*****Massachusetts Department of***

***Elementary and Secondary Education***

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| Jeffrey C. Riley*Commissioner* |  |

# MEMORANDUM

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| **To:** | Members of the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education |
| **From:**  | Jeffrey C. Riley, Commissioner |
| **Date:**  | November 9, 2021 |
| **Subject:** | Comprehensive District Reviews |

The Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (Department) conducts numerous district and school reviews for a wide variety of purposes throughout the year. It is the Department's goal to minimize the burden these reviews place upon districts and schools as much as possible, while also ensuring that we fulfill our legal and public obligations by conducting thorough, high-quality reviews.

To this end, the legislation that called for the creation of the Department's Office of School and District Accountability (now called the Office of District Reviews and Monitoring, or ODRM) requires the office to *ensure that no school or district is audited during the administration of any statewide assessments, and shall coordinate with other entities in the department to ensure that a school or district is not subject to multiple comprehensive audits or reviews by the department or any accrediting body within a 9 month period unless the board specifically votes to do so on an emergency basis* ([M.G.L. c. 15, § 55A](https://malegislature.gov/Laws/GeneralLaws/PartI/TitleII/Chapter15/Section55A)). The Board voted in December 2010 to delegate this scheduling task to the Commissioner, and I am submitting this report for FY2022 comprehensive audits and reviews to the Board in accordance with that vote.

ODRM worked with the Department’s Public School Monitoring Office (PSM) to avoid any potential overlap when selecting the districts for the district accountability reviews required by state law. In addition, PSM and the Office of Charter Schools and School Redesign worked proactively to avoid overlaps and conflicts for their scheduled reviews.

With one exception, the following comprehensive reviews do not include any conflicts or overlaps for the 2021-22 school year: five-year charter renewal reviews, Commonwealth virtual school certificate renewal reviews, tiered focused monitoring reviews, district accountability reviews, and accreditation reviews by the outside agency New England Association of Schools and Colleges (NEASC).

TEC Connections Academy, a Commonwealth Virtual School District, will receive both a tiered focused monitoring review and a certificate renewal review during the 2021-22 school year. The district was notified of the two scheduled reviews which overlap within a nine-month period and chose to proceed with both reviews. Additionally, the offices conducting these reviews are working with one another and with the district to ensure that the reviews do not interfere with district operations.

These efforts taken together have resolved all conflicts under the control of the Department.