MEMORANDUM

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| **To:** | Members of the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education |
| **From:**  | Patrick Tutwiler, Interim Commissioner |
| **Date:**  | April 22, 2025 |
| **Subject:** | OpenSciEd in Massachusetts |

This memorandum provides background to the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education regarding OpenSciEd and the role of the MA Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) as a lead partner state in the development of the science curriculum materials. DESE’s ongoing work with OpenSciEd is grounded in our [*Educational Vision*](https://www.doe.mass.edu/bese/docs/fy2023/2023-05/item7.1-educational-vision.pdf):that all students are known and valued, have learning experiences that are relevant, real-world, and interactive with individualized supports that enable them to excel at grade level (or beyond).

**OpenSciEd in Massachusetts**

[OpenSciEd](https://www.openscied.org/) brings together multiple partners, including Massachusetts as one of ten partner states, a consortium of curriculum developers, and many other science education leaders and experts, to create a complete set of robust, research-based, open-source, K–12 science instructional materials while addressing demand for science instructional materials designed for the Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS) and the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks.

In 2018, DESE signed on as one of the lead partner states in the development, field test, and feedback of the OpenSciEd instructional materials, including the curriculum and aligned professional learning. As a lead state, we reviewed the curriculum design specifications, helped select the developer consortium, and ensured that Massachusetts’ educators and students had voice in the development and revision of the instructional materials.

Massachusetts educators and students participated in the OpenSciEd Field Test of the K-12 materials as an important part of our work in ensuring teachers have access to high quality open-source instructional materials and dynamic interactive professional learning that gives all students in Massachusetts a chance to experience equitable science instruction. OpenSciEd emphasizes student discourse, engagement in the science and engineering practices, and collaborative problem-solving around complex, real-world phenomena.

**Massachusetts Field Test and Feedback Cycles**

DESE brought on six districts to field test the initial middle school units in the 2018-2019 school year. With additional funding support from the One8 Foundation, DESE was able to scale the field test to additional districts. Educators and students were able to provide feedback to the developers that improved the use and alignment of the materials with Massachusetts expectations.

From 2020-2022, OpenSciEd high school instructional materials were field tested in five districts. [All final units have been released to the public.](https://openscied.org/curriculum/) Educators and students again provided feedback to improve the units, and all districts that participated in the field test elected to continue implementing the finalized high school curriculum beyond the field test years.

OpenSciEd elementary instructional materials were field tested in 12 districts beginning in 2023. The field test concludes this school year, and the final, revised units will be posted online to be freely available on a rolling basis through 2027.

To date, over 90 districts in Massachusetts have reported OpenSciEd as a curriculum-in-use. DESE provides instructional guidance resources on our [website](https://www.doe.mass.edu/stem/ste/openscied.html) and support through ongoing implementation networks and professional learning opportunities. The One8 Foundation continues to run a grant program for the implementation of the OpenSciEd middle school curriculum.

At the April 29 meeting, Erin Hashimoto-Martell, Associate Commissioner of Instructional Support; Nicole Scola, Assistant Director of Science and Technology/Engineering; Casandra Gonzalez, Science and Technology/Engineering Content Specialist; and Kim Laliberte, Director of Science for Fall River, will present an overview of this information to the Board and invite discussion and questions.