Driscoll, Commissioner of Education

Date: June 19, 2007

I am pleased to announce that images of students' March 2007 MCAS Retest English Language Arts (ELA) compositions will be available online on June 21.

A principal may access the compositions for his or her school as follows:

- Go to www.mcasservicecenter.com
- Select MCAS
- Select MCAS Reporting
- Click OK

You are now at the MCAS Results and Discrepancy Reporting page

- Select District
- Select School
- Enter Password
- Click Login
- Click Student Compositions (upper right hand corner)

As a reminder, the composition site contains official student records, which must remain confidential. State and federal law require that access to an individual student's results is **strictly limited** to the student, parents/guardians, and authorized school personnel.

If you have problems accessing the Web site, please contact the MCAS Service Center at

1-800-737-5103. If you have questions regarding the compositions, contact the Student Assessment Services Unit at 781-338-3625.

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Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System



2008-2009 Statewide MCAS and MEPA Test Administration Schedule

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

Copy: MCAS Test Coordinators

From: David P. Driscoll, Commissioner of Education

Date: June 19, 2007

To assist you in planning your school and district calendars, I am pleased to provide the **2008-2009 MCAS and MEPA test administration schedule**  .

The Department is highly sensitive to scheduling conflicts that may arise as a result of increased statewide testing in our schools. We have attempted to account for a broad range of potential scheduling conflicts, including holidays and major educational professional events, by consulting with an extensive array of educational/professional organizations and individual educators.

As a reminder, the testing schedule for the 2007-2008 school year has been posted to the Department's Web site at www.doe.mass.edu/mcas/cal.html since last spring. If these dates are not already incorporated in your school and district schedules, please be sure to make note.

Please contact the Student Assessment Services Unit at 781-338-3625 if you have any questions.

Thank you for your cooperation.

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