

Dear Board Members,

The 2022-23 school year was a productive one for DESE. The policies and priorities the Board established in prior years continued to bear fruit with the addition of new Innovation Career Pathways for students, new Early College programs, and an improved Individualized Education Program process guide for students with disabilities and their families. The year was also notable for advances in adult education, with $250 million over five years awarded to programs throughout the Commonwealth and the beginning of free high school equivalency testing for Massachusetts residents.

We continued to rank first among states in terms of our results on the National Assessment of Educational Progress and Advanced Placement success, but the spring 2022 MCAS results reminded us that it will take several years to recover from the pandemic’s effects, and we are still only #1 for some. To address these gaps, we provided districts with opportunities to give students more time on learning through tutoring, Acceleration Academies, and afterschool and summer programs.

We also continued our work to get early literacy instruction right, so that all students have a foundation for success. As a result of the Board’s work, all schools now screen students in kindergarten through grade 3 for reading challenges, a huge step toward helping all students read effectively.

I appreciate the insights that each of you bring to our work. I would like to thank Tricia Canavan and Darlene Lombos for their service, which ended last year, and note that we welcomed Dr. Ericka Fisher to the Board in June.

I look forward to continuing our service together for the benefit of our students.

Sincerely,

Jeffrey C. Riley

Commissioner