Mitchell D. Chester
Commissioner of
Elementary and Secondary
Education

- Update Archive
- Commissioner's Welcome
- Superintendents' Checklist

RSS

# Commissioner's Update

**August 22, 2008**

Dear Superintendents and Leaders of Charter Schools and Collaboratives:

For as long as I can remember, for me the end of August has always meant Back to School. This started when I was a kid, and continued into my adult life when I became a teacher, then an administrator, a parent and now Commissioner.

As much as I enjoy the summer, the first few weeks of school are always my favorite time of year. I have already planned several school visits for the first few weeks in September, and intend to schedule others as the school year gets underway so I can learn more about the unique programs and opportunities offered in each district. I would welcome suggestions about particular programs or communities you think I should visit along the way.

Enjoy the last few days of summer and I wish you all a smooth Opening Day.

All the best,

Mitchell D. Chester, Ed.D.
Commissioner of Elementary and Secondary Education

In this Update I have four announcements and one item for your review.

## 2008 MCAS and AYP Reporting Schedule

As a reminder, the 2008 MCAS and AYP Data Review Schedule has been posted to the Department's website. It is extremely important that you report any MCAS discrepancies during the discrepancy period, which is August 15-25. Additional information regarding MCAS discrepancy reporting has been posted to MCAS Headlines at http://www.doe.mass.edu/mcas/.

Please note that we have added tentative dates for the public release of MCAS and AYP results (school-, district-, and state-level results). As a reminder, MCAS School- and district-level results are embargoed until Wednesday, September 24, when the Department will release final results to the public.

**Items Posted at www.doe.mass.edu:**

1. Important Information about the Massachusetts English Proficiency Assessment (MEPA) for Fall 2008
   Deadline to Complete Enrollment Verification: September 19, 2008
2. Instructions for Ordering Materials for the November 2008 MCAS Retest and February 2009 Biology Test Administrations
   Deadline to Respond: September 19, 2008
3. Fall 2008 Training Sessions for Qualified MELA-O Trainers (QMTs)
4. Careful Hiring of Education Personnel, Including Substitute Teachers
5. Nominees Needed for Massachusetts Tests for Educator Licensure (MTEL) Test Review Committees
6. Reminder about Requirement to Report Educator Misconduct
7. Completion of First EPIMS Collection
8. Legal Holiday; Accommodation for Religious Observances
9. Holiday Observances in Massachusetts

Sincerely,

Mitchell D. Chester, Ed.D.
Commissioner of Elementary and Secondary Education

last updated: August 25, 2008

- MCAS Home
- About the MCAS
- MCAS/MEPA Test Schedule
- Test Administration
- Participation Requirements
- Test Items
- Student Work/Scoring Guides
- MCAS Results
- MCAS Alternate Assessment
- MEPA
  - ELPBO Requirements
  - Participation Requirements
  - Sample Work/Scoring Guides
  - Test Administration
  - Results
- NAEP
- Other Resources:
  - Pathways to Success on MCAS
  - MCAS Performance Appeals
  - MCAS Service Center
  - Adams Scholarship
  - Parent Hotline 1-866-MCAS220



# Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System

## Important Information about the Massachusetts English Proficiency Assessment (MEPA) for Fall 2008

**Deadline to Complete Enrollment Verification: September 19, 2008**

To: Superintendents, Principals, and Directors of Charter Schools

Cc: English Language Learner Program Directors and Educators Serving English Language Learners

From: Mitchell D. Chester, Ed.D.
Commissioner of Elementary and Secondary Education

Date: August 20, 2008

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In fall 2008, all LEP students in grades 1-12 will participate in a field test for MEPA-R/W.

Some LEP students must also participate in fall MEPA testing, as shown in the table below. In preparation for fall testing, principals must complete the enrollment verification form between September 2 and 19.

| Test | Who Participates | Ordering Test Materials |
|---|---|---|
| **2008 MEPA-R/W Field Test** (October 6-10) | All LEP students enrolled in grades 1-12 | Test materials are automatically shipped to schools based on their March SIMS submission |
| **Fall 2008 MEPA** | | |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| MELA-O<br>(October 1-29) | • All LEP students enrolled in kindergarten[1]<br>• Only those LEP students enrolled in grades 1-12 who did not participate in the spring 2008 MELA-O | N/A |
| MEPA-R/W<br>(October 20-29) | • All LEP students enrolled in grade 3[2]<br>• Only those LEP students enrolled in grades 4-12 who did not participate in the spring 2008 MEPA-R/W | **Schools must complete the enrollment verification form between September 2 and 19.** See attached instructions . |

1 Exception: Students who are repeating kindergarten and participated in the spring 2008 MELA-O do not participate.

2 Exception: Students who are repeating grade 3 and participated in the spring 2008 MEPA-R/W do not participate.

If you are unsure of whether a student participated in the spring 2008 MELA-O or MEPA-R/W, you may research the student's score using one of the following methods:

- Review your school and/or district's spring 2008 MEPA data file posted at www.mcasservicecenter.com under "MEPA Reporting." (Principals will have access only to their own school's data; superintendents will have access to data for all schools within their district.)
- Review copies of your school's *MEPA Parent/Guardian Reports* from spring 2008.
- Contact the student's previous school or district to request the student's scores.
- Call the MCAS Service Center (800-737-5103) to request the student's scores. You will need to provide the student's name, SASID, date of birth, and name of previous school.

Thank you for your attention to this important information about English proficiency assessments for LEP students.

Instructions for Principals Preparing for the Fall 2008 MEPA Test Administration

last updated: August 25, 2008

- MCAS Home
- About the MCAS
- MCAS/MEPA Test Schedule
- Test Administration
- Participation Requirements
- Test Items
- Student Work/Scoring Guides
- MCAS Results
- MCAS Alternate Assessment
- MEPA
- NAEP
- Other Resources:
  - Pathways to Success on MCAS
  - MCAS Performance Appeals
  - MCAS Service Center
  - Adams Scholarship
  - Parent Hotline 1-866-MCAS220



# Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System

## Instructions for Ordering Materials for the November 2008 MCAS Retest and February 2009 Biology Test Administrations

**Deadline to Respond: September 19, 2008**

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

From: Mitchell D. Chester, Ed.D.
Commissioner of Elementary and Secondary Education

Date: August 20, 2008

Updated September 17, 2008

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I am writing to provide information about participation guidelines, administration dates, and instructions for ordering test materials for the November 2008 MCAS English Language Arts (ELA) and Mathematics retests and the February 2009 Biology test.

### Participation Guidelines and Administration Dates

When preparing for test administration and ordering test materials, remember that all Massachusetts students educated at public expense, including students enrolled in educational collaboratives and approved and unapproved private special education schools within and outside the state, who are seeking to obtain a high school diploma are required to meet the Competency Determination (CD) standard. Superintendents must ensure that schools and programs that serve their students, both inside and outside the district, order test materials for students who are eligible and choose to participate.

Below are participation guidelines for these upcoming test administrations.

| Test | Who May Participate | Administration Dates |
|---|---|---|
| November Retest | • Students repeating grade 10 who have not yet earned a scaled score of 220 on the ELA/ Mathematics tests (updated Sept. 17, 2008)<br>• Students in grades 11 and 12 who have not yet earned a scaled score of 220 on the ELA/ Mathematics tests (updated Sept. 17, 2008)<br>• Adults who have exited high school and are attempting to earn a CD<br><br>See Attachment A for more information. | ELA: November 5-7, 2008<br>Mathematics: November 12-13, 2008 |
| February Biology | • Students in grades 9 and 10 who have completed or are expected to complete a high school biology course by the time of testing<br>• students in grade 11 who have not earned their CD in Science and Technology/Engineering | February 2-3, 2009 |

## Preparation for Testing

To prepare for these test administrations, principals must

1. update shipping information by **September 19** (see Attachment B);
2. complete the enrollment verification form for ordering test materials **between September 8 and 19, even if no test materials are needed** (see Attachment B).

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

Additional information about these test administrations, including the test administration manuals, will be posted later this fall to the Department's website at www.doe.mass.edu/mcas.

Thank you for your assistance.

Attachment A: Additional November Retest Participation Guidelines

Attachment B: Instructions for Principals Preparing for the November 2008 MCAS Retests and February 2009 MCAS Biology Test

- MCAS Home
- About the MCAS
- MCAS/MEPA Test Schedule
- Test Administration
- Participation Requirements
- Test Items
- Student Work/Scoring Guides
- MCAS Results
- MCAS Alternate Assessment
- MEPA
- NAEP
- Other Resources:
  - Pathways to Success on MCAS
  - MCAS Performance Appeals
  - MCAS Service Center
  - Adams Scholarship
  - Parent Hotline 1-866-MCAS220



# Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System

## Fall 2008 Training Sessions for Qualified MELA-O Trainers (QMTs)

To: To: Superintendents, Principals, and Directors of Charter Schools

Copy: English Language Learner Program Directors and Educators Serving English Language Learners

From: Mitchell D. Chester, Ed.D.
Commissioner of Elementary and Secondary Education

Date: August 20, 2008

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As in previous years, the Department will hold training sessions for Qualified MELA-O Trainers (QMTs) in fall 2008. The MELA-O is based on the observation and evaluation of LEP students by QMTs and Qualified MELA-O Administrators (QMAs) who rate each student's oral English language proficiency using a scoring matrix. The upcoming trainings will include retraining sessions for existing QMTs and one training session for new QMTs in districts that do not currently have a QMT.

### Retraining Sessions for QMTs

Districts are responsible for ensuring that all QMTs who were qualified **before spring 2007** are retrained and pass a requalifying test by January 31, 2010, in order to continue administering the MELA-O and reporting scores to the Department. Please visit www.doe.mass.edu/mcas/mepa/melao_lep.html for a list of QMTs who need to requalify before January 31, 2010.

We encourage superintendents to send one of their district QMTs who is in need of retraining to one of the training sessions listed below. Please note that each training session is limited to 60 participants.

| Dates | Locations | Hours |
|---|---|---|

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Friday, September 26 | Springfield | 8:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. |
| Monday, December 1 | Mansfield | 8:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. |
| Tuesday, December 2 | Danvers | 8:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. |

## Training Session for New QMTs

If your district does **not** currently have a trained QMT, you have an opportunity to send an individual to be trained this fall. The prospective QMT must attend both days of the training listed below. Please note that space is available for up to 40 participants.

| Dates | Location | Hours |
|---|---|---|
| Thursday, November 6 **and** Friday, November 7 | Marlborough | 8:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. |

## Instructions for Registration

To register for any of the QMT training sessions, complete the form posted online at www.mcasservicecenter.com. Under the MEPA heading, select "Registration for MELA-O Training" from the menu, and then select "Registration for MELA-O Training" from the list of options. The deadline for registration is one week prior to the session. Registrants will receive a printable confirmation page and driving directions. Please note that only confirmed registrants will be guaranteed admission.

Please contact the MCAS Service Center at 800-737-5103 if you have any questions about registering for these training sessions.

Thank you for your attention to this information.

- Laws & Regulations Home
- State Regulations
- State Laws
- Federal Laws
- Legal Advisories
- Arbitration Awards
- Litigation Reports

District/School Administration > Administration >

# Education Laws and Regulations

## Careful Hiring of Educational Personnel, Including Substitute Teachers

To: Superintendents of Schools, Charter School Leaders, Directors of Approved Day or Residential Schools, Educational Collaboratives and Other Interested Parties

From: Mitchell D. Chester, Ed.D., Commissioner of Elementary and Secondary Education

Date: August 22, 2008

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As educators, we are entrusted with the safety and well-being of the students who attend our schools. I would like to remind you of the importance of exercising due diligence whenever you hire staff. For example, we recommend that before making an offer of employment, each school district, school, or educational program should:

- Require candidates to list all previous employers on their job applications.
- Conduct thorough background and reference checks. This includes contacting a candidate's recent employers – particularly the superintendent or a senior level administrator in the school district(s) where the candidate worked previously – to ensure that all relevant information is provided.
- Use a checklist and keep documentation of your reference calls.
- Conduct criminal background (CORI) checks on current and prospective employees, volunteers, school

transportation providers and others who may have direct and unmonitored contact with children, as required by Mass. General Laws c. 71, § 38R. For more information, please see our Advisory Opinion on the Massachusetts CORI Law at http://www.doe.mass.edu/lawsregs/advisory/cori.html. Please note that the CORI process relates only to Massachusetts; it does not check databases in other states and jurisdictions.

- Always confirm electronically, through ELAR – the Department's online educator licensure service – that candidates for positions requiring an educator license (certification) hold the appropriate license or certificate for the position and that their licenses are active. In order to assist districts in determining which license may be appropriate for the assignment, the Department has developed a guide called "Matching Licenses" which can be found at http://www.doe.mass.edu/news/news.asp?id=3542. To review the status of educator licenses, please use the Educator Licensure Status DropBox located at the Department's Security Portal at http://www4.doemass.org/. It is listed under the DropBox Central application and can be accessed by users who have the Directory Administrator security role. You can also use the DropBox to request expedited review of an educator's application.

For assistance regarding licensure, please contact Nancy Perkins through the Commissioner's Hotline at 781-338-3065.

Schools and districts should exercise care in hiring substitute teachers (or unlicensed teachers for whom you would seek a waiver) as well as permanent staff. A school or district could, for example, terminate the employment of a substitute teacher for conduct that, while not criminal, is inappropriate and may put students at risk. Since substitute teachers are not required to hold an educator license (although some do), checking on a candidate for a substitute teaching position only through the CORI and ELAR systems is important but may not necessarily turn up critical information about the candidate. This underscores the need for school hiring authorities to require candidates to list all previous employers on their applications and to contact, at a minimum, one or two of the candidate's recent employers for a reference check.

Care in hiring is a key factor in protecting students and continuing to improve our schools. For further guidance on the hiring process, I recommend that you and your human resources staff consult with your legal counsel as needed.

Thank you for your attention to this important matter.

- MTEL Home
- How to Register
- Subject Matter Tests
- Test Preparation Resources
- Summary of Test Results
- FAQ
- Evaluation Systems, Pearson

Educator Services > Becoming an Educator >

# Massachusetts Tests for Educator Licensure (MTEL)

## Nominees Needed for Massachusetts Tests for Educator Licensure (MTEL) Test Review Committees

To: Superintendents and Principals of Schools, Charter School Leaders, College and University Presidents, Education Deans and Preparation Program Contact Persons, Deans of Colleges of Arts and Sciences, Education Professional Associations, and Other Interested Parties

From: Mitchell D. Chester, Ed.D.,
Commissioner of Elementary and Secondary Education

Date: August 2008

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The purpose of this memo is to ask your assistance in identifying educators for consideration as participants in test review committees for the Massachusetts Tests for Educator Licensure (MTEL). Test development activities will take place during 2008-2010 for the following tests and/or practice tests:

**Business**

**English**

**English as a Second Language**

**General Science**

**Health Education**

**History**

**Latin and Classical Humanities**

**Physical Education**

**Visual Art**

Committee members will be selected to include a representative group of Massachusetts educators who are exemplary in their field. Please nominate educators for the test review committees, for the fields listed above, who meet these qualifications:

**Public School Educators**

- Hold a valid MA license in a field listed above.
- Currently practice in the field and at the level of the license.

**College and University Faculty**

- Teach liberal arts and sciences, fine arts, or education undergraduate or graduate level courses in one or more of the fields listed above in which prospective PreK-12 educators may be enrolled.

**Educator Nomination and Selection Information**

Please nominate educators for consideration as committee members by visiting the MTEL committee recruitment website at www.marecruit.nesinc.com, selecting "Nominate a Colleague," and completing the nomination form. You may also wish to encourage educators to visit this web site and select "Apply Now" to complete an application form. Educators selected to serve on the committees will be contacted and provided with additional information about the activities, dates, and location of the meetings.

**Committee Member Activities**

Selected educators will participate in content advisory or bias review committees, for the fields listed on the previous page. Committee members will meet two or three times between Fall 2008 and Spring 2010 for one to two days to review test materials.

**Expense Reimbursement and PDPs**

Committee members will receive continental breakfast and lunch, travel reimbursement, and Professional Development Points (PDPs). School districts will be reimbursed for the cost of hiring a substitute teacher for participating committee members.

Thank you very much for your assistance and prompt response to this request. If you have any questions related to test development activities, please contact Pamela Eisermann at our testing company at 413-256-0444.

- Laws & Regulations Home
- State Regulations
- State Laws
- Federal Laws
- Legal Advisories
- Arbitration Awards
- Litigation Reports

District/School Administration > Administration >

# Education Laws and Regulations

## Reminder about Requirement to Report Educator Misconduct

To: Superintendents of Schools, Charter School Leaders, Directors of Approved Day or Residential Schools, Educational Collaboratives and Other Interested Parties

From: Mitchell D. Chester, Ed.D., Commissioner of Elementary and Secondary Education

Date: August 22, 2008

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Massachusetts, like many other states, requires school superintendents, charter school leaders and other administrators such as principals or directors of approved special education day and residential schools to report to the Commissioner of Elementary and Secondary Education in writing whenever a licensed educator is dismissed, not renewed or resigns after committing misconduct that might warrant revocation or other limitation of the educator's license. The state regulation, 603 CMR 7.14 (8)(h), reads as follows:

> (h) Administrators' Obligation to Report. Any administrator who has dismissed, declined to renew the employment of, or obtained the resignation of any educator for any of the reasons cited in 603 CMR 7.14 (8) (a) shall report in writing such resignation or dismissal and the reason therefor to the Commissioner within 30 days. This obligation to report also applies when an administrator acquires relevant information after an educator's dismissal, resignation, or non-renewal. Failure to make such reports shall be grounds on which the Commissioner may revoke the administrator's license.

The reporting requirement is designed to ensure that, as the licensing authority for Massachusetts educators, the Commissioner is made aware of misconduct that may call into question the "sound moral character" that state law requires of every licensed educator. The grounds that may trigger license action are set forth in the Educator Licensure Regulations at 603 CMR 7.14(8)(a), available online at http://www.doe.mass.edu/lawsregs/603cmr7.html?section=14. The grounds include conviction of certain crimes, loss of another professional license, demonstrated unfitness, and gross misconduct or negligence in the conduct of the license holder's professional duties. Please note that the regulation does not require reporting of dismissals or non-renewals for reasons of poor

job performance or other factors that do not implicate the grounds for license action in 603 CMR 7.14 (8)(a).

The grounds include conviction of certain crimes, loss of another professional license, demonstrated unfitness, and gross misconduct or negligence in the conduct of the license holder's professional duties. Please note that the regulation does not require reporting of dismissals or non-renewals for reasons of poor job performance or other factors that do not implicate the grounds for license action in 603 CMR 7.14 (8)(a).

In summary, the Educator Licensure Regulations require superintendents and other administrators to:

- Make a written report to the Commissioner when you dismiss or accept the resignation of a licensed educator or decline to renew the educator's contract for one of the reasons noted above.
- Include the reason for your action.
- Report educator misconduct even if you learned about it after the license holder no longer works for you.
- Send your report within 30 days of the employment action or of your learning about the misconduct.

Please note that this reporting requirement is separate from the duty of a school administrator or other mandated reporter under the child abuse law, Mass. General Laws c. 119, § 51A, to report suspected child abuse or neglect immediately to the Department of Children and Families (formerly called the Department of Social Services), regardless of whether the suspected perpetrator is an educator.

Our work in this area is of great importance to the safety and well-being of students and the integrity of the educational profession. I appreciate the seriousness with which superintendents and others have responded to the reporting requirement. If you have any questions about the reporting of educator misconduct, please contact Attorney Cathleen Cavell of the Department's Legal Office at 781-338-3400. Thank you for your continuing attention to this professional responsibility.

# Statistical Reports

## Completion of First EPIMS Collection

To: Superintendents, Principals and Charter School Leaders

From: Mitchell D. Chester, Ed.D.
Commissioner of Elementary and Secondary Education

Date: August 22, 2008

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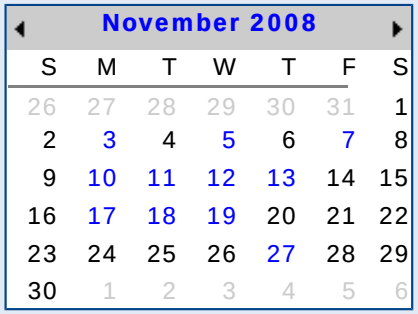
I am very pleased to announce that the first state-wide Education Personnel Information Management System (EPIMS) collection has closed with 100 percent district and charter school participation. I would like to thank you and your staff for your hard work and commitment to completing this important project.

Through this collection we were not only able to assign a unique educator identifier for the first time in our state, we also collected other important characteristics about our educator workforce AND every class they are assigned to teach. Further, we'll soon be able to connect this information with our Licensure database, ELAR, and integrate all of this into the education data warehouse. This represents a major step forward in our efforts to use data to continuously improve results and close persistent gaps in performance.

That said, I recognize how difficult it can be to gather the resources for processing, reporting and analysis that are required to accurately report this level of information. Once again, thank you.

I would also like to acknowledge the dedication and hard work of the Information Services Office. They provided exceptional customer service through this brand new collection process while continuing to support our other data collections, particularly the student collection system (SIMS). Staff also reviewed the EPIMS information for each district and charter school as it was received, ensuring a high quality of data particularly for a first year collection.

I look forward to working with you to get the most out of the information collected by EPIMS, including how it intersects with other dimensions of our work. Together, we will develop policies and practices that ensure our students benefit from the most effective educator workforce in the nation.




# Legal Holidays; Accommodation for Religious Observances

To: Superintendents of Schools, Charter School Leaders

From: Mitchell D. Chester, Ed.D., Commissioner of Elementary and Secondary Education

Date: August 25, 2008

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With this memo I am enclosing a list of Massachusetts legal holidays and major religious holidays for the 2008-2009, 2009-2010 and 2010-2011 school years. School officials have said these documents are useful in planning the school calendar, accommodating students and staff who observe religious holidays, and determining possible days of low attendance. For information on other religious holidays observed by members of religions represented in your school community, I encourage you to contact local clergy.

State and federal laws require schools to make reasonable accommodation to the religious needs of students and employees in observance of holy days. Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 151B, section 4 (1)(A) addresses this issue with respect to employees. With respect to students, Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 151C, section 2B reads in relevant part as follows:

> Any student in an educational or vocational training institution...who is unable, because of his religious beliefs, to attend classes or to participate in any examination, study or work requirement on a particular day shall be excused from any such examination or study or work requirement, and shall be provided with an opportunity to make up such examination, study or work requirement which he may have missed because of such absence on any particular day; provided, however, that such makeup examination or work shall not create an unreasonable burden upon such school. No fees of any kind shall be charged by the institution for making available to the said student such opportunity. No adverse or prejudicial effects shall result to any student because of his availing himself of the provisions of this section.

Schools may meet their obligation to accommodate students by excusing individual absences for religious observance, or by adjusting the school calendar to provide a school year of at least 180 school days, while taking into account possible days of low attendance due to religious holidays.

Please share this information with your school building administrators. We hope you will find it helpful.

ESE Phone: 781-338-3000

EVENTS CALENDAR

November 2008

| S | M | T | W | T | F | S |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 26 | 27 | 28 | 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 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |

# Holiday Observances in Massachusetts

**(Statewide Legal Holidays are in Bold)**

***Notes:*** This list does not include all religious holidays observed by each faith. State and federal law require schools to make reasonable accommodation to the religious needs of students and employees in observance of holy days. For information on other religious holidays observed by members of religions represented in your school community, please contact local clergy.

School vacations are determined by School Districts, not the ESE. Contact the local School Administration Office for details. View contact information for Massachusetts Schools and Districts.

| | 2008-2009 School Yr. | 2009-2010 School Yr. | 2010-2011 School Yr. |
|---|---|---|---|
| Labor Day | **Mon., Sept. 1** | Mon., Sept. 7 | **Mon., Sept. 6** |
| Rosh Hashanah* | Sept. 30-Oct. 1 | Sept. 19-Sept. 20 | Sept. 9-Sept. 10 |
| Yom Kippur* | Thurs., Oct. 9 | Mon., Sept. 28 | Sat., Sept. 18 |
| Sukkot* | Tues., Oct. 14 | Sat., Oct. 3 | Thurs. Sept. 23 |
| Columbus Day | **Mon., Oct. 13** | Mon., Oct. 12 | **Mon., Oct. 11** |
| Ramadan** | Sept. 1-Sept. 29 | Aug. 21-Sept. 19 | Aug. 11-Sept. 9 |
| Veterans' Day | **Tue., Nov. 11** | Wed., Nov. 11 | **Thurs., Nov. 11** |
| Eid al-Fitr** | Wed., Oct., 1 | Sun., Sept. 20 | Fri., Sept. 10 |
| Thanksgiving | **Thurs., Nov. 27** | Thurs., Nov. 26 | **Thurs., Nov. 25** |
| Chanukah* | Mon., Dec. 22 | Sat., Dec. 12 | Thurs., Dec. 2 |
| Christmas Day | **Thurs., Dec. 25** | Fri., Dec. 25 | **Sat., Dec. 25** |
| Kwanzaa | Fri., Dec. 26 | Sat., Dec. 26 | Sun., Dec. 26 |
| New Year's Day | **Thurs., Jan. 1** | Fri., Jan. 1 | **Sun., Jan. 1** |
| Eid al-Adha** | Mon., Dec 8 | Fri., Nov. 27 | Tues., Nov 16 |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Martin Luther King, Jr. Day | **Mon., Jan. 19** | Mon., Jan. 18 | **Mon., Jan. 17** |
| Presidents' Day | **Mon., Feb. 16** | Mon., Feb. 15 | **Mon., Feb. 21** |
| Ash Wednesday | Wed., Feb. 25 | Wed., Feb. 17 | Wed., Mar. 9 |
| Evacuation Day (Suffolk County only) | **Tues., Mar. 17** | Wed., Mar. 17 | **Thurs., Mar. 17** |
| Palm Sunday | Sun., April 5 | Sun., Mar. 28 | Sun., April 17 |
| Passover * | Th., 4/9-Fri., 4/10 | Tues., 3/30-Wed., 4/1 | Tues.,4/19-Wed.,4/20 |
| | Wed., 4/15- Thu., 4/16 | Mon., 4/6-Tues., 4/7 | Mon., 4/25-Tues., 4/26 |
| Good Friday | Fri., April 10 | Fri., April 2 | Fri., April 22 |
| Easter | Sun., April 12 | Sun., April 4 | Sun., April 24 |
| Orthodox Easter | Sun., April 19 | Sun., April 4 | Sun., April 24 |
| Patriots' Day | **Mon., April 20** | Mon., April 19 | **Mon., April 18** |
| Memorial Day | **Mon., May 25** | Mon., May 31 | **Mon., May 30** |
| Shavuot* | Fri., May 29 | Wed., May 19 | Wed., June 8 |
| Bunker Hill Day (Suffolk County only) | **Wed., June 17** | Thurs., June 17 | **Fri., June 17** |
| Independence Day | **Sat., July 4*** ** | Sun., July 4**** | **Moni., July 4** |

*According to the Massachusetts Lawyers Diary and Manual, "In addition to dates noted, observant Jews celebrate the second, seventh and eighth days of Passover; the second, eighth and ninth days of Sukkot; and two days of Shavuot. All Jewish holidays begin at sundown, the evening prior to the day of the holiday."

**Due to the lunar calendar these are only approximate dates.

***Under G.L. c. 4, § 7, cl. 18, legal holidays that fall on a Saturday are observed on that day.

****Under G.L. c. 4, § 7, cl. 18, a legal holiday shall be observed the day following when said holiday shall occur on Sunday.

last updated: August 25, 2008