# Minutes of the Regular Meeting

**of the Massachusetts Board of Education**

# August 15, 2006

**1:10 p.m. – 2:20 p.m.**

**Department of Education**

**350 Main Street, Malden, Massachusetts**

Members of the Board of Education Present:

**James A. Peyser**,Chairman, Milton

**Ann Reale**, Vice-Chair, Commissioner of Early Education and Care

**Christopher Anderson**, Westford

**Harneen Chernow,** Jamaica Plain

**Trevor Frederick**, Chair, Student Advisory Council, Ipswich

**Patricia Plummer**, Chancellor, Board of Higher Education

Roberta Schaefer, Worcester

**Henry M. Thomas, III,** Springfield

**David P. Driscoll,** Commissioner of Education, Secretary to the Board

Member of the Board of Education Absent:

Abigail Thernstrom, Lexington

### Chairman James A. Peyser called the meeting to order at 1:10 p.m.

#### Approval of the Minutes

**On a motion duly made and seconded, it was:**

**VOTED: that the Board of Education approve the minutes of the**

**June 27, 2006 regular meeting, as presented by the Commissioner.**

The vote was unanimous.

**Comments from the Chairman**

Chairman Peyser opened the meeting by congratulating Patricia Plummer, who has been named Chancellor of Higher Education. Chancellor Plummer, who served on the Board of Education as the designee of the former Chancellor, is now an official member of the Board. Commissioner Driscoll also congratulated Chancellor Plummer, and thanked her for her partnership with the Department of Education over the past several years on joint projects such as the Massachusetts high school reform initiative (funded by a National Governors Association grant) and development of the pre-kindergarten-grade 16 database. Earlier in the day, the Joint Committee on Educational Policy, consisting of members of the Board of Education and the Board of Higher Education along with the Commissioner and the Chancellor, met and discussed progress on these initiatives.

### State Budget for FY 07

Commissioner Driscoll updated the Board on the final FY2007 budget for the Department of Education. The FY2007 budget represents a 7.3% increase above the FY2006 budget. Commissioner Driscoll highlighted some of the programs with significant funding increases, including Chapter 70 foundation aid; Extended Learning Time grants; professional development relating to English language acquisition, school leadership, and math and science teaching; Work Based Learning; School-to-Work Connecting Activities; Adult Learning Centers; Kindergarten Development grants; and data analysis/reporting tools for the Department and school districts. He thanked the Administration and Legislature for their support of public education. Chairman Peyser agreed but also expressed concern that the budget for targeted assistance to low-performing schools and districts, an urgent priority, was cut by over $500,000.

### Department of Education School Leadership Initiatives

Department of Education administrators Lynda Foisy and Bobbie D'Alessandro updated the Board on the Department's statewide leadership development initiative. The Department has contracted with the National Institute for School Leadership (NISL), a program of the National Center for Education and the Economy, to develop and deliver leadership training for school principals and central office administrators in Massachusetts, starting with 14 urban school districts. This work complements the leadership development efforts already underway through the State Action for Education Leadership Project (SAELP), funded through a grant to the Department from the Wallace Foundation. The NISL program is designed for school principals and district level leaders who are in their first five years of a leadership role. In 2005-06, 87 participants have been trained through NISL, and 240 participants will be trained in 2006-07.

### Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS)

The Board discussed the participation of Massachusetts as a "nation" in the 2007 Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS). TIMSS is one of the only standardized tests given to students in the United States and nations around the world, allowing for international performance comparisons. States typically do not receive individual results, and participate only by testing a small sampling of students whose results contribute to the nationwide average. Commissioner Driscoll said that participating as a "nation" will allow us to compare the mathematics and science performance of Massachusetts' students to their peers in other states and in other countries. Massachusetts participated in TIMSS as a "nation" in 1999.

The Commissioner suggested that the Board vote on TIMSS participation at this month’s meeting, to provide time for the Department to take the steps necessary for Massachusetts schools and students to participate in the 2007 study. Board member Roberta Schaefer, the author of Article II, Section 7 of the Board’s bylaws (which states that except in an emergency, the Board shall take action on a matter of policy only when it has discussed the matter at a previous meeting), noted that the Board could waive it by a two-thirds vote of the members present. She said she supports the proposal on TIMSS participation and would move to waive the bylaw in this instance.

Board member Chris Anderson said that participating in TIMSS as a nation will allow us to assess our progress globally. Chancellor Plummer agreed, and noted that our TIMSS results are an important indicator in our Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) initiative. Chairman Peyser said, "Participation in TIMSS will provide us with another reliable benchmark against which to calibrate our progress in raising student achievement. This also sends a clear signal that we are not just interested in being a national leader in math and science. Our goal is to be truly world class."

**On a motion duly made and seconded, it was:**

**VOTED: that the Board of Education waive the provisions of Art. II, Sec. 7 of its bylaws, in order to take action on this matter at this month’s meeting.**

The vote was unanimous.

**On a motion duly made and seconded, it was:**

**VOTED: that the Board of Education approve the participation of Massachusetts as a “nation” in the 2007 Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study.**

The vote was unanimous.

### Student Records Regulations

The Board discussed technical amendments to the Regulations on Student Records, as presented by the Commissioner. The amendments concern access to student records by non-custodial parents, and make the regulations consistent with state and federal law.

**On a motion duly made and seconded, it was:**

**VOTED: that the Board of Education, in accordance with G.L. chapter 69, § 1B and chapter 71, §§ 34D and 34H, and having solicited and reviewed public comment in accordance with the Administrative Procedure Act, G.L. chapter 30A, § 3, hereby adopt the proposed amendments to the Regulations on Student Records, 603 CMR 23.07(5), as presented by the Commissioner. The amendments concern access to student records by non-custodial parents.**

The vote was unanimous.

### Approval of Grants

The Board discussed grants totaling $4,617,370 under six federal programs: Technology for Data Driven Decisions ($785,566); Enhancing Education Through Technology grant ($877,706); Secondary School Reading Implementation grant ($680,000); McKinney-Vento Homeless Education grant ($759,005); Community Service-Learning School-Based Program ($276,647); and Perkins Tech-Prep Enhancement - FY2007 ($1,238,446).

**On a motion duly made and seconded, it was:**

**VOTED: that the Board of Education approve the grants as presented by the Commissioner.**

The vote was unanimous.

### Authorization to Commissioner

The Board discussed authorizing the Commissioner, in consultation with the Chairman and members of the Board, to approve grants and any other matters that require action between August 15th and the next regular Board meeting. The Commissioner noted that he will report on any such approvals at the next regular meeting on September 26th.

**On a motion duly made and seconded, it was:**

**VOTED: that the Board of Education authorize the Commissioner, in consultation with the Chairman, to act on behalf of the Board in approving grants between August 15, 2006 and the next regular meeting of the Board; provided that the Commissioner shall report to the Board at the next regular meeting on any grants that have been so approved.**

The vote was unanimous.

On a motion duly made and seconded, it was:

**VOTED: that the meeting adjourn at 2:20 p.m., subject to the call of the Chairman.**

Respectfully submitted,

David P. Driscoll

Commissioner of Education

and Secretary of the Board