May 2014

Dear applicants and other interested stakeholders:

I am pleased to release a Request for Proposals (RFPs) for applicants interested in operating a Commonwealth of Massachusetts Virtual School (CMVS) that will open in the school year 2015-2016 or later.

Only Massachusetts school districts and collaboratives can apply to open a CMVS in school year 2015-2016. In addition, this year’s application process includes both a prospectus, due July 1, 2014, and a final application, due October 6, 2014. Based on our review of the prospectuses, we will invite selected applications to submit final applications. Only invited groups will be eligible to submit final applications.

An Act Establishing Commonwealth Virtual Schools, Chapter 379 of the Acts of 2012, was signed into law on January 2, 2013 (statute; codified at M.G.L. c. 71, § 94). This allows the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (Department) to launch a competitive request for proposals (RFP) for certificates to operate virtual schools. The law permits up to three virtual schools to operate in 2013-2016. As a result, the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education (Board) will award up to one certificate to a qualified applicant that demonstrates a strong capability to provide students in the Commonwealth with a rigorous and effective virtual K-12 education.

I would also like to point out that Massachusetts has new CMVS regulations (603 CMR 52.00), approved by the Board in March 2014, which will go into effect before the start of the 2014-2015 school year. I encourage you to read the regulations, which are posted on our website at http://www.doe.mass.edu/boe/docs/2014-03/item7.html. In addition, you will find references to the new regulations throughout this RFP.

I am looking forward to the exciting new opportunities for teaching and learning that a CMVS can bring to a state that has already set the bar nationally for high academic achievement. We expect nothing less from those who seek to provide our students with a virtual education. These expectations and related requirements are spelled out in this RFP and in the statute, which I strongly encourage all applicants to review carefully; the statute is posted on the mass.gov website at http://www.malegislature.gov/Laws/SessionLaws/Acts/2012/Chapter379.

The Department looks forward to receiving strong applications seeking to provide students in the Commonwealth with a rigorous virtual school education.

Sincerely,

Mitchell D. Chester, Ed.D.
Commissioner of Elementary and Secondary Education
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I. OVERVIEW OF COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS VIRTUAL SCHOOLS

A. DEFINITION

A Commonwealth of Massachusetts Virtual School (CMVS) is a public school operated by a board of trustees where teachers primarily teach from a remote location using the Internet or other computer-based methods and students are not required to be located at the physical premises of the school.

If a district or an education collaborative operates the CMVS, then the proposed board of trustees shall be appointed by the members of the school committee or the collaborative board. Such appointments shall be subject to the approval of the Commissioner of Elementary and Secondary Education (Commissioner). Similar to a charter school, a CMVS is autonomous from and operates independently of any existing school district. The Board of Elementary and Secondary Education (Board) grants a certificate to the proposed board of trustees for a virtual school. The CMVS and its board of trustees, as defined in the certificate, then becomes a public entity, authorized by the Commonwealth, to supervise and control the CMVS, subject to the oversight of the Board and the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (Department). While a founding group may include individuals who do not intend to serve on the board of trustees, an applicant must identify proposed board members who have agreed to serve in that capacity in order for the certificate to be granted. Any proposed changes to the board of trustees must be approved by the Commissioner. The Board may authorize a single board of trustees to manage more than one CMVS; provided, however, that each school is issued its own certificate.

A CMVS shall not discriminate in the enrollment of students on the basis of race, color, national origin, creed, sex, gender identity, ethnicity, sexual orientation, mental or physical disability, age, ancestry, athletic performance, special need, proficiency in the English language or a foreign language, or prior academic achievement.

B. AUTHORITY

Section 94 of M.G.L. c. 71 specifies 39 “terms and conditions” that an applicant group must address and authorizes the Board and the Commissioner to oversee the process of issuing requests for proposals, the award of certificates to operate a CMVS, and the promulgation of regulations necessary to implement the statute. The full text of the statute is posted on the mass.gov website at http://www.malegislature.gov/Laws/SessionLaws/Acts/2012/Chapter379.

Not more than ten Commonwealth of Massachusetts Virtual Schools are allowed to operate in the Commonwealth at any time. For the 2013-2016 school years, the Board is authorized to grant certificates for up to two additional virtual schools so that up to three CMVS may operate.

Under no circumstances will the total number of students attending all Commonwealth of Massachusetts Virtual Schools full-time exceed 2 percent of the total number of students attending public schools in the Commonwealth. Details regarding other enrollment caps are provided in the statute at M.G.L. c. 71, § 94(c), and Section 8 of Chapter 379 of the Acts of 2012.
C. KEY REQUIRED CHARACTERISTICS

The following is a summary of some of the key characteristics of a CMVS. Note that only Massachusetts school districts and education collaboratives can apply to open a CMVS in school year 2015-2016.

Governance: Commonwealth of Massachusetts Virtual Schools are public schools governed by boards of trustees that operate independently of any school districts. The board of trustees, upon being granted a certificate by the Board, becomes a public entity authorized by the Commonwealth, subject to the oversight of the Board and the Department, to govern the CMVS. Subject to oversight and approval, the board of trustees has the powers necessary to implement the CMVS including the power to adopt a name for the school, determine the school’s curriculum and annual budget, acquire property for use as a school facility, and receive and disburse funds. A CMVS is a state entity and members of its board are special state employees.

Note that, when selecting members of the board of trustees for the CMVS, applicants groups must take care to avoid potential conflicts of interest. Board members must be able to make decisions that are solely in the best interest of the CMVS. Board members and immediate member of their families may not hold a financial interest in the proposed school or in the proposed educational management organization or school support organization (if applicable). They also may not hold a financial interest with any individual(s) or any organizations that may contract or provide service to the proposed school.

Equal Educational Opportunity: As public schools, every CMVS is open to all students. If awarded a certificate, the CMVS must not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, creed, sex, gender identity, ethnicity, sexual orientation, mental or physical disability, age, ancestry, athletic performance, special need, proficiency in the English language or a foreign language, or prior academic achievement.

Staff: All teachers hired by a CMVS must be licensed in Massachusetts pursuant to M.G.L. c. 71, § 38G, in the areas in which they teach. All educators must be evaluated consistent with regulations promulgated by the Board and related guidance developed by the Department; refer to http://www.doe.mass.edu/educators/e_license.html for more information. In addition to licensed teachers, a CMVS must have:

- A school physician and licensed school nurse; refer to M.G.L. c. 71, § 53, for more information.
- A special education administrator; refer to M.G.L. c. 71B, § 3, for more information.
- An attendance office; refer to M.G.L. c. 76, § 20(a), for more information.
- A licensed English Language Learner (ELL)/English as a Second Language (ESL) teacher if the school serves English Language Learners; refer to M.G.L. c. 71A for more information.

Curriculum and Instruction: Massachusetts schools must provide curriculum and instruction aligned with the standards contained in the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks (MCF). The 2011 frameworks for English language arts (ELA) and mathematics that include the Common Core Standards and all other frameworks adopted by the Board can be found at, http://www.doe.mass.edu/frameworks/current.html. A CMVS may choose from available curricula aligned with the frameworks or develop curricula aligned with these standards that reflect the mission of the school and that are designed to meet the needs of all students enrolled by the CMVS.

Assessment: The Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System (MCAS) tests measure academic achievement of all public school students in the Commonwealth, including those enrolled in a CMVS. English language arts (ELA) and mathematics are measured annually in grades 3-8 and 10; science and technology/engineering are measured annually in grades 5, 8, 9, and 10. Refer to http://www.doe.mass.edu/mcas/overview.html for more information. The award of a high school diploma includes the requirement that students earn a Competency Determination (CD) in ELA,
mathematics, and science and technology/engineering. To qualify for a CD, students must either earn a scaled score of at least 240 (Proficient) on the grade 10 ELA and mathematics tests, or earn a scaled score between 220 and 238 (Needs Improvement) on these tests and fulfill the requirements of an Educational Proficiency Plan (EPP). Students must also earn a scaled score of at least 220 (Needs Improvement) on one of the high school science and technology/engineering tests. Refer to http://www.doe.mass.edu/mcas/graduation.html for more information. The acquisition of English language proficiency by English language learners (ELLs) is assessed using the ACCESS for ELLs tests in all grades from K through 12. ACCESS for ELLs is a standards-based, criterion-referenced test designed to measure social and academic proficiency in English. It assesses social and instructional English used within the school context as well as the language associated with language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies across the four language domains (Listening, Speaking, Reading, Writing); refer to http://www.doe.mass.edu/mcas/access/ for more information. All CMVSs must administer state mandatory student assessments, including online student assessments.

NOTE: Massachusetts is transitioning to the use of Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC) assessments in 2013-2014 and 2014-2015. In the fall of 2015, the state Board of Elementary and Secondary Education will vote on whether to fully implement PARCC as the Commonwealth’s student testing program. For more information on PARCC, refer to http://www.doe.mass.edu/parcc/.

Accountability: A certificate granted by the Board to operate a CMVS is for a term of three to five years for certificates granted through the 2016 school year (SY) (the 2015/2016 SY) and for up to five years after SY 2016. In making such decisions, the Board will develop procedures and guidelines for amending, revoking, and renewing a CMVS certificate and consider progress in student academic achievement and the extent to which the school met its obligations and commitments under its certificate; refer to http://www.doe.mass.edu/apa/accountability/default.html for more information related to performance accountability for public school districts. Every CMVS is responsible for providing accurate and timely data and related information required by the Department, including an annual report of implementation, efforts to increase student success, and an accounting of revenue and expenditures; refer to the “Information Services” page on the Department’s website, http://www.doe.mass.edu/infoservices/ and to the statute for a partial list of reporting requirements and related resources.

Enrollment Restrictions: Every CMVS is required to enroll at least 5 percent of its students from the school district that established the school or, when established with other districts or a collaborative, from the districts that comprise the collaborative or are party to the agreement with the establishing district. Enrollment of students in six individual courses that last a full school year shall count as one student enrolled on a fulltime basis for the purpose of this requirement. (See 603 CMR 52.05(13), which is posted at http://www.doe.mass.edu/boe/docs/2014-03/Item7-p603cmr52.pdf.)

Reporting: Every CMVS is responsible for submitting data to and filing reports with the Department in a timely and complete manner in accordance with guidelines published by the Department. The Department establishes district and school codes for every Commonwealth of Massachusetts Virtual School.
D. KEY CONSIDERATIONS AND PREFERENCES IN THE SELECTION PROCESS

The Board of Elementary and Secondary Education (Board) shall give preference to applications that include an educational program or specialized focus that appropriately addresses one or more of the student populations listed below. If approved, a virtual school must develop deliberate, specific steps to attract, enroll, and retain any target populations specified in its certificate, as long as it does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, creed, sex, gender identity, ethnicity, sexual orientation, mental or physical disability, age, ancestry, athletic performance, special need, proficiency in the English language or a foreign language, or academic achievement.

- students with physical or other challenges that make it difficult to physically attend a school;
- students with medical needs requiring a home or hospital setting;
- students with unusual needs requiring a flexible schedule;
- students who are over-age for their grade;
- students who have been expelled;
- students who have dropped out or who are at risk of dropping out;
- students who are pregnant or have a child;
- students with social and emotional challenges that make it difficult for them to physically attend a school;
- students who feel bullied or cannot attend school because the student’s safety is at risk;
- gifted and talented students;
- students who seek academic work not available in their school;
- students in rural communities; and
- students in institutionalized settings.

The Board shall also consider whether proposed schools will create or enhance the opportunity for students to attend virtual schools in all grades from kindergarten to grade 12.

The following is a summary of additional key considerations that will be taken into account during the selection process.

Organizational Capacity and Experience: A strong board of trustees defines the mission of the school, develops policies and changes them when appropriate, hires qualified staff to manage the school’s day-to-day operations, holds the staff accountable for meeting established goals, and formulates a long-range plan and accountability plan that will ensure the school’s continued stability. In addition to its many other responsibilities, the board must ensure that the school is complying with all applicable state and federal laws and that the board itself is operating in accordance with the rules set out by all applicable Massachusetts laws and regulations. Finally, the board is responsible for operating the school in accordance with its certificate.

The board of trustees, leadership, and staff of the proposed CMVS must possess a wide variety of skills and qualifications that enable them to develop, open, sustain, operate, and continuously improve an effective school. The board of trustees should be composed of at least five members to conduct business effectively and to provide efficient and effective governance and oversight. In addition, board members must, within a year of their appointment, complete an orientation concerning the responsibilities of their office. (See 603 CMR 603 CMR 52.06(2) and 52.06(4), at http://www.doe.mass.edu/boe/docs/2014-03/Item7-p603cmr52.pdf.)
When recruiting board members, founding groups should ensure that proposed members:

- possess the experience and qualifications necessary to implement the proposal outlined in the CMVS application;
- possess skills and experience in areas such as education, management, finance, development, and law;
- demonstrate the capacity to found and sustain an excellent school; and
- are able to manage public funds effectively and responsibly.

Applicants may also choose to contract with other entities to provide services. A board of trustees must operate consistently with laws relating to public accountability, such as the open meeting law and the state ethics law. State ethics law may limit an individual's ability to serve on the board of trustees if the individual currently holds or previously held a position at the entity with which the board is considering partnering or contracting, if the individual's relatives work at the school or for an entity with which the board is considering partnering or contracting, or if the individual has some other financial interest in the school or in an entity with which the board is considering partnering or contracting.

**Learning and Supports for Students in an Online Environment:** Every CMVS must take appropriate and necessary steps to ensure that access to and engagement in the educational program is afforded to every enrolled student. The Department expects virtual schools to have vigorous protocols, tools, and practices because virtual learning takes place remotely and by definition poses unique challenges. Every CMVS must meet the time and learning requirements of state law unless the CMVS requests a waiver of those requirements supported by research-based evidence and best practices in the field. To request a waiver, the proposed CMVS must complete the optional questions at the end of Section IB-Curriculum, Assessment, and Learning Time of the proposal narrative.

**Additional Supports and Interventions for Special Populations:** Students with special learning needs, including English language learners and students with disabilities, will require additional supports to ensure they are fully engaged in the curriculum and are making substantial progress acquiring the knowledge, skills, and abilities presented by the curriculum. A CMVS must provide a program that addresses the unique characteristics of the online learning environment and responds to these unique needs appropriately. A CMVS must consider the needs of all students and provide them with full and meaningful access to the general education curriculum so students can fully participate in the educational goals and mission of the school.

**Restriction of Enrollment by Sending Districts:** The school committee of a sending district may, by vote, restrict enrollment of its students in a CMVS if the total enrollment of its students in virtual schools exceeds 1 percent of the total enrollment in its district; provided, however, that no student enrolled in a CMVS shall be compelled to withdraw as a result of that vote. Only full-time students count towards the 1 percent threshold. The Department will publish an annual list of districts eligible to restrict future full-time enrollment, using October SIMS data to assess which school committees are eligible to vote to restrict future enrollment. (See 603 CMR 52.05(11) at [http://www.doe.mass.edu/boe/docs/2014-03/Item7-p603cmr52.pdf](http://www.doe.mass.edu/boe/docs/2014-03/Item7-p603cmr52.pdf).)
E. FUNDING

For each student that a CMVS enrolls, it will receive funding from the Commonwealth in an amount preset by the statute. M.G.L. c. 71, § 94(k).

1) The statute identifies the “school choice” rate of $5,000 per student as the default tuition. The Department will retain seventy-five dollars per pupil of this amount for the administration of the CMVS program. Applicants need to indicate in their proposal whether they commit to implement their proposed program under the $4,925/student they will receive under the school choice rate. If the applicant is prepared to implement the proposed CMVS at this rate but has included components that require funding beyond this amount, the applicant must indicate which such components might need to be scaled back or eliminated due to the default reimbursement level.

2) Applicants may request a higher per-pupil tuition rate if they believe it is necessary to implement the school’s proposed program. The Department will consider such requests, in consultation with the Operational Service Division of the Administration and Finance secretariat. Requests for a higher tuition rate must provide data and other evidence to support the argument that the school’s program cannot be provided with the school choice tuition rate. In addition, preference will be given to requests that are conditioned upon meeting performance targets. To the extent that a CMVS is contracting with vendors, those vendor agreements should also be conditioned upon meeting performance targets. Applicants should understand that the school choice tuition rate is the default and that a higher rate may not be approved.

Once granted a certificate, a CMVS will receive monthly payments starting in July of the fiscal year that the school plans to accept student enrollments. Payments will be based on the pre-enrollment estimate that the school must submit annually to the Department. The first five monthly payments will be approximately one-twelfth of the projected annual pre-enrollment multiplied by the approved per pupil tuition rate; the remaining monthly payments for the fiscal year will be based on the October SIMS collection from the CMVS. (See 603 CMR 52.08(5) at http://www.doe.mass.edu/boe/docs/2014-03/Item7-p603cmr52.pdf.)

A CMVS is responsible for providing directly or for arranging for the provision of services specified on a student’s IEP. However, the sending school district (the district where a student resides) remains fiscally responsible for these services. The cost of special education services, and a corresponding increase in tuition, is calculated in accordance with 603 CMR 10.07(3); for additional information, see the circuit breaker cost methodology at http://www.doe.mass.edu/finance/circuitbreaker/.

Every CMVS will receive a proportional allotment of federal and state grant funds for which they apply and are eligible. This includes most entitlement and competitive grant programs. Every CMVS may also apply for private grants, engage in fundraising, and accept gifts.
II: SUBMISSION INSTRUCTIONS AND TIMELINE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Overview</th>
<th>The Board of Elementary and Secondary Education grants certificates allowing virtual schools to operate in Massachusetts. The virtual schools law (statute; codified at M.G.L. c. 71, § 94) allows up to three virtual schools to operate in 2015-2016. Since two certificates were previously granted, one certificate remains for the 2015-2016 school year. (For 2016-2017, three additional certificates will be available.)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Eligibility</td>
<td>For a virtual school opening in 2015-2016, only Massachusetts school districts and collaborative are eligible to apply, by first submitting a prospectus. In order to be eligible to submit a final application, an applicant group must have submitted a prospectus and received an invitation from the Commissioner to submit a final application.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Application Process</td>
<td>The CMVS application is a two-stage process, beginning with a prospectus, due July 1, 2014. In early August, after reviewing the prospectuses, the Commission of Elementary and Secondary Education will invite selected applicants to submit final applications, which will be due October 6, 2014. The Board of Elementary and Secondary Education will vote at its January meeting whether to grant certificates for a new virtual school to operate.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Application Materials</td>
<td>This packet contains all of the forms and questions needed for both the prospectus and the final application. Many of the questions and forms will be used for both stages of the application process. When completing the prospectus, do not submit items marked “for final application only.” Applicant groups who are invited to submit final applications are permitted to revise their responses from the prospectus stage to the final application stage.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Questions</td>
<td>A webinar will be held Friday, May 16, from 2:00 to 3:00 p.m. to familiarize potential applicants with the application process and the requirements for virtual schools. Details will be posted online in the news section of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts Virtual Schools web page (<a href="http://www.doe.mass.edu/odl/cmvs/">http://www.doe.mass.edu/odl/cmvs/</a>) Applicants may also email questions to the Office of Digital Learning <a href="mailto:odl@doe.mass.edu">odl@doe.mass.edu</a>, with the subject line “CMVS Question: &lt;insert brief summary of question&gt;.” Questions regarding the Prospectus must be received by June 24, while questions regarding the Final Application must be received by September 29. The Office of Digital Learning will periodically post updates to the Questions and Answers. Look for Question and Answers information on the Office of Digital Learning CMVS website <a href="http://www.doe.mass.edu/odl/cmvs/app-process.html">http://www.doe.mass.edu/odl/cmvs/app-process.html</a>.</td>
</tr>
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| Format | The prospectus and final application must use the headings and numbering in the corresponding outline and be formatted as follows:  
- one-inch margins  
- 11-point font, or larger (Arial is recommended but not required)  
- single spaced  
- blank line between paragraphs  
- table of contents that includes attachments  
- page numbers in the bottom right hand corner of each page, including attachments with consecutive numbers tied to the table of contents |
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<tr>
<td><strong>Page limits</strong></td>
<td>The prospectus is limited to 45 pages of text. The final application is limited to 75 pages of text. Page limits do not include the Information Sheet, the Certification Statement and Assurances, the Executive Summary, and required attachments. Applications that exceed the page limits (not including the items listed above) shall be evaluated through the last allowable page, and all subsequent pages shall be disregarded.</td>
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<td><strong>Electronic Format</strong></td>
<td>The Commonwealth of Massachusetts is committed to providing information to the public that is accessible to all, including those utilizing assistive technology to access information. Applicants are required to prepare an accessible electronic version of the final application for submission to the Office of Digital Learning. The final application must be consistent with the Department’s Website Accessibility Policy which can be found online at <a href="http://www.doe.mass.edu/resources/policy.html?policy=accessibility">http://www.doe.mass.edu/resources/policy.html?policy=accessibility</a> as well as the Web Content Standards Checklist, which can be found online at <a href="http://www.doe.mass.edu/nmg/checklist.doc">http://www.doe.mass.edu/nmg/checklist.doc</a>. The Department reserves the right to not accept final application submissions that do not conform to accessibility standards.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Submitting Materials</strong></td>
<td>All materials should be submitted via email to the Office of Digital Learning (<a href="mailto:odl@doe.mass.edu">odl@doe.mass.edu</a>). The subject of the email must contain the label “CMVS” and indicate its contents (e.g., “CMVS Application”). Paper submissions will not be accepted. The deadline for receipt of all materials is <strong>5:00 PM</strong> on the due date indicated. Emails must be received and time stamped as delivered no later than 5:00 PM. Applications received after the deadline will not be accepted. Materials will be reviewed for completeness before being accepted and sent to reviewers. Incomplete applications will not be accepted. The Department will send a confirmation email to applicants within two business days of receipt of application materials.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>DEADLINE FOR PROSPECTUS</strong></td>
<td>July 1, 2014, 5:00 PM</td>
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<td><strong>Review of prospectus</strong></td>
<td>July 2014</td>
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<td>The prospectuses will be reviewed by the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education with the support of external reviewers, using the criteria described throughout this RFP.</td>
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<td><strong>Invitation to submit final applications</strong></td>
<td>August 2014</td>
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<td>After reviewing the prospectuses, the Commissioner of Elementary and Secondary Education will invite selected applicants to submit final applications.</td>
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<td><strong>DEADLINE FOR FINAL APPLICATIONS</strong></td>
<td>October 6, 2014, 5:00 pm</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Note that only groups invited by the Commissioner are eligible to submit final applications. See instructions above on how to submit materials.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Review of Final Applications</strong></td>
<td>October-November 2014</td>
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<td>The final application will be reviewed by the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education with the support of external reviewers using the criteria described throughout this RFP.</td>
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<td><strong>LMS Review</strong></td>
<td>November 2014</td>
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<td>As part of the review of the final application, applicants will be asked to demonstrate their proposed learning management system (LMS) and key components of the instructional, support, development and management programs for students, teachers, and administrators. This demonstration may take place virtually.</td>
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<td><strong>Public Hearing</strong></td>
<td>November 2014</td>
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<td>The Board will hold a public hearing on the final applications in November. The hearing will be conducted by one or more members of the Board as stipulated by the CMVS statute, <a href="http://www.malegislature.gov/Laws/SessionLaws/Acts/2012/Chapter379">http://www.malegislature.gov/Laws/SessionLaws/Acts/2012/Chapter379</a>. The public will also be invited to submit written comments.</td>
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<td><strong>Interviews</strong></td>
<td>November 2014</td>
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<td>Staff of the Office of Digital Learning will conduct an interview with the applicant group and proposed board of trustees of each final application. Comments and questions from the final application review teams and the public hearings will serve as a basis for the interview.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Commissioner's Recommendation</td>
<td>January 2015</td>
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<td>The Commissioner will review the results of this process and make recommendations to the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education regarding the award of CMVS certificates.</td>
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<table>
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<tr>
<th>Board of Elementary and Secondary Education Grants CMVS Certificates</th>
<th>January 2015</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The Board of Elementary and Secondary Education will vote whether to grant a certificate for school year 2015-2016 at its January 2015 meeting. (Once scheduled, the meeting date will be posted at <a href="http://www.doe.mass.edu/boe/boedate.html">http://www.doe.mass.edu/boe/boedate.html</a>.) The Board reserves the right to grant a certificate with the terms and conditions that it deems appropriate, including, but not limited to, the opening date, grade span, and maximum enrollment of the school.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Application Timeline FOR CMVS Opening in 2015-2016

Applicant Groups Submit Prospectuses
July 1, 2014

Panel Reviews of Prospectuses
July 2014

Commissioner Invites Selected Applicant Groups to Submit Final Applications
August 2014

Invited Applicants Submit Final Applications
October 6, 2014

Panel Review of Final Applications
October-November 2014

Review of Learning Management Systems (LMS)
October-November 2014

Public Hearings and Public Written Comment Period
November 2014

Interviews with Applicant Groups/Proposed Boards of Trustees
November 2014

Commissioner Makes Recommendations to Board of Elementary & Secondary Education
January 2015

Board of Elementary & Secondary Education Votes on Whether to Grant Certificate
January 2015
Prospectus Checklist

Due Tuesday, July 1, 2014, 5:00 p.m.

The prospectus is limited to no more than 45 pages of text, excluding the Information Sheet, the Certification Statement and Assurances, the Executive Summary, and Required Attachments.

☐ Information Sheet

☐ Certification Statement & Assurances (Applicants are required to submit a Certification Statement to confirm that the information in the final application is true to the best of the applicant’s knowledge signed by an individual authorized to act with authority on behalf of the founding group and proposed board of trustees.

☐ Executive Summary – no more than 2 pages
Summarize the proposed school’s mission, educational program, instructional methodology, services, how this potential school will enhance options for students, make online delivery as good as or better than face-to-face delivery, any specialized student focus, and the founding group’s capacity to make the school a success.

☐ I. How will the school demonstrate academic success?
  ☐ A. Mission statement, guiding principles and core values
  ☐ B. Curriculum, instruction, and assessment
  ☐ C. Student services and supports (including those for special student populations)

☐ II. How will the school demonstrate its capacity to deliver its proposed programs and services?
  ☐ A. Governance
  ☐ B. Partnerships

☐ III. How will the school manage its operations?
  ☐ A. School characteristics
  ☐ B. School operations

☐ IV. How will the school demonstrate faithfulness to its mission and terms of its certificate?

☐ V. Attachments
  ☐ A. Completed questionnaire and resume for each proposed member of the board of trustees and key staff (e.g., executive director or principal), if they have been identified
  ☐ D. Curriculum scope and sequence

Incomplete applications and applications not received by the deadline will not be reviewed.
Final Application Checklist

Due Monday, October 6, 2014, 5:00 p.m.

The final application is limited to no more than 75 pages of text, excluding the Information Sheet, the Certification Statement and Assurances, the Executive Summary, and Required Attachments.

☐ Information Sheet

☐ Certification Statement & Assurances

Applicants are required to submit a Certification Statement to confirm that the information in the final application is true to the best of the applicant’s knowledge signed by an individual authorized to act with authority on behalf of the founding group and proposed board of trustees.

☐ Executive Summary – no more than 2 pages

Summarize the proposed school’s mission, educational program, instructional methodology, services, how this potential school will enhance options for students, make online delivery as good as or better than face-to-face delivery, any specialized student focus, and the founding group’s capacity to make the school a success.

☐ I. How will the school demonstrate academic success?

☐ A. Mission statement, guiding principles and core values

☐ B. Curriculum, instruction, and assessment

☐ C. Student services and supports (including those for special student populations)

☐ II. How will the school demonstrate its capacity to deliver its proposed programs and services?

☐ A. Governance

☐ B. Partnerships

☐ C. Management and staff

☐ D. School finances

☐ III. How will the school manage its operations?

☐ A. School characteristics

☐ B. School operations

☐ IV. How will the school demonstrate faithfulness to its mission and terms of its certificate?

☐ V. Attachments

☐ A. Completed questionnaire and resume for each proposed member of the board of trustees and key staff (e.g., executive director or principal), if they have been identified

☐ B. Draft bylaws

☐ C. Proposed budget

☐ D. Curriculum scope and sequence

☐ E. Organizational chart

☐ F. Partner provider information sheet

☐ G. Draft agreement with partner provider(s)

☐ H. Draft enrollment policy and admission application

Incomplete applications and applications not received by the deadline will not be reviewed.
COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS VIRTUAL SCHOOL APPLICANT INFORMATION SHEET

This form must be completed and attached to the final application.

Name of Proposed CMVS:
(enter name of proposed CMVS)

Note: must include Commonwealth Virtual School in the school name

Sponsoring School District(s) and/or Education Collaborative(s)
(Include ESE code. Example, Boston: 00350000. See Department profiles page for codes: http://profiles.doe.mass.edu/)

1. The proposed school will open in the fall of school year 2015-2016:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School Year</th>
<th>Grade Levels</th>
<th>Total Student Enrollment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2015-2016</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016-2017</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td>2017-2018</td>
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<tr>
<td>2018-2019</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2019-2020</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Enrollment</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2. Age (year and month) at entry for kindergarten, if applicable:

3. Are members of the applicant group currently affiliated with a private or parochial school as the operator or as an employee of the school?
   Yes  No

4. Target ratio: 1 teacher to ________ students in this CMVS

5. Will any of the teachers included in your response to the preceding question be responsible for providing instruction and/or other supports to students enrolled in other schools or courses?
   Yes  No

6. Will the school offer online courses to other MA students not attending the CMVS?
   Note: a CMVS may not offer courses to students who are not MA residents.
   Yes  No
7. Will the school permit students to earn credits by demonstrating competency in a grade or subject matter?

[ ] Yes  [ ] No

8. Is the school requesting a waiver of student learning time requirements (http://www.doe.mass.edu/lawsregs/603cmr27.html?section=all)?
   Note: see section I.B. for additional information required for a waiver of student learning time.

[ ] Yes  [ ] No


[ ] Yes  [ ] No

10. Do you have plans for meeting the needs of students with disabilities and students who are English language learners (ELLs)?

[ ] Yes  [ ] No

11. Do you have a plan for providing access to necessary technology and materials for all students?

[ ] Yes  [ ] No

12. Do you have a plan for providing meals to all students?

[ ] Yes  [ ] No

13. Do you have plans to provide physical education classes?

[ ] Yes  [ ] No

14. Do you have plans for administering the Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System (MCAS) or the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC)? (Note that in the fall of 2015, the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education will vote whether to adopt PARCC as the Commonwealth’s student testing program.)

[ ] Yes  [ ] No

15. What percent of the total enrolled students are expected to come from the districts(s) or collaborative establishing this CMVS?

[ ]


[ ] Yes  [ ] No
17. Please indicate if the school plans to offer programs specifically for students in the following categories. If approved, a virtual school must develop deliberate, specific steps to attract, enroll, and retain any target populations specified in its certificate, as long as it does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, creed, sex, gender identity, ethnicity, sexual orientation, mental or physical disability, age, ancestry, athletic performance, special need, proficiency in the English language or a foreign language, or academic achievement.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>with medical needs requiring a home or hospital setting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>who have been expelled</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>who are pregnant or have a child</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>with physical or other challenges that make it difficult for them to physically attend a school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>who seek academic work not available in their school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>who are gifted and talented</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>in institutionalized settings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>with unusual needs requiring a flexible schedule</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>who are over-age for their grade</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>who have or are at risk of dropping out</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>with social and emotional challenges that make it difficult for them to physically attend a school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>who feel bullied or cannot attend school because the students' safety is at risk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>in rural communities</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

18. Please indicate if the school plans to request a higher per-pupil tuition rate because the school believes it is necessary to implement the school’s proposed program.

☐ Yes  ☐ No
COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS VIRTUAL SCHOOL CERTIFICATION STATEMENT

This form must be completed and attached to the final application.

Name of Proposed CMVS:
(enter name of proposed CMVS)

Note: must include Commonwealth Virtual School in the school name

I hereby certify that the information submitted in this application is true to the best of my knowledge. Further, I understand that, if awarded a certificate, the proposed school shall be open to all students on a space-available basis, and shall not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, creed, sex, gender identity, ethnicity, sexual orientation, mental or physical disability, age, ancestry, athletic performance, special need, proficiency in the English language or a foreign language, or academic achievement. I further certify that the proposed school shall comply with federal and state law and guidance including, but not limited to, regulations that will be adopted governing virtual schools. I certify that the proposed school will comply with any conditions imposed on the certificate for the CMVS if a certificate is granted. This is a true statement, made under the penalties of perjury.

Signature of Authorized Person: <insert digital signature here>

Name of Authorized Person:

Date:

Address:

City State: Zip:

Daytime Phone: Fax:

Email:
COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS VIRTUAL SCHOOL ASSURANCES

This form must be signed by a duly authorized representative of the applicant group and submitted with the final application. An application will be considered incomplete and will not be accepted if it does not include the Statement of Assurances.

As the authorized representative of the applicant group, I certify under the penalties of perjury that the information submitted in this application for a certificate for

(enter name of proposed CMVS)

is true to the best of my knowledge and belief; and further, I certify that, if awarded a certificate, the school:

1. Will not charge tuition, fees, or other mandatory payments to students for full-time attendance at the Commonwealth of Massachusetts Virtual School (CMVS), for participation in required or elective courses, or for mandated services or programs. M.G.L. c. 71, § 94(k) (specifying tuition to be paid through School Choice); M.G.L. c. 71, § 48 (requiring school districts to purchase textbooks and school supplies for students).

2. Will offer required computers, printers, software, and Internet access to students free of charge. M.G.L. c. 71, § 94(b)(30) and (31) (addressing provision of technology, materials, and technical support); M.G.L. c. 71, § 48 (requiring school districts to purchase textbooks and school supplies for students).

3. Will not charge any public school for the use or replication of any part of their curriculum subject to the terms of any contract between the CMVS and a third party provider. This does not prohibit the CMVS from reaching an agreement with another school or district in the Commonwealth regarding the charge to that school or district for a student’s participation in individual courses offered by the CMVS.

4. Will acknowledge the Department’s unlimited and irrevocable right to publish and to disseminate any materials or products developed or refined using state and federal funding provided to the CMVS under its certificate.

5. Will permit parents to enroll their children only voluntarily and not because they must send their children to this school.

6. Will enroll any eligible student who submits a timely and complete application, unless the school receives a greater number of applications than there are spaces for students. If the number of application exceeds the spaces available, the school will hold a lottery in accordance with M.G.L. c. 71, § 94(b)(9).
7. Will be open to all students, on a space-available basis, and shall not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, creed, sex, gender identity, ethnicity, sexual orientation, mental or physical disability, age, ancestry, athletic performance, special need, proficiency in the English language or a foreign language, or academic achievement. M.G.L. c. 71, § 94(b)(8); see also 42 U.S.C. 2000d (Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964); 20 U.S.C. 1703(f) (Equal Educational Opportunities Act of 1974); 20 U.S.C. 1681 (Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972); 29 U.S.C. 794 (Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973); 42 U.S.C. 12132 (Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Education Act of 1990); 20 U.S.C. 1400 (the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act of 2004); No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 at Title III, Part A, § 3121(c)(1)(C), and Title X, Part C, §§ 721, 722(g)(4) (McKinney-Vento Homeless Education Assistance Improvements Act of 2001); Mass. Const. amend. art. 114 (prohibits discrimination based upon disability); M.G.L. c. 71A, § 7 (English language education); M.G.L. c. 76, § 5 (prohibiting discrimination in public education base upon race, color, sex, gender identity, religion, national origin, sexual orientation).

8. Will be secular in its curriculum, programs, admissions, policies, governance, employment practices, and operation in accordance with the federal and state constitutions and any other relevant provisions of federal and state law.


10. Will adhere to all applicable provisions of federal and state law relating to students with disabilities including, but not limited to, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1974, Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, and chapter 71B of the Massachusetts General Laws.

11. Will adhere to all applicable provisions of federal and state law relating to students who are English language learners including, but not limited to, Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the Equal Educational Opportunities Act of 1974, and chapter 71A of the Massachusetts General Laws.

12. Will comply with all other applicable federal and state law including, but not limited to, the requirement to offer a school nutrition program. M.G.L. c. 69, § 1C.

13. Will meet the performance standards and assessment requirements set by the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education for all students in public schools including, but not limited to, administering the Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System (MCAS). M.G.L. c. 71, § 94(b)(7) or the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC), if the Board votes to adopt it. (Note that the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education will vote whether to adopt PARCC in the fall of 2015.)

14. Will submit all data required by the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education in a timely and complete manner, including an annual report no later than January 1st for the previous school year, as required by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts Virtual School statute, M.G.L. c. 71, § 94(m).

15. Will submit an annual independent audit to the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education and the Office of the State Auditor no later than January 1st for the previous school year, as required by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts Virtual School statute, M.G.L. c. 71, § 94(n).
16. Will ensure that all core academic teachers of English language learners and the administrators who supervise and evaluate them earn the sheltered English immersion endorsement consistent with 603 CMR 14.07; see http://www.doe.mass.edu/lawsregs/603cmr14.html?section=07.

17. Will provide the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education with written assurance (signed letter from board chair or designee) that a criminal background check (CORI) has been performed, a check of sex offender registry information (SORI) has been completed, and fingerprints were submitted for a national criminal history check for all employees, volunteers, and other persons at the CMVS who have the potential for direct and unmonitored contact with children. M.G.L. c. 71, § 38R.

18. Will obtain and keep current all necessary permits, licenses, and certifications related to fire, health, and safety within the building(s) and on school property.

19. Will maintain uninterrupted any necessary and appropriate insurance coverage.

20. Will submit to the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education the names, home addresses, and employment and educational histories of proposed new members of the school's board of trustees for approval prior to their service.

21. Will ensure that all members of the school's board of trustees file with the State Ethics Commission completed Statements of Financial Interest as required by M.G.L. c. 268B. M.G.L. c. 71, § 94(d).

22. Will submit in writing to the Commissioner of Elementary and Secondary Education a request to amend its certificate if the school plans to make any change to its operations that differ from the terms and conditions specified in its certificate. (Examples include the school name, grades served, instructional methodology, or contractual relationships.) In particular, the CMVS agrees to submit such requests and to receive approval prior to making any changes to the material terms and conditions of its certificate. (See 603 CMR 52.10(2), at http://www.doe.mass.edu/boe/docs/2014-03/Item7-p603cmr52.pdf.)

23. Will submit in writing to the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education a pre-enrollment estimate by May 1 before the first fiscal year that the school plans to accept student enrollments.

Signature of Authorized Person: <insert digital signature here>

Name of Authorized Person: 

Date: 

Affiliation: 

COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS VIRTUAL SCHOOL NARRATIVE

NOTE: Please refer to the Submission Instructions and Timeline section for the formatting requirements for the narrative.

I. HOW WILL THE SCHOOL DEMONSTRATE ACADEMIC SUCCESS?

A. MISSION STATEMENT, GUIDING PRINCIPLES, AND CORE VALUES

The mission statement communicates the essence of the proposed virtual school. The guiding principles and core values should reflect the CMVS founders’ commitments, core beliefs and values about a virtual school education and should address the diverse needs of the student population and should be founded on an understanding of effective, research-based educational practices, best practices from the field, and high standards for student learning.

For prospectus and final application:

✓ Describe the school’s mission, purpose, and specialized focus, if any, of the proposed CMVS.
✓ Describe the school’s guiding principles and core educational values adopted by the founders and discuss how they will support high levels of academic achievement for all students. Identify the foundation of research and best practices in the field that support the school’s guiding principles and core values.
✓ Identify the student population the school intends to serve, including, any programs specifically for students in

D. Key Considerations and Preferences in the Selection Process in the Overview section. Explain the proposed school’s capacity to instruct and meet the needs of these students, describing specific strategies and resources that will be used to serve their unique needs.
✓ Describe the school’s capacity to implement the proposal and provide high quality instruction.

B. CURRICULUM, INSTRUCTION, ASSESSMENT, AND LEARNING TIME

A CMVS has the freedom to choose and/or to develop curricula that best reflect the mission, guiding principles, and core values of the school and best serve the needs of the expected student population. Nevertheless, it is essential that the school’s curriculum aligns with the content and learning standards contained in the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks on which the Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System (MCAS) and the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC) are based. For the most up-to-date versions of the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks, see the Department’s website, http://www.doe.mass.edu/frameworks/.

For prospectus and final application:

Curriculum
✓ Required attachment: Include a Curriculum Scope and Sequence for each content area at each proposed grade level and confirm alignment with Massachusetts standards in the Attachments.
✓ Describe the curriculum and instructional resources that will be used by the school and how they align with the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks. Note that high school students (grades 9-12) should be offered courses sufficient to meet MassCore requirements (see http://www.doe.mass.edu/ccr/masscore/?section=general).
✓ Explain how the school will ensure that all students (including students with disabilities, who may be using assistive technologies) will be able to access the general education curriculum.
✓ Describe the school’s plan for evaluating the effectiveness of the curriculum, ensuring its successful implementation throughout the school, and refining it as needed.
Identify any third-party curriculum or assessment vendors with whom the school will contract. Additional details regarding Partner Providers will be provided in a separate section.

Describe the course management system and instructional methods that will be used to implement the curriculum.

Describe any plans the school has for using open educational resources (OER) or other Creative Commons-licensed resources, as well as any plans for creating resources that will be shared broadly with the education community.

**Instruction**

- Describe how the proposed instructional methods will support high standards of achievement and are appropriate for all students.
- Describe whether the school will establish standards-based, personalized learning plans for every student. Include information on how students and parents will be able to monitor the student’s progress. Indicate whether the learning plan will be made available to receiving districts for students who transfer out of the virtual school.
- Indicate the frequency of the synchronous learning opportunities and/or the percentage of the instruction that will occur synchronously. Also indicate if these sessions will be required or optional for students.
- Describe how the school will ensure that all enrolled students will be fully engaged in learning and will have opportunities to thrive in the virtual learning environment.
- Describe how the school will involve parents and guardians as partners in education and how the school will provide a high degree of interaction between teacher, learner, and parents/guardians. If the school will have requirements for the frequency of contact between the teacher and student and parents/guardians, include those requirements.
- Describe strategies the school will use to promote academic integrity, discourage plagiarism, and prevent cheating on assignments and tests.

**Assessment**

- Describe how the school will monitor and assess student progress in order to identify areas of difficulty. Include how the school will make use of data, including data gathered from formative and summative assessments, to inform instructional strategies and staff development plans.
- Identify any standardized assessment tools to determine and report student progress, in addition to the state standardized tests (MCAS or PARCC).
- Describe how the CMVS will administer state required assessment tests. Reference the Appendix for the Sample Virtual School Test Administration Request Form. Include how the school will be prepared for administering online assessment tests.

**Student Learning Time**

- If any programs will be offered to students during summer months, describe those programs and their goals.
- Describe how the school will define and monitor student attendance, including how it will verify that each student is actively engaged and participating in classes. Include goals for student attendance and how truancy will be addressed.
- Describe how the school will track student learning time, unless the school is applying for a waiver of the Student Learning Time Regulations (see: http://www.doe.mass.edu/lawsregs/603cmr27_guide.html).

**To apply for a waiver**, provide answers to the questions below in a separate paragraph with the heading APPLICATION FOR STUDENT LEARNING TIME WAIVER.

- Explain the educational rationale for the waiver and why it is needed.
- Provide the proposed policies and standards for promoting students to the next grade, achievement level, or grouping level. Provide a clear sense of what students will know and be able to do when they move to the next level.
• Explain how the school will measure the quality of the implementation and outcomes of the program. Describe the measures that will enable the program and the Department to ensure that enrolled students are making appropriate and satisfactory progress in mastering the content and attaining the other desired outcomes of the program. Include examples of the types of student data and stakeholder feedback that will be reviewed to ensure quality programming.

C. STUDENT SERVICES AND SUPPORTS (INCLUDING THOSE FOR SPECIAL STUDENT POPULATIONS)

Every CMVS is a public school and must be prepared to enroll and support all students who submit applications, including English language learners, students with disabilities, and other students with diverse learning needs, all of whom must be provided with full and meaningful access to the general educational curriculum.

For information on special education laws and regulations see http://www.doe.mass.edu/sped/laws.html.

For information on the laws and regulations relating to English language learners, see http://www.doe.mass.edu/lawsregs/603cmr14.html.

For standards (WIDA), requirements and guidance related to English language learners, see http://www.doe.mass.edu/retell/.

For prospectus and final application:

✓ Describe the school’s strategies for supporting all students at different ages and grade levels so that they complete courses and achieve their academic and career goals. Include a description of the settings in which these support services will be provided and the qualifications of individuals who will provide the support services.

✓ Describe how the school will provide adequate initial and ongoing training and support for students to enable them to successfully participate in online learning. Describe any orientation that will be provided, how students’ ability to learn online will be assessed, and what remedial help will be available to ensure students will be successful online learners. (See 603 CMR 52.05(14) at http://www.doe.mass.edu/boe/docs/2014-03/Item7-p603cmr52.pdf.)

✓ Describe the standards, processes and procedures that the proposed school will employ to identify, assess, teach, and support students who are English language learners.

✓ Describe how the school will provide special education services, in compliance with chapter 71B. (See: https://malegislature.gov/Laws/GeneralLaws/PartI/TitleXII/Chapter71b.)

✓ If the school will enroll secondary students, describe what supports will be provided to help students prepare for college and careers.

✓ Describe how the school will support students’ social and emotional needs and growth, including how it will promote good digital citizenship and prevent cyberbullying.

✓ Describe how the school will create a community for students. Include extra-curricular activities that will be offered, including any face-to-face activities, and how often the activities will take place. Describe how the school will measure student and parent satisfaction with the school.
II. **HOW WILL THE SCHOOL DEMONSTRATE ITS CAPACITY TO DELIVER PROPOSED PROGRAMS AND SERVICES?**

**A. GOVERNANCE**

A CMVS certificate is granted to a board of trustees. Members of the board of trustees are public agents authorized by the state and are responsible for governing the CMVS. Board members must be able to make decisions that are solely in the best interest of the CMVS. Board members and immediate member of their families may not hold a financial interest in the proposed school or in the proposed educational management organization or school support organization (if applicable). They also may not hold a financial interest with any individual(s) or any organizations that may contract or provide service to the proposed school.

For prospectus and final application:

- Required attachment: Include *Completed Questionnaires and Resumes for Proposed Members of Board of Trustees and Key Staff* in the Attachments.
- Describe the school’s governance structure. Clearly distinguish between the roles and responsibilities of the board of trustees and the school’s leadership as they relate to curriculum, personnel decisions, budget allocation, and vendor selection.
- Describe processes related to the board’s oversight of the school, including setting priorities and goals; monitoring progress; developing the annual budget; monitoring the school’s finances; conducting long-term financial and strategic planning; and supporting, monitoring, and evaluating the school leader(s).
- Describe the process the board will use to make decisions, regarding policies, procedures, fiscal planning, and operations. Include the board’s plan for seeking feedback from the school staff, parents, and the larger community when setting policy.
- Provide examples of the proposed board’s future actions in governing the proposed school. These examples should accurately reflect an understanding of the roles and responsibilities of the board of trustees. They should also be consistent with public accountability, including open meeting law, state ethics law, and virtual school law.
- Summarize each proposed board member’s experience and qualifications. Provide a brief job description for each board member, including board members that have not yet been selected.
- Describe the process that will be used to recruit and select new board members who have the skills and expertise to ensure the sustainability of the school.
- Describe the annual process the board will use to evaluate its own performance. Include steps that will be taken to guide the board’s development and maintain its effectiveness.

For final application only:

- Required attachment: Include a draft of the complete *CMVS Bylaws* in the Attachments.
- Describe systems the board will employ to ensure clear decision-making. Include communication processes that will facilitate and ensure public accountability, including board meetings designed to foster open, deliberate, and thorough discussions.
- Describe the process that will be used to handle inquiries and complaints made to the board.
- Provide a description of the succession planning for board officers. Include a description of the orientation and development process for new board members.
- Indicate if there will be any ex-officio members of the board of trustees (i.e., seats that are earmarked based on a person’s position, such as school principal or parent, or student representative) and explain the rationale for including them.
- Describe any committees, advisory groups, and/or task forces and their role in supporting school development and success.
B. PARTNERSHIPS

Applicants may choose to enter into agreements or contracts to procure goods or services. A CMVS may also contract for the provision of substantially all educational management services, curriculum tools, and/or operational support. An applicant must clearly identify potential entities with whom the CMVS intends to contract or otherwise partner, the nature of the legal relationship with such entity, and specifically describe what role(s) the entity will play on behalf of the proposed CMVS. Examples of potential partners are educational management organizations (EMOs), curriculum or software providers, and higher educational institutions.

For prospectus and final application:
- Identify any proposed partner organizations, and describe the nature and purpose of the school’s partnership with each. If any partner will be involved in the governance of the school in any way, provide details.
- Summarize each proposed partner’s expertise relevant to this application and how the partnership will enhance, complement, and/or support the guiding principles and core values of the proposed school.
- Describe how each partner was vetted and selected over other potential partners. Provide evidence that the partner has demonstrated positive academic results and responsible fiscal management. Identify where and how each partner has implemented its services.

For final application only:
- Required attachment: Include the Partner Provider Information Sheet in the Attachments.
- Required attachment: Include Draft Agreements with Partner Providers in the Attachments. The draft agreement must delineate the roles and responsibilities of the partner provider, the board of trustees and the school leadership. It should describe how the board of trustees will provide effective oversight of the partner provider, including monitoring academic performance and fiscal activity. The draft agreement should also include performance evaluation measures (including student academic performance), the total fee paid for management services, a description of the payment structure, clarification of authority over hiring and firing, and the conditions and procedures for the contract’s renewal and termination. (NOTE: If the partner is a college, university, museum, educational institution, or other not-for-profit entity, a letter of commitment from the organization can take the place of a contract. The letter should indicate the proposed affiliation and the terms and scope of the partnership.)

C. MANAGEMENT AND STAFF

Applicants must demonstrate they will have a sufficient number of qualified staff to deliver on the terms of the certificate and provide a high quality virtual education option to all enrolled students. See Staff under C. Key Required Characteristics in the Overview section for required personnel.

For final application only:
- Required attachment: Include an Organizational Chart in the Attachments. The chart should that include employees of the school, as well as the board of trustees.
- Provide a narrative that clearly explains the Organizational Chart attachment, the reporting structure, and the relationship between the school’s leader and other staff members. Include the number of teachers and administrators per grade/subject, as well as the target student/teacher ratio.
- If the proposed school leader has been selected, describe the process and criteria used to determine that this person was the best candidate for the position. Describe the person’s skills and experience, explaining how they will enable the person to successfully achieve the school’s mission. If the proposed school leader has never led a school, describe any training programs that he or she has completed or is currently participating in. If the school leader has not been
selected, describe the desired skills and experience of the ideal leader, as well as the plans for recruiting and selecting the person.

✓ Describe the qualifications and experience of the staff, including how many are certified to teach in the areas to which they are assigned. For any positions for which an individual has not yet been selected, include the minimum required qualifications.

✓ Describe the professional development and ongoing support that will be provided for teachers and administrators, including any professional development that will be required for teachers who have not previously taught online.

✓ Describe opportunities the school will provide for teachers to collaborate, share effective and practices, and make decisions that affect instruction. Include strategies that will be used to help teachers and specialists plan how to best serve students who need extra support.

✓ Describe the procedures for evaluation of teachers and administrators including how frequently formal and information evaluations will take place. (All educators must be evaluated consistent with regulations promulgated by the Board and related guidance issued by the Department.)

✓ Describe how school leaders will observe the virtual instruction, provide feedback to teachers regarding ways to improve their practice, and provide support to any underperforming staff.

✓ Explain how individual base salaries and increases will be determined for all employees, including leadership, administrators, teachers, and non-instructional staff.

D. SCHOOL FINANCES

Planning and managing school finances are essential for organizational viability, successful implementation, and the monitoring and evaluation of resource allocations. The statute identifies the “school choice” rate, currently set at $5,000 (less the $75 reserved by the Department plus the actual cost of services for special education students – see M.G.L. c. 71, § 94(k)) as the default reimbursement for each student enrolled in a CMVS. Applicants may request a higher per pupil rate that will need to be justified and approved by the Board.

For final application only:

✓ Required attachment: Complete the Budget Template based on the school choice rate of $4,925/student. Note that the budget must reflect the expenses related to all of the commitments proposed in the application, including the educational program, expected population of students with disabilities and English language learners, human resources needs, and the repayment of potential debt. It should also include total expected realistic sources of revenue, including tuition, any grants (federal, state, and private), and fundraising. The budget should begin with the pre-operational period and go through the school’s third year of operation.

✓ Provide a budget narrative explaining the projected revenue and expenses, including descriptions of staffing and other operating expenses. Include information on the assumptions behind the budget projections.

✓ If requesting funding above the standard $4,925/student rate, identify the proposed rate and justify it, describing what services would become possible under this rate (indicating which budget line items would be impacted).

✓ Explain the process for tracking and managing the school’s finances. Who will be responsible and what are their qualifications?

✓ Describe the fiscal controls and financial management policies the board of trustees will employ to remain informed of the school’s financial position. If the CMVS will contract with an external provider for financial management services, explain how the board of trustees will monitor the provider’s performance and hold it accountable.

✓ Explain how the school will ensure it has sufficient funds to cover all anticipated expenses, including but not limited to start-up costs, and school operation. Describe contingency planning
for potential financial challenges, such as cash flow problems due to lower than anticipated student enrollment. Include specific strategies for dealing with these challenges.

✓ Explain whether the school expects to raise additional funds and why. If so, describe any short-term or long-term financing that the school anticipates securing during the period of this budget.
III. HOW WILL THE SCHOOL MANAGE OPERATIONS?

A. SCHOOL CHARACTERISTICS

The school calendar, organization of students within the educational program, and communications with the school community (including parents, students and faculty) are just a few of the elements that an effective school must manage. The school’s characteristics should be consistent with the proposed mission, guiding principles, and core values established by the founders.

For prospectus and final application:
✓ Describe the organization of the school by ages of students or grades to be taught and an estimate of the total enrollment of the CMVS.
✓ Describe how and where students will access the school’s courses, including whether it is in the home or in a location provided and overseen by the CMVS applicant.
✓ Describe the school’s proposed school year.
✓ Describe how the school plans to conduct outreach to prospective students, including targeted groups specified in the school’s certificate.
✓ Describe the school’s student retention strategy.
✓ Describe the method for and timetable of admission to the commonwealth virtual school.
✓ Describe how the school will conduct a lottery in the event that admission applications exceed the school’s enrollment capacity. Also describe any preferences the school shall give for enrollment.
✓ Describe goals, expectations and mechanisms for communication between the board of trustees, school leaders, teachers and students—and how such communications will be tracked and managed.

Describe how age-appropriate supervision of students under 14 will be communicated, monitored, and addressed if concerns arise.

B. SCHOOL OPERATIONS

A CMVS must have strong operational capabilities in order to support the delivery of a rigorous program, to provide accurate and timely information to sending and receiving districts, and to report data in a timely manner.

For prospectus and final application:
✓ Describe how the school will ensure that all students have access to the technology and materials necessary to complete their course of study.
✓ Describe the school’s provisions for cyber safety, and reference any regulations/processes the school will follow.
✓ Describe the technical support available to students and staff, including but not limited to the types of support that will be available and the hours that it will be offered.

For final application only:
✓ Describe any facilities that will be used as an administrative office, drop-in center, meeting space, and so on. Describe how the school will maintain its infrastructure, including service level agreements and procedures for resolving any outages.
✓ Describe the school’s capacity to support and store all critical student, program, and staff data for expedient retrieval and analysis. State whether the student information system is SIF compliant http://www.doe.mass.edu/infoservices/data/sif/. Specify how the school will meet all reporting requirements http://www.doe.mass.edu/infoservices/data/schedule.html.
✓ Describe in detail the process and forms that the CMVS will use to provide written notification to each sending school district of the number and grade levels of students who are attending the CMVS or who have transferred from the CMVS back to the sending district or to another school.
IV. HOW WILL THE SCHOOL DEMONSTRATE FAITHFULNESS TO ITS MISSION AND TERMS OF ITS CERTIFICATE?

Renewal decisions are based upon evidence regarding the success of the school’s academic program; the viability of the school as an organization; and the faithfulness of the school to the terms of its certificate. The accountability process for Commonwealth of Massachusetts Virtual Schools recognizes that virtual schools are subject to increased accountability in exchange for increased freedom. A school must demonstrate results within the term of its certificate or risk non-renewal.

Each CMVS must establish an accountability plan that sets rigorous, measurable goals for student learning outcomes, organizational viability, and faithfulness to mission, based on the program defined in the application. This plan will be finalized and approved by the Office of Digital Learning by the end of the school’s first year of operation. Once approved by the Office of Digital Learning, the accountability plan will be used by the school for annual reporting on its progress, for monitoring, and for renewing its certificate.

A. PROCESS

For final application only:
✓ Describe the process the school will undertake in its first year to create an effective accountability plan. Identify who will be primarily responsible for defining and overseeing this process, as well as for collecting and analyzing the data to evaluate the school's progress towards its accountability plan objectives.

B. ACCOUNTABILITY PLAN OBJECTIVES

For final application only:
✓ Give three examples of accountability plan objectives for each area below. These objectives should be rigorous, measurable, outcome-based, and focused on core school priorities.

(1) Academic success – provide three examples
   For each objective, describe the evidence that will be used to evaluate student performance and identify specific achievement targets for this performance (including student retention goals). Because the objectives are to be accomplished by the end of the third year, provide benchmarks the school will reach along the way. In creating these academic objectives, consider using different measures and setting different types of objectives. Be sure the objectives are clear, measurable, and data driven.

(2) Organizational viability – provide three examples
   For each objective, describe the indicators that will be used to evaluate the school’s organizational viability. Meeting these goals should demonstrate that there is sufficient support for the school, that the school offers a productive and collaborative environment for learning and work, that the school manages its operations and finances effectively, and that the board of trustees and school leadership exercise sound governance.

(3) Faithfulness to mission – provide three examples
   For each objective, describe the indicators that will be used to evaluate the school’s faithfulness to its mission. These goals should demonstrate that the school is effectively implementing the program.

Note: Additional annual reporting requirements are included in the Appendix. It can be beneficial to align objectives and associated measures with data that support periodic and annual reports.
V. LIST OF REQUIRED ATTACHMENTS

The following attachments are required (except as indicated for the prospectus) and should be sequentially numbered and clearly referred to in the text. Attachments do not count toward the 40 page limit for the prospectus or the 60 page limit for the final application.

A. COMPLETED QUESTIONNAIRES AND RESUMES FOR PROPOSED MEMBERS OF BOARD OF TRUSTEES AND KEY STAFF

Attach a completed Proposed Board of Trustee Questionnaire (see Appendix) and a resume for each prospective member of the board of trustees and other individuals who may be identified as leaders of the proposed CMVS, such as an executive director or principal, if such individuals have been identified. At the prospectus state, only the completed questionnaires are required.

B. DRAFT BYLAWS (FOR FINAL APPLICATION ONLY)

Use the Criteria for CMVS Bylaws (see Appendix) to guide the creation of the proposed virtual school’s bylaws. Submit a draft of the bylaws, along with the completed Criteria for CMVS Bylaws checklist, indicating which pages of the draft bylaws address each of the 34 required criteria.

C. PROPOSED BUDGET (FOR FINAL APPLICATION ONLY)

Complete the Budget Template for the first three years that the proposed school will operate, plus the pre-operational period from July 1 to the first day of school. The template is available on the CMVS RFP website at http://www.doe.mass.edu/odl/cmvs/app-process.html.

D. CURRICULUM SCOPE AND SEQUENCE (FOR BOTH PROSPECTUS AND FINAL APPLICATION)

Provide the curriculum scope and sequence for each content area at each proposed grade level, along with a curriculum map showing how the CMVS curriculum aligns with Massachusetts standards http://www.doe.mass.edu/frameworks/current.html.

E. ORGANIZATIONAL CHART (FOR FINAL APPLICATION ONLY)

Provide an Organizational Chart that shows the reporting structure and relationship between the board of trustees and the school’s leadership; and between the school’s leader and administration regarding all teachers, specialists, and any other staff members. The chart should show the number of teachers and administrators per grade/subject.

F. PARTNER PROVIDER INFORMATION SHEET (FOR FINAL APPLICATION ONLY)

Applicants must provide information about any partners (contracted providers) of instructional, support and/or management services. If applicable, complete the Partner Provider Information Sheet (see Appendix).
G. DRAFT AGREEMENT WITH PARTNER PROVIDER(S) (FOR FINAL APPLICATION ONLY)

Submit a draft agreement for each external provider. (Note that if the partner is a college, university, museum, educational institution, or other not-for-profit entity, a letter of commitment from the organization can take the place of a contract. The letter should indicate the proposed affiliation and the terms and scope of the partnership.)

H. ENROLLMENT POLICIES AND ADMISSIONS APPLICATION (FOR FINAL APPLICATION ONLY)

Use the checklist to guide the creation of the proposed virtual school’s enrollment policy. Submit a draft of the enrollment policies and admissions application, along with the completed checklist, indicating which pages of the policies and application address each of the criteria.
APPENDIX

We strongly encourage all applicants to review carefully the statute in order to better understand the requirements and expectations of Commonwealth of Massachusetts Virtual Schools. It is posted on the mass.gov website at http://www.malegislature.gov/Laws/SessionLaws/Acts/2012/Chapter379.

The following is a list of excerpts from M.G.L c71, § 94:

BOARD OF TRUSTEES POWERS (M.G.L. C. 71, § 94(E))

The board of trustees of a Commonwealth of Massachusetts Virtual School shall have all powers necessary or desirable for carrying out its virtual program, including, but not limited to, the power to:

(1) adopt a name and corporate seal; provided, that any name selected shall include the words "Commonwealth of Massachusetts Virtual School;"
(2) acquire real property, from public or private sources, by lease, lease with an option to purchase or by gift, for use as a school facility;
(3) receive and disburse funds for school purposes;
(4) incur temporary debt in anticipation of receipt of funds; provided that, notwithstanding any general or special law to the contrary, the terms of repayment of any Commonwealth of Massachusetts Virtual School's debt shall not exceed the duration of the school's certificate without the approval of the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education;
(5) solicit and accept grants or gifts for school purposes; and
(6) determine the school's curriculum and develop the school's annual budget.

For additional information, see 603 CMR 52.06(2) at http://www.doe.mass.edu/boe/docs/2014-03/Item7-p603cmr52.pdf.

REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

Annual Fiscal Report (M.G.L. c. 71, § 94(k)(1))

Submit an annual report to the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education, not later than January 1 for the previous school year. The report shall include, but not be limited to:
(1) the revenue and expenditures for the prior fiscal year with a specific accounting of the uses of public and private dollars;
(2) compensation and benefits for teachers, staff, administrators, executives and members of the board of trustees;
(3) the amount of funds paid to any management company;
(4) the sources of surplus funds, identifying specifically whether the funds are private or public;
(5) how surplus funds were used in the previous fiscal year; and
(6) the planned use of surplus funds in future fiscal years, including the upcoming fiscal year.
**Annual CMVS Report (M.G.L. c. 71, § 94(m))**

Submit an annual report to the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education not later than January 1 for the previous school year. The CMVS shall make its report available to the public on the school's website. The report shall include, but not be limited to:

1. a discussion of progress made toward the achievement of the goals set forth in the certificate and the school's accountability plan;
2. a list of the programs and courses offered;
3. a description and number of the students enrolled in the CMVS by grade level, the number of students eligible for free and reduced price lunch, and the number of students who applied and were not admitted;
4. a financial statement describing by appropriate categories the revenue and expenditures for the prior fiscal year and a balance sheet describing the school's assets, liabilities and fund balances or equities;
5. information regarding and a discussion of student attendance and participation;
6. information regarding and a discussion of student-teacher interaction;
7. information regarding and a discussion of student performance in the school, including data from state assessments and a comparison of students’ achievement with the achievement of students in sending districts;
8. a discussion of how many courses students completed and how many courses students did not complete;
9. a discussion of how the school created a community for students;
10. what activities were provided to engage students and how students participated in those activities;
11. a discussion of parental involvement;
12. a discussion of the school's outreach and recruitment efforts; and
13. a summary of teacher and administrator turnover, including a comparison with previous years to the extent that this is applicable.

The report shall include input from teachers and administrators at the virtual school and input from administrators in the district that has established the virtual school or input from districts that are members of an education collaborative that has established the virtual school.

**Annual Independent Audit (M.G.L. c. 71, § 94(n))**

Every CMVS must file an independent audit of its accounts annually (not later than January 1st for the previous school year) with the Department and with the State Auditor. Such audit shall be in a form prescribed by the State Auditor. The State Auditor may investigate the budget and finances of Commonwealth of Massachusetts Virtual Schools and their financial dealings, transactions, and relationships and shall have the power to examine the records of Commonwealth of Massachusetts Virtual Schools and to prescribe methods of accounting and the rendering of periodic reports.

**Accountability Plan**

The CMVS shall provide timely and accurate reports related to the school’s accountability plan as stipulated by the Office of Digital Learning.
SAMPLE VIRTUAL SCHOOL TEST ADMINISTRATION REQUEST FORM

Every CMVS must administer state-required tests to all of its students, either at regional test sites or at schools in sending districts. For example, the virtual school may arrange for students to participate in testing in their sending districts upon parental request and with the agreement of the sending district.

Each year, in preparation for the spring state test administration, Commonwealth of Massachusetts Virtual Schools will need to complete the attached form according to deadlines established by the Department so that the Department can be assured that testing will occur according to the protocols stated in the MCAS Principal’s Administration Manual (PAM).

Note that in the fall of 2015, the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education will vote whether to adopt PARCC as the Commonwealth’s student testing program, replacing the MCAS.

SAMPLE VIRTUAL SCHOOL TEST ADMINISTRATION REQUEST FORM

Instructions: To request approval to administer state tests to students educated via a virtual school, complete and fax this request form by the deadline to the Department’s Student Assessment Services Unit at 781-338-3630. Retain documentation on file for three years.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1. Contact Information</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Principal’s Name:</td>
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<tr>
<td>Telephone Number:</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fax Number:</td>
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<tr>
<td>School:</td>
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<tr>
<td>District:</td>
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</tbody>
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<tr>
<th>2. Test Administration Options</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Check the option(s) below that the school proposes to adopt.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Option 1: Regional Test Sites</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Option 2: Schools in Sending Districts</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

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<tr>
<th>3. Proposed Test Administration Details</th>
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<tr>
<td>Submit a separate sheet with details describing the following:</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Regional Test Sites**

- the proposed regional test sites
- the proposed test administration schedule
  - The principal must establish a definition of a regular school day for MCAS testing purposes (students may have the length of a regular school day to complete each test session).
- plans for ensuring the secure transport of test materials and secure testing conditions
  - The principal must coordinate procedures (e.g., preparing a sufficient quantity of materials for distribution to the sites).
- procedures for materials to be returned to locked storage at the end of each day
  - If a hotel safe is used, materials must be locked in a portable safe inside the hotel’s safe.
- the proposed test administrators
  - Test administrators must meet state certification requirements. For each proposed test administrator, provide the person’s name, position in the school or district, and the date of training in administering MCAS tests.
  - At least two test administrators must be present at each site and one individual must be named as a site supervisor.
- plan for notifying parents/guardians and providing updates as necessary of the details for testing
  - Parents/guardians should be informed that they will need to provide verification of their children’s identities, if CMVS staff cannot identify students by sight (e.g., student identification cards, parent/guardian sign-in).
  - Prior to testing, CMVS must notify parents/guardians in writing of the testing location and that they are expected to provide transportation for their children to the MCAS testing site but that transportation will be provided upon request for a family that is unable to provide its own.
- how test accommodations will be provided to students with disabilities based on their IEPs and 504 plans

**Schools in Sending Districts**

- The CMVS must be prepared to pay a fee for service, if the district charges such a fee.
- The CMVS must maintain memoranda of understanding with the sending districts as part of their school files.
- The CMVS must submit specified information to the Department that will enable student results to be processed and reported appropriately (information will be provided upon approval of request).

**Other Details (for both Regional Test Sites and Schools in Sending Districts)**
- how the MCAS-Alt will be conducted for students with significant disabilities who require it
- how ACCESS for ELLs testing will be administered to any English language learners enrolled in the CMVS

**The principal of the school must sign below to acknowledge the following:**

- All test materials will be kept secure during transportation to the sites and during test administration.
- The test administration will follow all procedures described in the Principal’s Administration Manual (PAM) and in the appropriate Test Administrator’s Manual.
- All test materials will be returned according to instructions in the PAM, and additional student information will be provided to the Department upon request for accurate processing of results.

Principal’s Name: _______________________ Principal’s Signature: _______________________ Date: ______________

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**4. Approval/Denial of Request – For Department Use Only**

(This section will be completed and returned to your school prior to testing.)

Check one: □ This request has been approved. OR □ This request has been denied.

Department of Elementary and Secondary Education
Staff Person Name and Position: ____________________________
Signature: ____________________________________________ Date: ______________________
CRITERIA FOR CMVS BYLAWS

Use this checklist to guide the creation of the proposed virtual school's bylaws. Submit a draft of the bylaws, along with the completed checklist, indicating which pages of the draft bylaws address each of the 34 required criteria.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1.</th>
<th>State the name and purpose of the school and that the school is a public school.</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>State that the name of the school must include the words “commonwealth virtual school” as part of its name.</td>
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<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Cite M.G.L. Chapter 379</td>
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<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>State that the board of trustees holds the certificate granted by the Massachusetts Board of Elementary and Secondary Education.</td>
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<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>State that the board of trustees of a virtual school is a public entity, which operates independently of a school committee.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>Remember that the bylaws should not refer to the school as a non-profit corporation, a charitable organization, a 501(c) (3), or use descriptions indicating that the school is anything other than a public entity.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>State that the individual board members are considered special state employees.</td>
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<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>State that the board is a public employer for the purposes of tort liability (M.G.L. Chapter 258) and for collective bargaining purposes (M.G.L. Chapter 150E).</td>
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<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td>State that the board of trustees may not discriminate against potential members on the basis of race, color, national origin, creed, ancestry, ethnicity, age, gender identity, religion, marital status, sexual orientation, or non-disqualifying handicap or mental condition.</td>
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<tr>
<td>10.</td>
<td>Specify that public notice be given of the date, time and location of all meetings in accordance with the law pertaining to the open meetings of governmental bodies.</td>
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<tr>
<td>11.</td>
<td>Specify that detailed, accurate records of every meeting be adopted and kept in accordance with the law pertaining to the open meetings of governmental bodies.</td>
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<td>12.</td>
<td>Stipulate the situations under which an executive session may take place.</td>
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<td>13.</td>
<td>State that trustee participation occurs in person for the purpose of a quorum or vote. The board may include language addressing remote participation provided such language is consistent with M.G. L. c. 30A, § 20(d); 940 CMR 29.10; and guidelines issued by the Office of the Attorney General.</td>
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<td>14.</td>
<td>Specify the minimum (at least five) and maximum number of trustees required on the board.</td>
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<td>15.</td>
<td>Specify that action by the board requires a majority vote of a quorum of seated trustees and, to the degree required, specify the situations for which approval may require a special majority.</td>
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<tr>
<td>16.</td>
<td>Define the number of years that shall constitute a board member’s term.</td>
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<td>17.</td>
<td>Set a specific, reasonable, limit on successive or total terms that a member may serve.</td>
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<tr>
<td>18.</td>
<td>State that a formal vote of the board of trustees is required to accept all new members.</td>
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<tr>
<td>19.</td>
<td>Expressly require a voting employee representative in the board’s composition if the school intends to have any paid employee member(s) serve on the board.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20.</td>
<td>Specify the number and titles of officers (e.g., chair, vice-chair, secretary, and treasurer).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21.</td>
<td>Describe the responsibilities of each officer.</td>
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<tr>
<td>22.</td>
<td>Describe a process for electing officers.</td>
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<tr>
<td>23.</td>
<td>State that the board complies with the state conflict of interest law, M.G.L. Chapter 268A.</td>
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<td>24.</td>
<td>State that board members must disclose any financial interest or business transactions that they (or any immediate family member) have in any school in Massachusetts or elsewhere with the State Ethics Commission, the Department and the city or town clerk within 30 days of joining the board and by September 1 annually, including the year after service is completed (unless service is less than 30 days in that year).</td>
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<td>25.</td>
<td>State that the board of trustees shall request the appointment of a trustee to the board only where the board has no reason to know that the trustee has a financial interest under M.G.L. c. 268A which may preclude a majority of the board from participating in deliberations or voting on certain matters that are expected to come before the board. The board must exercise due diligence prior to determining that a proposed trustee does not have such a financial interest.</td>
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<td>26.</td>
<td>Specify that the school’s fiscal year begins on July 1 (and ends on June 30 of the following calendar year).</td>
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<td>27.</td>
<td>Specify a process for making amendments to the bylaws, subject to the approval of the board of trustees and the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education.</td>
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<td>28.</td>
<td>Describe the procedure for responding to any complaints filed with the board of trustees.</td>
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<td>29.</td>
<td>Prohibit the board of trustees from exercising managerial powers over the day-to-day operations of the school.</td>
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<td>30.</td>
<td>State the ability of the board of trustees to select, appoint, evaluate, and/or remove only the school director(s).</td>
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<td>31.</td>
<td>Specify the process through which a trustee may resign and/or be removed from the board.</td>
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<td>32.</td>
<td>Require that the board of trustees meet at least quarterly.</td>
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<td>33.</td>
<td>Require an annual meeting of the board of trustees.</td>
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<td>34.</td>
<td>Describe the process for the formation of committees and/or task forces.</td>
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# PROPOSED BOARD OF TRUSTEES AND KEY STAFF QUESTIONNAIRE

Each proposed board of trustee member or key employee should complete this form.

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<th>Present Employer and Job Title</th>
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<th>Past or present employment by or board membership in a school, educational management organization, or school support organization</th>
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<tr>
<th>Town of Residence</th>
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**QUESTIONS**

1. How did you become aware of the proposed school?

2. Why do you wish to serve? If you will be a board member, what office on the board would you anticipate holding, if any (e.g. such as chair person or treasurer)? How long do you anticipate being a member of the board?

3. Provide specific examples of actions that you have taken that demonstrate your commitment to public education.

4. What is the role of a Commonwealth of Massachusetts Virtual School board trustee?

5. Describe your specific interest and unique qualifications that demonstrate your capacity to implement the proposal as written.
6. Please describe any current or past relationship that you or an immediate member of your family\(^1\) has with the school district or collaborative that is applying for the Commonwealth of Massachusetts Virtual School certificate.

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7. Please indicate if you or an immediate member of your family knows generally, and/or is disfavored by other members of the proposed board, proposed school employee(s), or individual(s) affiliated with the proposed educational management organization or school support organization, if applicable. Indicate the individual(s) and describe the nature of the relationship(s) if one exists.

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8. Please indicate if you or an immediate member of your family has or may have a financial interest\(^2\) in the proposed school; proposed educational management organization or school support organization, if applicable; or individual(s) or any other company that may contract or provide service to the proposed school, if applicable. Please include the possible leasing or selling of any real property, and the purchase of equipment or services for the proposed school. If yes, please explain.

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9. Have or will you or any member of your immediate family receive funds, gifts, loans, services, or any other benefit for any purpose from the proposed school or any other company proposing to contract or provide services to the proposed school? If yes, please explain.

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10. Describe what you would do if you believed one or more members of the school's board was acting unethically or not in the best interests of the school.

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11. To the best of your knowledge, are there any situations which may give the appearance of a conflict of interest or that would make it difficult for you to discharge the duties of a board member and make decisions that are solely in the best interest of the school? If yes, please explain briefly. Individuals are encouraged to contact the State Ethics Commission (http://www.mass.gov/ethics/) about how conflict of interest law applies to their situation.

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\(^1\) Immediate family is defined as the proposed board member and his or her spouse, and the parents, children, brothers, and sisters of the proposed board member and his or her spouse.

\(^2\) Financial interest is defined as anything of economic or monetary value.
**EXPERTISE**: Mark with (X)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Community Service</th>
<th>Early Childhood</th>
<th>Special Education</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fundraising</td>
<td>Elementary Education</td>
<td>English Language Learner Education</td>
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<td>Educational Leadership</td>
<td>Secondary Education</td>
<td>Human Resources</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finance/Business</td>
<td>Law</td>
<td>School Governance</td>
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<tr>
<td>Management</td>
<td>School Improvement</td>
<td>Technology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Innovative public school models</td>
<td>Online/Blended Learning</td>
<td>Data Services</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other (Please list.)</td>
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**CERTIFICATION**

I RECOGNIZE THAT ALL INFORMATION SUBMITTED WITH THIS PROPOSED BOARD OF TRUSTEES QUESTIONNAIRE BECOMES A MATTER OF PUBLIC RECORD, SUBJECT BY LAW TO DISCLOSURE TO MEMBERS OF THE GENERAL PUBLIC. I CERTIFY THAT THE INFORMATION CONTAINED IN THIS DOCUMENT AND ATTACHED RESUME IS TRUE AND COMPLETE TO THE BEST OF MY KNOWLEDGE UNDER THE PENALTIES OF PERJURY.

<table>
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<th>Signature:</th>
<th>Date:</th>
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PARTNER PROVIDER INFORMATION SHEET

As part of the CMVS application process, applicants are required to submit this form for each proposed contract with an external provider for curriculum, management, and/or other services. The proposed provider(s) must complete the information below and include it in the Attachments. The Department of Elementary and Secondary Education may contact the person(s) listed below to request student performance and other accountability data.

Name of Partner Provider:  
Primary Contact:  
Address:  
City:  State:  Zip:  
Daytime Phone:  Fax:  
Email:  
Has the Partner Provider completed a Voluntary Product Accessibility Template (VPAT)?  Yes ☐ No ☐  
If Yes, provide a link to the VPAT.  

NOTE: For information on the VPAT, see http://www.state.gov/m/irm/impact/126343.htm. Also note that the Center on Online Learning and Students with Disabilities has posted publicly available information about product accessibility from vendors at http://centeronlinelearning.org/resources/vpat/.

PARTNER PROVIDER

Note: This section may be submitted as an attached Excel document.

Provide the list of states, school districts and/or individual schools that your organization is currently operating in. In addition, provide the following information:

- Name of Partner Provider;
- Primary contact name, title, and contact information (address, phone, fax, and email);
- Name of states, districts, schools as well grade spans and total number of students served;
- Brief description of the services provided; and
- Number of years services have been provided.

Note: The Department reserves the right to deny any applicants that do not report accurate data.
**ENROLLMENT POLICIES AND ADMISSIONS APPLICATION**

Use this checklist to guide the creation of the proposed virtual school's enrollment policy. Submit a draft of the enrollment policies and admissions application, along with the completed checklist, indicating which pages of the policies and application address each of the criteria.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1. General Policy Statement(s) (or Introduction):</th>
<th>PAGE/LOCATION:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. States the grades at which the school enrolls (or does not enroll) new students.</td>
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<tr>
<td>b. States a non-discrimination policy that includes “[name of school] does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, creed, sex, gender identity, ethnicity, sexual orientation, mental or physical disability, age, ancestry, athletic performance, special need, proficiency in the English language or a foreign language, or prior academic achievement.”</td>
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<tr>
<td>c. States that the school will have and implement a student recruitment and retention plan. (A Commonwealth of Massachusetts virtual school must develop deliberate, specific steps to attract, to enroll, and to retain any target populations specified in its certificate. A virtual school shall not use financial or technology incentives to recruit students.)</td>
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<tr>
<th>2. Description of the Eligibility Criteria for Enrollment:</th>
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<tr>
<td>a. States that the applicant must be a resident of Massachusetts to apply to enroll, and to attend a Commonwealth of Massachusetts Virtual School. States that a student shall not enroll as a full-time virtual student while attending another school.</td>
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<tr>
<td>b. Defines requirements for reasonable proof of residency, including for homeless students.</td>
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<tr>
<td>c. States that the school does not require potential students or their families to attend interviews or informational meetings as a condition of application and/or enrollment.</td>
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<tr>
<td>d. States that the school does not administer tests to potential applicants or predicate enrollment on results from any test of ability or achievement.</td>
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<tr>
<td>e. Specifies age thresholds for kindergarten and age ceilings for high school programs. Schools may request reasonable proof of age related to these requirements, such as a birth certificate or equivalent proof of age.</td>
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</table>
3. **Description of the Enrollment Process:**

- a. Describes the school’s enrollment processes, including the initial application process, as well as any subsequent application and lottery processes.

- b. States that public notice of all application deadlines is given at least one month in advance.

- c. States the final date for all students offered enrollment to accept enrollment.

- d. States that all information requested in the application, such as language spoken at home or race/ethnicity, is not intended and will not be used to discriminate.

- e. States the virtual school’s policy regarding disclosure of student information.

- f. Provides form for students and parents to consent or deny disclosure of student information.

- g. States that, upon request, the school will provide the names and addresses of students to a third party mail house for mailings unless the parent requests that the school withhold their child’s information.

4. **Description of the Lottery Procedures:**

- a. States that the school will determine the number of spaces available each year by grade level.

- b. States that at least one week notice is given prior to each enrollment lottery.

- c. States that each lottery is conducted in public and indicates the location of the lottery.

- d. States that a disinterested party draws the lottery.
5. Description of the Lottery Procedures (continued):

e. Provide a list of the groups targeted for enrollment in the virtual school (specified in the school’s certificate), and state that the school will give preference for admission to students in those groups, as long as doing so does not violate the school’s non-discrimination policy (see 1b above).

f. States that those students for whom enrollment in the school would cause the state to exceed the two percent enrollment cap (for enrollment in all of public virtual schools in the state) will not be offered admission but will remain on the waiting list.

g. States that all applicants not selected in an enrollment lottery are placed on a waiting list in the order the names were selected while also taking into account preference for targeted groups named in the school’s certificate.

h. States that if the principal enrollment process fails to produce an adequate number of enrolled students, the lottery process may be repeated if a waiting list does not exist and the required lottery process is strictly followed, including public notification and deadlines.

6. Description of the Waiting List Policy:

a. States that if a student stops attending the virtual school or declines admission, the next available student on the waitlist for that grade will be offered admission until the vacant seat is filled.

b. States that no student will be admitted ahead of other eligible students unless said student is a member of one of the groups targeted for enrollment in the virtual school (specified in the school’s certificate).

c. States how students on the waiting list will be informed of an offer of admission.

d. States the school’s policy for students who have declined an offer of admission.

e. States the school’s policy on maintaining the waiting list from year-to-year.
7. Description of the Waiting List Policy (continued):

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<tr>
<td>f. States that the school will keep accurate records of their waitlist containing, the names, home addresses, telephone numbers, and grade levels of students who entered the lottery but did not gain admission.</td>
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<tr>
<td>g. States that when a student stops attending the school for any reason, the school will attempt to fill vacant seats up to February 15th, (articulate which grades are included and excluded - seats in the last half of the grades offered and in grades 10, 11, and 12 are excluded statutorily. If a school has an odd number of grades, the number of grades in the last half shall be rounded up to the nearest whole number).</td>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>h. Explain that a vacancy not filled after February 15th moves into the subsequent grade, to be filled the following September if such grade is not in the last half of the grades offered and is not grades 10, 11, or 12.</td>
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8. Application for Admission Requirements:

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. The application does not require dual parent/guardian signatures.</td>
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<td>b. The application does not require submission of the student’s social security number.</td>
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<tr>
<td>c. The school submits a copy of the application with its enrollment policy to ESE for approval.</td>
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