*****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:**  | February 8, 2022 |
| **Subject:** | Plans for 2022 Accountability Reporting |

At the February 15, 2022 meeting, staff from the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (Department) will introduce initial plans and a proposed timetable for potential changes to the state’s district and school accountability system, which would be implemented for 2022 accountability reporting this fall.

# Background

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the U.S. Department of Education (ED) invited states to apply for a waiver from the accountability requirements of the federal Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) for the 2019-2020 and 2020-2021 school years and the assessment requirements for the 2019-2020 school year. Massachusetts requested and received these waivers. As a result, the Department has not implemented all aspects of our statewide accountability system since fall 2019.

In December 2021, ED offered states another opportunity to request certain modifications to their accountability systems for the 2021-2022 school year via an addendum to the ESEA Consolidated State Plan. If approved, the addendum will provide us with the opportunity to reestablish the baseline for future accountability reporting using data from the 2021-2022 school year, while still meeting federal requirements.

**Tentative Plans for 2022 Accountability Reporting**

In the fall of 2022, the Department proposes to produce some, but not all, of the information associated with annual district and school accountability determinations. Under this “accountability lite” model, we intend to publish district, school, and student group-level performance data for each of the approved accountability indicators, as well as certain normative measures (e.g., school percentiles) that will help districts, schools, the Department, and the public assess the performance of all districts and schools using common measures. The availability of this information will also continue to help communities and the state decide how to assign resources and other assistance.

Under the “accountability lite” model, we would not publish indicator targets, points for progress towards targets, progress ratings, or determinations of each district’s and school’s need for assistance or intervention. These aspects of the traditional accountability system would be reconsidered for future accountability reporting cycles.

**Federal Requirements**

As a condition of approval of the 2021 accountability waiver, the Department must resume our practice of issuing federal designations in the fall of 2022 using data from the 2021-2022 school year. Federal designations, which are incorporated into the state’s accountability system, include:

* *Comprehensive Support and Improvement (CSI):* The lowest performing 5 percent of Title I schools statewide, and any high school with a graduation rate below 66.7 percent
* *Targeted Support and Improvement (TSI):* Any school with one or more student groups that are among the lowest performing 5 percent of student groups statewide for two consecutive years
* *Additional Targeted Support and Improvement (ATSI):* Any TSI school with one or more identified student groups demonstrating performance below that of the 5th percentile Title I school

The Department has been assigning these designations to schools since 2018, and we believe the “accountability lite” approach accommodates this requirement. With this approach, we can reset the baseline for future accountability determinations using data from the 2021-2022 school year while still fulfilling our federal reporting obligations and making basic information about school performance available to districts, schools, and the public.

**Timelines**

To provide sufficient notice to districts and schools regarding our plans for 2022 accountability reporting, we propose the following schedule for Board discussions and public comment:

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| **Timeframe** | **Action** |
| February 15, 2022 | Initial discussion of plans for 2022 accountability reporting  |
| February 15 – March 1, 2022 | Public comment period for the *2021-2022 Addendum Template for the Consolidated State Plan due to COVID-19* |
| March 7, 2022 | Deadline for submitting the *2021-2022 Addendum Template for the Consolidated State Plan due to COVID-19* to ED |
| March 22, 2022 | Board discussion and vote to solicit public comment on proposed amendment(s) to state accountability regulations (603 CMR 2.00) |
| April – May 2022 | Public comment period for proposed amendment(s) to regulations |
| June 28, 2022 | Board discussion and vote to approve proposed amendment(s) to state accountability regulations (603 CMR 2.00) |

Rob Curtin, Chief Officer for Data, Assessment, and Accountability will be at the meeting on February 15 to discuss this plan and answer questions.