

**COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS  
BOARD OF EDUCATION**

**\*\*\*REGULAR MEETING\*\*\***

**BRYN MAWR SCHOOL  
35 SWANSON ROAD  
AUBURN, MASSACHUSETTS**

**TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 23, 1999  
9:00 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.**

**MEMBERS OF THE BOARD  
OF EDUCATION PRESENT:**

Mr. James A. Peyser, Chairman, Dorchester  
Dr. Roberta R. Schaefer, Vice-Chairperson, Worcester  
Mr. Charles Baker, Swampscott  
Ms. Patricia Crutchfield, Southwick  
Dr. Edwin J. Delattre, Boston  
Mr. William K. Irwin, Wilmington  
Dr. Stanley Z. Koplik, Boston  
Mr. Marcel LaFlamme, Chair, Student Advisory Council, Monson  
Dr. Abigail Thernstrom, Lexington

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

**ALSO PRESENT:**

Nancy Catuogno Varallo, Registered Diplomate Reporter, Certified  
Realtime Reporter

**COMMENTS FROM THE CHAIRMAN:**

**CHAIRMAN PEYSER:** Good morning, everyone. Before we get on with the business of the meeting, I'd like to turn over the mike for a moment to our hosts, Gerald Poulin, principal of Bryn Mawr School; Patty Martin, the superintendent of Auburn Public Schools; and Liz Gribbons, Vice Chair of the School Committee for Auburn. I thank you for having us.

**MR. POULIN:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman, Mr. Commissioner, and the rest of the Board. It's our pleasure to have you and your staff visit Bryn Mawr School. The staff and students were very excited about you coming today and we hope you enjoy your visit with us. We have had many things happen here, but we have never had the Board of Education meet at our school. It is an honor to have all of you here. I would like to introduce the Vice Chairperson of the Auburn School Committee, Ms. Liz Gribbons.

**MS. GRIBBONS:** Good morning. I also wanted to welcome you here today and tell you that we are honored to have you with us. Please let me introduce Dr. Martin, the Superintendent of Public Schools.

**DR. MARTIN:** Again, welcome to the Auburn Public Schools. I had asked Liz if I could be last because I wanted to share, with the Board of Education, how the Education Reform Act has helped the Auburn Schools, and, in particular, the practitioners.

We have received funding in support of our professional development, but the funding isn't the key component of the Education Reform Act for Auburn. It is accountability, the frameworks, and how they have driven our district. It is the MCAS assessment, an issue which you're going to take up today, and the powerful data that is provides a

district in analyzing curriculum, instructional strategies and district-wide curriculum. However, another element of the accountability component has been the evaluation of personnel.

There is so much in the news about the MCAS, but the practitioners are the ones driving it forward. My colleagues sitting in the audience -- superintendents from area communities, the administrators from the Auburn Public Schools, and the site-based leaders have used this accountability as part of driving their buildings and their personnel forward. So for all of the press that the MCAS test has received, I have to tell you, for the Town of Auburn and the Auburn Public Schools, the accountability component of the Education Reform Act has driven Auburn in a very positive direction, as it has for other districts.

All the districts here today have aligned their curriculum, provided a tremendous amount of professional development and teacher training, including a tremendous amount of professional development in evaluation of staff. Most of all, administrators have been trained in actual research and analysis of data including the data that comes from that MCAS test so that we can move our districts forward. I believe I am speaking for us all when I say, we have very strong beliefs about teaching and learning and we live by those beliefs. We appreciate the work that the Department of Education and the Board of Education are doing. Student learning is key to all of us.

I appreciate the opportunity to speak this morning. I welcome you and wish you, on behalf of all of us here, wisdom in your decision today but, mostly, a happy and healthy Thanksgiving. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN PEYSER:** Thank you very much and I thank you for having us here today.

There are a few issues I want to raise before turning it over to the Commissioner for his monthly report. One is that the Joint Commission on Educator Preparation has adopted recommendations, specifically regarding the so-called 80 percent pass rate, as part of the program approval for schools of education. That recommendation, forwarded to the Board, will be distributed to all members. As our discussion yesterday indicated, we are in the process of taking up this issue of program approval in the context of teacher certification. I expect that we will receive other recommendations from the Joint Commission by the end of the year. All of this will feed into those discussions that we will have here early next year. Those recommendations are now available and I will make sure that all Board members receive them.

I'm also happy to report that since our last meeting, the Senate, by a vote of 21-17, adopted a bill which would increase the number of both Commonwealth and Horace Mann charter schools, at a rate of seven a year for five years. That legislation is now pending before the House. It is my hope that, in January, they will take it up, pass it, and be signed into law. As you know, at least from the Commonwealth charter school side, we have already granted all the charters available, so this has a certain urgency to it, especially if we're going to have the opportunity to approve any schools before the beginning of the next school year.

Another action that the legislature took, as part of the budget, was to adopt an outside section which related to the issue of special education services for students enrolled in private schools. As has been discussed on a couple of occasions here, the legislature adopted language which specifically directs districts to provide services to private schools and students with special needs that meet their "individual needs." They are trying to draw a distinction between individualized services as opposed to more general staff development and training. They've also instructed us, as part of that outside section, not to make any significant changes to the regulations we have adopted or those that have been on the books for some time, particularly changes around deleting or significantly modifying the requirements. That issue, to a certain degree, has been decided for us. There are guidelines that will need to be reissued by the Department when we bring up special education regulations in March. There may be some minor modifications, but nothing significant as a result of this legislation.

I want to draw the Board members' attention to a recent report issued by the Education Commission of the States, *Governing America's Schools*. It's on the Internet site. I have an executive summary here. It talks about different approaches to governance and structured reform. I wanted to read some of the general themes that run through those recommendations:

- (1) allowing money to follow the child to the school he or she attends

- (2) granting individual schools control over their personnel and budget
- (3) giving parents more choice about where children attend school
- (4) providing good information on student, teacher, and school performance for parents and the community
- (5) redefining labor management relations and focusing accountability on accrued student achievement.

Personally, I find all those things to be quite laudable. It also reflects the strands of our own education reform efforts in terms of the statutory language that's preceded our work and the work that we are doing now.

**DR. THERNSTROM:** What's the website on that?

**CHAIRMAN PEYSER:** ECS.ORG and you can find it easily off of that home site. Let's see. Lastly, I have formed a task force to review the Commissioner's performance and to make a recommendation at our December meeting in terms of salary adjustment. This is part of an annual review process. The members of that task force are Bill Irwin, Roberta Schaefer and I. We'll be reporting back to the Board in December on our recommendation. With that, I'll turn it over to the Commissioner.

**COMMENTS FROM THE COMMISSIONER:**

**COMMISSIONER DRISCOLL:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I do want to go over the information in front of you this morning. There is a pink sheet identifying people who will be part of public comment, and a written statement submitted by one of the presenters regarding his public comment. The next memo you received by fax, but I wanted to make sure that you have it, includes the FY 2000 budget because everyone knows that was just completed last week. Our finance subcommittee, that has been working to develop recommendations for the FY 2001 budget, has been held up waiting for the FY 2000 budget. That particular memo has the finalized FY 2000 budget and our FY 2001 budget request, which will be on the agenda this morning, and materials relating to school building assistance. Next is a memo from me to the Members of the Board as a result of the finance subcommittee meeting that was held last week. There were seven line items that the subcommittee wanted information on, and so there's a one-page summary on each one of those seven line items. Next is a letter from Dean Delattre to me regarding the advisory councils. Members may remember that at the last meeting Chairman Peyser asked three members of the Board to review the advisory councils. Dean Delattre has done so and I have talked to the other two members as well. When we get to that point in the agenda, I will be handing out a new list that will include two additional names that have come in and three deletions. Then, finally, there is the grant package for November 23 that again had to wait until the finalization of the budget.

Very quickly, Mr. Chairman, there are some upcoming events that I would like to make people aware of. First of all, there's a Mathematics, Science and Technology conference which we are holding here in Worcester, at the Beechwood Inn, with Superintendent Payzant of Boston and Superintendent Cardonio of Worcester. It is focused on middle and high school science and mathematics in particular.

On Wednesday, December 1, Chairman Peyser and I are joining Governor Cellucci to host a conference, again in Worcester, at the Centrum Conference Center, on character education. We are pleased to have Mayor Guerriero of Melrose talking about his initiative on civility, and Dr. Kevin Ryan, founder and former director for the Center for the Advancement of Ethics and Character at Boston University, as our keynote speaker. We hope many Board members will be able to attend. Our student member, Marcel LaFlamme, will be part of a workshop.

The Board of Education is hosting a very important forum on Chapter 70 on December 7, from two to six at the Department of Education in Malden. This is very important as we look to FY 2001, which will begin the first year of life after the seven-year formula included in the Education Reform Act. There has been a lot of discussion but there hasn't been a lot of coalescing around key issues. This forum will be extremely important in helping this Board and me come to recommendations on Chapter 70.

The Board of Education has passed new, comprehensive regulations on recertification. We need to develop guidelines, and the Department needs to have a number of information sessions and question and answer booklets.

The recertification guidelines that accompany the regulations will be shared with the Board, in draft form, before the end of this week.

We anticipate that, in December, the Board will be dealing with the Waltham amended equity plan and perhaps the Boston Public Schools as well. We all know that there is current litigation regarding this whole issue.

I'd like to make a few acknowledgements. Roberta Schaefer, Member of the Board, received an award from the Pioneer Institute and the 1999 Better Government Competition Award in recognition of her work as Executive Director of the Worcester Municipal Research Bureau. Sandra Stotsky, Deputy Commissioner, has a chapter in an ERIC publication titled "The Uses of Literature in Education for Democratic Citizenship: Lessons and Suggestions from the American Experience." I'd also like to recognize some people in the audience. We have a number of superintendents here: Johanna van Houghten from Grafton; Superintendent Cecci from Blackstone Valley; Superintendent Dave Roche from Millbury; Rosemary Joseph from Tantasqua. We also have a group of students here from the Lawrence Public Schools. Finally, Mr. Chairman, we have another guest, a Member of the Board of Education from 1975 to 1985 and a resident of Holden. I am pleased to welcome Howard Griess.

Finally, I've asked Board members if they are able to move the June date and if that's not possible, please let me know, otherwise I will assume that is going to happen.

#### **PUBLIC COMMENT:**

James Hamos from UMASS Medical:

**MR. HAMOS:** Commissioner Driscoll and Members of the Board, thank you for allowing me this opportunity to bring you the comments from the Science and Technology Revision Panel. Arthur Camins and I will detail aspects of the memo that we have delivered to the Department, and which you will be receiving in due course. This memo summarizes our set of recommendations to the Commissioner and to the Board.

For the record, I'd like to note that the Commissioner's Mathematics and Science Advisory Council, which I chair, are very pleased that the revision process included an opportunity for the Revision Panel to review input on the public comment draft that came in from the field. This continues to demonstrate that in the realm of the Science and Technology Framework, Department of Education staff has been open to multiple lines of input and has been fair with the groups who have been working diligently on various stages of the document. I believe this is a critical part of enhancing the trust between the Board, DOE staff, and practitioners. I implore you to continue such efforts in other phases of this process including the ones that will soon unfold with the mathematics framework where I believe the debate will be much more contentious.

Feedback from the field and recommendations from the Commissioner that you're reviewing today indicate there should be standards for earth science in high school and that end-of-course testing should be the form of MCAS in the disciplines of science. Thus, students would take exams at the end of 9th grade and 10th grade based on science courses they have taken in those years, and the Department would offer exam options in the individual disciplines, or based on interdisciplinary courses. The revision panel has concurred with this direction for the framework. Further, we recommend that the Board provide strong encouragement and incentives for districts and students to take three and four years of science. I'd also like to highlight some major provisos that should be remembered as we move forward.

First, the emphasis in developing the frameworks has always been to identify the core of the science disciplines that every student should know and be able to do. For this to become a reality that is rich in life-long learning for all students, the emphasis has rightly been on a core of conceptual understandings. With this approach, by the time students are in high school, one finds only eight to ten standards in each course or discipline. Now, for the convenience of discipline-specific MCAS tests, my concern is that the framework will eventually be the standards that will define high school courses termed as biology, chemistry, earth science and physics, things that we have always seen in high schools. This leads to conversations that there might be more than eight or ten things students should learn in a course, followed by another conversation that frames a desire to define still more standards. The

result will be a framework that becomes more and more specific in defining course content. This already happened in the draft document that went out to the field containing asterisked and non-asterisked standards. In our recommendations, the revision panel reemphasizes the need for standards that focus on scientific concepts. A useful challenge for all of us, including myself as an active neuroscientist, is to look at the asterisked standards as written and ask if we truly understand the concepts that are at their basis. A key recommendation for you is to resist the temptation to subdivide or add still more standards.

Second, the revision panel, as well as science educators and scientists throughout the country, believe that conceptually based science standards should be tested in multiple ways. In particular, inquiry, the key first strand of the framework, and the design process that underlies the technology standards, should be tested by asking students to "do science" or "do technology". We have limited the MCAS science and technology exam to being a pencil and paper test. As seen in recent MCAS results, the current science and technology tests continue to pose a significant challenge for Massachusetts students. We are aware that many of you are concerned by this and believe that another avenue for students to demonstrate knowledge and ability is through performance testing. Most critically, this approach is also sound practice for the disciplines of science and engineering.

Thank you for your time. I strongly implore you to seek input and utilize the expertise of Massachusetts colleagues who are K-16 science educators as well as practicing scientists and engineers. We hope to continue working with you on making science and technology education accessible for all students. Thank you.

Arthur Camins of Hudson Public Schools:

**MR. CAMINS:** Members of the Board, Commissioner Driscoll, on behalf of the Science and Technology Revision Panel, I also would like to thank you for the opportunity we've had to make improvements to the curriculum frameworks and the opportunity to speak to you today. I also would like to amplify the recommendations of the November 18 memo that we delivered to the Department for your attention.

Let me begin by saying that the panel remains committed to the idea that the frameworks should be a lever for change in Massachusetts to improve achievement for all students. Let me outline a few areas of concern in addition to those that Dr. Hamos delivered. Feedback from the field, as well as Department staff input, indicates that there is confusion about whether the framework should represent an expectation of what all students should know or guidelines for those interested in advanced study. This confusion was exacerbated by questions asked on the Comment and Review Form. Members of the panel feel strongly that the content in the framework should continue to represent rigorous but reasonable expectations for what all students should be expected to know and be able to do. This does not at all imply low-level standards, but it does mean it's not the job of the frameworks to set standards for advanced placement courses that only a limited number of students will take. Districts have the responsibility to provide opportunities and set guidelines for advanced study.

In addition, I believe including two sets of standards in the frameworks would give the objectionable impression that there is a "basic" set of standards that are considered low level. Setting a standard for everyone does not imply any limit on what students can learn. We urge the Board to reaffirm its commitment to one set of standards that represent expectations for all students. The original framework included a strand entitled Science, Technology, and Human Affairs. The panel prepared a revised strand for the draft. However, this strand was removed by the Department staff, significantly altered, and relegated to Appendix I. As a result, the draft does not represent our best advice. This strand would have given teachers stronger direction to place the study of science and technology in the context of real decision making that affects our lives. The majority of students will not become professional scientists or engineers, so grappling with the role of science and technology in personal and societal decision making is critical for young people to learn. In addition to the knowledge of how the world works, it is this aspect of science that they need to carry with them throughout their lives. Personally, I believe this is a serious error that diminishes the importance of this essential component of science and technology. The panel recommends that Appendix I be incorporated into the Inquiry and Technology strands. Personally, I believe that the Science, Technology, and Human Affairs strand is important enough to be restored as a separate strand.

Finally, as you know, the panel has been thanked for its work and dismissed. Our formal role in guiding the revision is over. It is critical that the experts who are now called upon to advise the Department reflect classroom experience and the knowledge of both science educators and scientists. In addition, I urge you to give the Department guidance that the revision continue to reflect the collective judgment of the national science education and scientific communities as reflected in the recommendations of the National Research Council and the American Association for the Advancement of Science. It appears, from Department staff input in the revision process, that there's a danger that the same divisive tensions played out in the California standards process, resulting in the flawed and developmentally inappropriate California Science Standards, are at play here in Massachusetts. We need not go this route which would put Massachusetts out of step with the national science education community and seriously undermine the progress we have made since the first framework was promulgated. Thank you.

Bill Guenther, Mass Insight Education; Susan Kiernan and John Lozada, Mass Insight's Campaign for Higher Standards:

**MR. GUENTHER:** I'm Bill Guenther from Mass Insight Education and I'm here to very quickly introduce Susan Kiernan and John Lozada who are representing the Mass Insight's Campaign for Higher Standards. They are two parents from the public schools and they are here to introduce the first public comment in support of the graduation requirement for the class of 2003. We are very pleased that over 40 school, business, and community leaders have signed this statement led by the school and education community: School Superintendents Tom Payzant and Peter Negroni; Jerry Murphy, the Dean from the Harvard School of Education; from the Bentley School of Business Education, Pat Flynn; Gloria Larson of Foley, Hoag and Eliot; Kathy Minehan, head of the Federal Reserve Bank in Boston; and John Lozada, an attorney and member of the Latino community, and Susan Kiernan, a parent and chair of the Milton School Committee. They are who will address you now.

**MS. KIERNAN:** I'm Susan Kiernan from Milton. I thank you for your time this morning.

With the Board set to make preliminary decisions today on the MCAS graduation requirements for the year 2003, I would like to publicly state that there is widespread support for the course of the Board to vote for competency-based diplomas. John Lozada and I, along with other parents, are joining other individuals, businesses, and community groups across the state in endorsing Mass Insight Education's statement in support of a graduation requirement. As a parent, and as chair of our School Committee in Milton, I'm encouraged by the involvement of these varied groups who are interested in raising standards for our students and making a certificate of graduation meaningful. Board members have a copy of the statement that I would like to summarize very briefly.

First, the graduation requirement should, for the first few years, apply only to English and Math. There is substantial consensus among educators about what needs to be taught in these areas. The curriculum frameworks for these subjects have been in place the longest. The first graduating class will have the opportunity to have taken the test at least four times. There will be sufficient time for remedial work prior to graduation.

Second, the initial passing score should be set just above the Failing performance level. Proficient and Advanced represent appropriate long-term goals, but the Needs Improvement level represents a realistic starting point. Students scoring in the Failing category have not learned even the basic skills necessary to proceed in college or in most jobs. In the past we'd simply have looked the other way and passed the graduates through the system. We must now ensure that the diploma has substantive significance. As the mother of six children educated in the public system, four of whom are still enrolled in the Milton Public Schools, I'm thrilled by the changes I've seen in the way my children are learning. As a direct result of the state standards and of MCAS testing, teachers in Milton are working together creatively to ensure that our children learn the skills, and acquire the knowledge that will provide the tools that will let them compete successfully later in life. I see a renewed emphasis on writing, problem solving, and analytic thinking, even at the early grades. At our last school committee meeting, we heard from our ten national merit finalists and their parents. When asked to what they attributed their success, many parents and students mentioned writing across the curriculum as well as creative teaching methods employed by their teachers. I'd like to emphasize that MCAS has enhanced the creativity of our teachers.

I believe that the pace of change will only increase once a graduation requirement is implemented, and students and parents start to take the tests seriously. Many teachers are supporting the test and we, as parents, need to support our teachers. We owe our kids a chance to survive in our competitive world. I thank the business and educational communities for their organized involvement through Mass Insight and I thank this Board for your goals of high standards and achievement for all. Thank you very much.

**MR. LOZADA:** I would like to thank the Board, Bill Guenther, and Mass Insight for inviting me to speak on behalf of higher educational standards for the children of Massachusetts, and for a reasonable graduation requirement for 2003. As a parent, attorney, member of the Latino community and life-long learner, I encourage my children, my colleagues, and my community to be competitive, well educated, and capable of achievement. While I maintain reasonable concerns about the potential negative impact of this test on children's self-esteem and desire to learn, I support this initiative to examine individual ability to think, reason and articulate, against traditional spiritless recitations of rote learning.

I welcome the challenge of MCAS, and believe students can demonstrate basic competencies in thought, analysis, and reason, but I must reflect on the serious penalties to result from failure. If our leadership fails to properly garner our resources, I fear for the tens of thousands of Latino and other children who may not graduate from high school solely on the basis of one test. In the Latino community, I have witnessed the devastating effect of failure, rejection, and low expectations on the children and parents in my community. MCAS alone will not change this reality. Before any student in this state suffers the denial of a high school diploma, or is given a watered-down diploma, there must be proof that Massachusetts has offered each child a true opportunity to succeed, including the requisite investment of time, money, teacher preparation, and instruction. Sadly, our children currently remain pawns in a political struggle between unions, teachers, administrators and politicians focusing on blame and cost, rather than on the crucial need for united success in this endeavor. As a Latino, I dream of my children and the children of my community competing and achieving on a global scale, based on fundamental education and well-developed bilingual and bicultural skills.

In my youth in East Harlem, New York, I was raised by a loving and concerned single parent mother, who protected me from parental abuse and poverty, while seeking options for my success. My mother could not be my academic mentor because of gaps in education and her work schedule, but my teachers filled this void by building my confidence, aiding my understanding, and further encouraging me to succeed. With this chemistry, I achieved, graduating with decent grades from Amherst College and Hastings College of Law, despite 910 SAT scores. Today, I am securing a career of dedication to my community through the law. I have succeeded despite a harsh upbringing because teachers, administrators, and many others believed in me. I know the same could be true of children in our communities.

With confidence that this Commonwealth is willing to make the appropriate commitment of resources, but with the caveats that are reflected above, I support the Board of Education's decision to use the MCAS as a graduation requirement in the year 2003.

**CHAIRMAN PEYSER:** Thank you. That concludes the public comment portion.

The first business item, is the 2001 budget request. Perhaps we'll update you on what happened with 2000 and proceed with a discussion and vote on a recommendation for the 2001 budget cycle. Also, we'll have a couple of motions in the section on school building assistance grants that need to be voted on in light of the appropriations. Having been properly chastised, I neglected one important item on the agenda that is approval of the minutes. Thank you very much. Are there any comments on the minutes?

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

**VOTED:**           **that the Board of Education approve the minutes of the November 26, 1999 Regular Meeting.**

The motion was made by Mr. Irwin and seconded by Dr. Delattre, the vote was unanimous.

## 1. STATE BUDGET FOR EDUCATION

**COMMISSIONER DRISCOLL:** My congratulations to the staff. Just a couple of moments on the final budget for FY 2000. It's almost unbelievable that we are here, November 23, and talking about a budget that's less than a week old. But the process did finally conclude and, of course, there were significant increases for public education across the board. I want to highlight several of them.

First of all, of course, Chapter 70, the amount of money that goes out to cities and towns around regional school districts, was increased ultimately by a total of \$245.3 million. Early childhood is up \$24.1 million, and I must comment that that does pose a problem. In my judgment, even though there are excellent programs, including home visiting programs and other early literacy programs, it would be unwise to plan on spending that between November and June 30. I think there isn't time. There's a lot of pressure, rightfully, on us to see to it that money spent in the early childhood area is effective and accountable, and so we'll have more discussions about that.

The new kindergarten development program is up \$4.5 million. I mentioned home-based parenting which is established at \$2 million. After school programs are up \$7.4 million. Regional school transportation fulfills a commitment made by the Governor four years ago and is currently in its last or second to last year. It was agreed that we weren't living up to the statutory requirement of full funding of regional school transportation and so the Governor committed to close that gap over the time. I think this is the last payment of that.

**MR. WULFSON:** Next year.

**COMMISSIONER DRISCOLL:** There are a few other programs. One is a new program established, which I made recommended for FY 2001, regarding alternative education programs. Then there is the Attracting Excellence to Teaching program. The good news there is that we are up almost three times the applications. It's a very successful program where students who graduate in the top quarter of their class can get loans for teaching in public education. There's no other way to say it, public education is a tremendous recipient in terms of the FY 2000 budget.

**CHAIRMAN PEYSER:** I'd like to turn it over to Charlie Baker as Chairman of the Budget and Finance Subcommittee for a report on his recommendation for the 2001 budget.

**MR. BAKER:** Thanks, Jim.

We met several times and discussed a variety of proposals for next year. The basic parameter we were working inside was that we wanted to concentrate on funding the non-discretionary component of the education budget for 2001, and level funding the discretionary areas. I think the budget that we are recommending to the Board today represents that parameter.

There's about a \$170 million increase over FY 2000 appropriated spending, and virtually all of that increase is tied up in Chapter 70 increases, SBAB increases, and other non-discretionary spending increases. The rest of the budget is basically level funded. In addition to that, there is a bit of a rearrangement in the administrative budget that will make possible some additional resources: staff, resources applied to finance activities, SBAB activities, and assessment activities. Overall, it's probably the most financially reasonable proposal that has come out of the Board in quite a while.

**CHAIRMAN PEYSER:** On the level funding of the discretionary programs, the Commissioner came in representing the deletion of several programs in the discretionary accounts. What we have here essentially is the deletion of some of those accounts and the replacement of those accounts with some other new accounts which represents some new initiatives as well as marginal increases in other discretionary accounts. We are level funding the general category of discretionary spending. It does not mean that all of the individual categories that are line items in those accounts are in fact level funded.

Also, just to note because it's been raised by several Board members, individually and collectively, there is a \$500,000 item here for research and evaluation which is a new line item in the Department. There is also a million dollars that's



been added to the dual enrollment program at the suggestion of Stan Koplik. In addition to that, within the student assessment line item which is just over \$19 million, there is an amount of money in the \$500,000 to \$1 million range, which would fund increases in staffing internally the test development process.

**COMMISSIONER DRISCOLL:** I don't know, but I don't want to gloss over this. I think this is a very significant step and direction for this Board of Education and this Department. It's the right thing to do and it sends the right message. Basically what the Board said, through the finance subcommittee, is we understand those issues that you can't control such as Chapter 70, but we would like you to level fund the rest of the budget. So we are presenting to the administration, with the Board's approval, essentially a level funded budget, except for the three areas over which we have no control. I think that's very significant. In addition, the subcommittee allowed me to make tradeoffs, if you will, as long as I stayed within that parameter. And so you will see that in some areas we have reduced the budget in order to make room for what important priorities. Let me go through them very quickly.

First, is the area of student assessment. I would argue that this would be the one area that it would be criminal for us to underfund in any way, shape, or form. That's not to say we need to spend a billion dollars, but we have to have enough money to adequately assess the progress of our students. I want to point out, even though this is an increase, it's only \$15 per student per test. Just to give you a parameter, advanced placement is \$75 per pupil per test. I think we have a tremendous program. It's been proven now with the technical reports and the changes that the Board is making. I think it makes a tremendous difference in terms of changing grades and so forth. That's obviously going to cost money. We are now talking about issues like retesting. I hope we'll never be penny wise and pound foolish in this area. I'm not looking for a huge increase, but over the next few years we're going to have to include a slide as we address the assessment needs. By the way, as the Board increases its parameter, it means I have to reduce other parts of the budget, which is fine with me.

Secondly, the Chairman mentioned research and evaluation and the challenge that I have given to Deputy Commissioner Sandra Stotsky in this area. It's not only the Board giving us money on research and evaluation on issues they care about, but we are challenging the Deputy to find monies through private sources to match that kind of money. That's her challenge and I think she's up to it.

Next is mentoring. The Governor himself included \$5.5 million. I think across the board people understand, we are not going anywhere on Education Reform unless we have quality people in our classrooms. We have a pending crisis in being able to recruit and retain quality teachers. So we have an entire mentoring program that is crucial. Beyond all the other problems, number of people retiring, people not wanting to come into the field and so forth, one of the major problems is people that come into the field and leave. I want to point out that this particular item, in which we have full mentorships, partial mentorships and training for mentors, we have a reduction in the state's share. We begin with a 75 percent state contribution and then we expect over time for the district to pick up 75 percent. It is very important to understand that we are front-end loading, from the state point of view, but we expect the local districts to pick up the major share as we go forward.

Leadership academy funds. People recognize this across the board. We have a crisis in our leadership in trying to recruit and train principals and superintendents. I have never seen literature about effective schools that doesn't talk about the importance of an effective leader or principal.

Alternative education. Again we are hearing about this across the state. There are students who need to be taken out of classrooms and educated elsewhere. We need to get programs in this regard, we have several throughout the Commonwealth that are working now, but we need to do more in that area.

Charter school facilities. I think we recognize the need here. Hopefully we can get the legislation passed so we can have some new charter schools. A barrier, and, a rightful barrier, is the fact that we don't provide some startup monies. That's really criminal. So we need to provide it. It's not a huge amount of money, but it will take groups over that hump starting out and trying to get established. The facilities issue is a huge issue that should not be a barrier. If they have the right curriculum, the right idea, and a strong charter then we shouldn't be putting up barriers when start up money is the issue.

Finally, there's certification, which we'll be discussing today. We need to spend money in this area to make this system more efficient and we need to be able to provide technology so that we can collect the data. We are woeful in this state about what people are certified in and so we need to build a system to support our certification system.

Those are my priorities. I have given you a one pager. I again remind you that the rules of the road were if I wanted to add money, the finance subcommittee would say, "Fine, but you find it somewhere else." This is a level funded budget with the three items over which we have no control. I do want to say that the finance subcommittee did a great job under very difficult circumstances with the timing of the budget and involving representatives of the Administration & Finance Office. I think is a huge step forward. The communication and process by which we submit this budget to the administration is legions ahead of where it's been.

**CHAIRMAN PEYSER:** I'd like to make a comment in light of your last comment, Mr. Commissioner. The committee spent quite a number of hours pouring over these numbers, making recommendations, and giving feedback to the Department and others who helped to put this budget together. I think it was a very valuable process which I hope results in not only having a budget, but having a better informed Board so that we can, not only this year but in the future, act more knowledgeably and responsively in approving budgets. I do think this budget is a fiscally responsible one overall. It keeps faith with the basic commitments we have in Education Reform, especially around fully funding the foundation formula in the future. So with that, let me open it up to any comments.

**MR. IRWIN:** Just a couple questions, Jim. First - Why is there no request for anything in the auditing reserve for the year 2001? Second, and this has to do with your comments about charter schools, Dave -- Does that include the startup costs when you're talking about the charter school reimbursements?

**MR. WULFSON:** I think I can respond to both questions.

The auditing reserve was actually \$500,000 that was taken out of the auditing account this year and removed to the Administration & Finance account for the same purpose, but we are not quite sure why other than the Secretary just wanted to have a say in how that's used. All we are proposing is just returning it to our account and, obviously, the Governor will decide whether he wants to continue the arrangement with A&F.

**MR. IRWIN:** This is strictly a fiscal auditing.

**MR. WULFSON:** No, it covers more than fiscal auditing. It's really the accountability work that Julianne Dow's group does. There's a fiscal component to it. It involves the Education Management Accountability Board and the folks over at Revenue who participate in that. There's a whole effort to combine both the fiscal and programmatic accountability to meeting the needs of the new accountability system the Board has approved. So the bottom line is the same. It's just a question of whether some of it goes under the Administration & Finance rubric and some of it comes here or whether it all comes here.

**MR. IRWIN:** But when the audit is done, it's both fiscal and programmatic.

**COMMISSIONER DRISCOLL:** Could I add something here? A long time ago, the Chair, the Board and then Governor Weld, started talking almost about dual SWAT teams. We have EMAB and we had our own. I'm very pleased to say we are working together now and those audits are being done jointly. There's been a tremendous stretch forward in that whole regard from doing the educational and fiscal component on this.

**MR. IRWIN:** That's where my question was going. I hate to see us go there twice.

**COMMISSIONER DRISCOLL:** No, it wasn't anyone's fault, it was just two groups coming together and working out the protocols.

**MR. WULFSON:** The charter school reimbursement is not as big an increase as it appears. This is one of the accounts where the 2000 budget number is actually too low. Keep in mind, we put the estimates in for the state aid programs a year ago, before House 1 was prepared. In this case, we underestimated the charter school

reimbursement needs because we didn't know how many charters were going to be opening up this fall, how many students were going to be going, which districts they come from, which determines the amount of the reimbursement. So we underestimated the cost by several million dollars, and have indicated to Fiscal Affairs that we will probably either need to file a supplemental for that or use some reversions from other accounts to cover it. The zero-zero number in this particular account is understated. The increase is probably more in the three or four million dollar range.

**CHAIRMAN PEYSER:** Just by way of clarification, reimbursement is not to charter schools, but to districts where the students come from.

**MR. WULFSON:** Reimbursement for the tuition charge they are assessed.

**MR. IRWIN:** The startup costs for charter schools would not come out of the reimbursement area?

**CHAIRMAN PEYSER:** That's correct.

**MR. WULFSON:** That comes from the reimbursement grant, and also we have a federal grant that helps with that.

**DR. THERNSTROM:** I have long been concerned about the startup dollars for charter schools and I don't have a sense, and Jim, maybe you can tell me, what are other states doing with respect to that issue? What are we talking about here in terms of the magnitude of dollars that will be provided for startup costs?

**CHAIRMAN PEYSER:** I think patterns in other states vary. Some do nothing, some do what we do, some do somewhat more. Again, I don't have enough knowledge to really comment on this, but we are in the middle in terms of providing some startup funding. Of course, the wild card here is how many startup schools there will be. There are a couple of schools that will be opening up in September of 2000. Unless there's some legislative action, there isn't going to be any additional chartering, which may allow us to release some of these funds in 2000 to some new schools that currently aren't chartered. So some of this is a little bit I think unclear in terms of the funds that we can properly expend in this account.

**MR. WULFSON:** One of the things, you'll notice under the capital funds request at the end, which is outside the operating budget, is that we've identified four areas where we proposed to go in and ask for one-time funding for either data, information technology projects. In this case, we are planning on proposing a pool of money that could be used to assist schools in startup and capital costs. This is really just a placeholder. The capital funds request probably won't go in until later in the year. Typically, it's from surplus revenues from the state, and until then, the charter school office will be developing a more detailed proposal on what it is we should be doing, what the needs are, what's reasonable, and coming back to the Board with that.

**MR. BAKER:** I thought this was built as a match against the federal program.

**MR. WULFSON:** Yes, that was one thought, but we haven't really thought through all the other options yet. I think we would like to do that before we come back with a formal proposal.

**DR. SCHAEFER:** First of all, I wanted to compliment DOE staff on doing a great job.

I think it's important for the public to understand that some of these new initiatives tie directly into what the Department and the Board are working on. For example, the monitoring ties directly into the new licensing that we are talking about for teachers. We are saying that every new teacher needs to have some kind of induction program and this ties directly to that. Second, I do hope that the legislature will give us the money for research and evaluation because I think it's critical that we begin to have some understanding of what's working and what is not working. Then I wanted to ask, under the capital funds request, for some more elaboration on the teacher certification piece of that.

**MR. WULFSON:** It is basically another proposal that is still on the drawing board. Right now we have a very labor intensive, people intensive certification process that costs us about \$2 million a year. As an adjunct to the new certification/recertification process that the Board is developing through regulation, we would like to basically replace our existing teacher certification system, which is one of these ancient systems that had to be scotch-taped together to get through Y2K. We'd like to come up with a new system that is web based and will basically allow teachers to go on line, and fill out the information they need. It ties into the professional development requirements and the other requirements of the new system, and eliminate a lot of paper shuffling we do in Malden for teacher certification. We know there's a need, we know it will save operational dollars if we make the investment, but what we need to do is spend a little time this year doing some initial planning, coming up with some real better cost estimates, what the scope of the project will be, and then if we are ready, come back in the spring with a formal proposal on what we would like to request.

**MR. LaFLAMME:** I'm just looking at the breakdown of the student assessment item. Number 2, development and licensing of 1800 schools for the software application to train all public school teachers to score writing. For comment it says to see the attached description, and I didn't see a description in the packet which is fine, but could you just give me a quick synopsis of that?

**MR. WULFSON:** I will defer to Mr. Nellhaus on that.

**COMMISSIONER DRISCOLL:** This is a description of the software application training.

**MR. NELLHAUS:** We can develop, on a CD-ROM, materials that will train teachers to score compositions according to the standards that we hold to score the MCAS test. It would be a series of compositions that teachers would practice with and basically calibrate it to the MCAS rubric. Then there would be a training pack and a calibration pack, and teachers would gain the same understanding of the scoring process as they currently do by attending a week-long summer workshop. You can only train about 500 to 700 teachers a summer during those workshops. With this CD-ROM, all the teachers in the state would have the opportunity to benefit from this program.

**MR. LaFLAMME:** So the idea would be that all public school teachers would have at least the background knowledge or the skills, perhaps, to be able to score the writing questions.

**MR. WULFSON:** Keep in mind, in the MCAS request for both the 2000 appropriation and the 2001 request, that there's a certain element of uncertainty because the contract, which is the bulk of these costs, with Advanced Systems expires this fiscal year. We are in the selection process to select a new contractor with a new contract. We obviously had to make some assumptions on what the cost would be in the new contract, but we are not yet there in terms of knowing what the final costs are. So we will have to revise, no doubt, the 2000 and the 2001 numbers once we sign the new contract later this fall.

**DR. DELATTRE:** As you know, that's my concern here. I don't want to turn us to section 9 on test development. I know you don't want to do that part yet. Am I to understand that this budget includes up to a million dollars in DOE funding for the staffing of the Office of Academic Affairs and consultants to that office on test development and the like?

**CHAIRMAN PEYSER:** That's my understanding. Commissioner, can you confirm that?

**DR. KOPLIK:** I think you should consider keeping the finance subcommittee alive as we evolve through this budget and move to the next budget. I think that's probably a helpful exercise for those who participated, and it's better in terms of relations between the Department and the Board.

**CHAIRMAN PEYSER:** Well, I must admit I never thought of it as a temporary committee. You may not have realized that when I appointed you to it. There's no term associated with this. I think that's a very important point, not only in terms of continuing to be part of the budget development process and budget monitoring process, but also in terms of other finance reform issues: as Chapter 70 reform in the forum that's coming up, what to do with the feedback we get from that, putting together final recommendations, and responding to other changes as they occur in the

budget and financial area. I consider this a standing committee, perhaps one that is not going to meet quite as frequently as it has in the past several months, but one I hope will continue to meet regularly.

**MR. WULFSON:** May I highlight one other thing we skipped over? It's the Commissioner's recommendation to level fund and actually reduce a little bit the authorization for school building assistance. This is very significant. As you know, with school building assistance we determine how much we're going to spend a year in advance of actually spending it. It is the authorization amounts, not the appropriation that's important in recognition of the size of that program. The fact that it's not going to be sustainable in the upcoming Administration & Finance report recommendations, which we'll be coming back to you with as to how we can improve our management of that program. That's all going to have to work together. We need to be tighter in our review of projects, and not quite as costly so we can make sure that program continues to operate. This would be the first year in a number of years that that number didn't keep going up.

**COMMISSIONER DRISCOLL** Regarding Chapter 70 and SBAB, the Chair and the finance subcommittee have a number of concerns there. Stan, you're right, there are a number of issues.

I want to also point out that the subcommittee has accomplished something else that's significant, the reporting system to this Board during the fiscal year as to how the expenditures are going as far as the budget. This is something that will be very helpful. I think they have accomplished a great deal so I agree with you. I'm glad you want to extend the term.

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

**VOTED:**           **that the Board of Education approve the FY 2001 state budget request, and authorize the Commissioner to submit it to the House and Senate Committees on Ways and Means, the Joint Committee on Education, Arts and the Humanities, and the Secretary of Administration and Finance.**

The motion was made by Mr. Irwin and seconded by Ms. Crutchfield. The vote was unanimous.

**CHAIRMAN PEYSER:** Now, in these materials that were mailed to you all this weekend and on the table this morning, there are also a couple of motions relating to school building assistance. Commissioner, do you want to, or shall Jeff summarize?

**MR. WULFSON:** These are really two housekeeping matters. As I just alluded to, we will be coming back to the finance committee and to the full Board later in the year with some substantive recommendations on the program, but these are tied to the approval of the budget. There will be two actions. The first is to officially award grants to those projects that we have the funding for in the 2000 budget, and these are projects that have been on the waiting list, such as the non-desegregation projects going back to 1996. The second action is to ratify the new priority list which basically takes off the projects that we are funding and adds a new group of projects that were reviewed by the Department staff last year. These are all projects that came in through June of last year. So this does not really reflect a significant change in business at this point in time but that's something we'll need to come back to you on.

**MR. BAKER:** People need to understand that we're not just making a decision, at this point, to fund nine and a half million dollars worth of desegregation projects and \$28 million worth of non-desegregation projects. What we're basically doing is authorizing the first payment which authorizes the nine and a half million, but it's actually authorizations on desegregation of \$21 million, not that nine and a half million dollars commitment. On the \$28 million authorization for the non desegregation projects, you're actually authorizing 1.4 billion in total project spending and \$950 million in state commitments. The total value of the state commitment to this \$50 million appropriation represents over a billion dollars. This is part of the reason why this program really does need a bit of a look. I'm guessing right now but I guess the state commitment for SBA generally is over \$489 million, is that right? That's a big number.

**MR. WULFSON:** That's if we didn't add another project.

**CHAIRMAN PEYSER:** I'd like to add another point regarding expanding the waiting list. It would be fair to warn to schools and districts that are being added to this list, that we are looking for changes in both the regulations and procedures by which we actually approve projects. That may have an effect on the scope and character of these projects as they work their way from the bottom of the waiting list to the top. It's clear, at least in terms of discussions we had at the committee level, that there is a strong desire to examine the entire methodology around school building assistance, not only in terms of how this works through the Department, but also how the Board makes judgments about projects. In the context of Charlie's statement about the magnitude of the decision we are making today, there is probably a higher level of scrutiny that will be added or will be adopted for those projects to follow.

**DR. SCHAEFER:** Once you put them on the list, can you change the rules of the game?

**CHAIRMAN PEYSER:** Anyone with knowledge here can correct me if I am wrong, anyone without knowledge is not authorized to speak, but it's not approved until the Board approves them. So while the practice has been for the Board to approve all projects that come before it, it is not a done deal until the Board actually acts.

**DR. SCHAEFER:** So waiting list doesn't mean --

**CHAIRMAN PEYSER:** It's not a guarantee.

**MR. WULFSON:** The Board may see that the project actually starts while they are waiting for funding which makes it tougher to second guess.

**CHAIRMAN PEYSER:** I don't think we should take the waiting list lightly. Obviously, commitments have been made and, as Jeff said, in some cases they have made not only emotional and verbal commitments but have actually borrowed money and are in the hole. Nonetheless, it's not a done deal until the Board acts. With that, the motion is on the table. Let me confirm, is it for both motions?

**COMMISSIONER DRISCOLL:** Yes.

**CHAIRMAN PEYSER:** So someone can sort that out. It's been moved and seconded. All in favor?

**ALL:** Aye.

**CHAIRMAN PEYSER:** Opposed? It passes unanimously.

**2. COMPETENCY DETERMINATION (MCAS Grade 10 Passing Standard for Class of 2003) - Continuing Discussion and Vote to Solicit Public Comment**

**CHAIRMAN PEYSER:** I think as you're all aware, we began this discussion yesterday and we will be revisiting it today. I hope we are not completely repeating what went on yesterday. Not only were there Board members absent, who need an opportunity to participate, but those Board members who were here should have and will have the opportunity to expand on their thoughts and make further comment. I will avail myself of that prerogative now.

The matter before us today is both historic and momentous. For the first time, the Massachusetts Board of Education is preparing to establish a high school graduation requirement that is based on academic performance. Up to this point, the only state-mandated prerequisites for a high school diploma have been one year of American History and four years of gym. With the initial vote today and the final decision we make in January, we will have, at long last, placed outcomes and achievements ahead of inputs and seat time. There are those who believe that establishing an academic graduation standard is unfair and punitive, that it denies a valuable credential to young people who already have many obstacles to overcome. Others argue it is too soon to take this step because students and schools have not had enough time to prepare, or because we should wait until a wider variety of assessments is available to more fully measure all aspects of student ability. What these critics fail to recognize is that rejecting or

delaying the implementation of a meaningful graduation requirement will not be a gift to those students who lack the knowledge in school to reach a standard. To the contrary, it will be a punishment in that it will help perpetuate a system and culture that allows many young people to enter the world unprepared for success and set up for failure. The promise of a graduation standard is that it will compel young people to take seriously their responsibilities as students, and will at the same time bring out of the shadows those young people who are not being given the opportunity or the support necessary to fulfill their potential.

Unlike those who argue the standard we propose today is too much to ask, others argue that it is too little, that establishing a performance requirement below our aspirations for all graduates debases the terms "standard" and "competency" which are at the core of Education Reform. What these critics do not adequately appreciate is that this is the beginning of a process to establish and raise standards. It is not the end. Our first task is to ensure that clearly failing work is not rewarded with a high school diploma. Our longer-term objective is to bring all graduates to proficiency. In order to achieve this long-term goal, we must take care not to sacrifice the good in deference to the perfect. We cannot achieve our objective in a single step. Instead, we must begin and sustain a process of continuous improvement. To do that, we must establish initial standards that are challenging but achievable. While we must speak honestly about the distance yet to travel, we must do so in a way that does not destroy hope. I believe that the proposal before you today, which is endorsed by both the Commissioner and me, strikes the right balance between today's reality and our expectations for the future. I hope it receives your support.

**COMMISSIONER DRISCOLL** I must comment on what I think has been a truly unfair process from the media about the decision we're about to make. This should not be about the media's expectation level. This should be, instead, a process by which we look at what we are doing and making a decision based on what's reasonable.

This is a standards-based assessment, not a standardized test. A standardized test says to a student, "Come on in, you have no idea what we're going to test you on. We're going to give you multiple choices where you'll fill out bubbles and score according to your mother's education level." This is the way we've been doing it in this country for years. The standards-based approach says, "Here is what we want you to know and be able to do, and not only will your teachers know those standards, but we'll release the test itself." I quite frankly am perplexed why every teacher in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts doesn't have a copy of that test on their desk. It is not about teaching to the test it's about assuring that students meet standards. People have been told what the passing rate should be before we even gave the first test. Are we going to ignore the test itself and not even look at it? Are we going to ignore the technical report that provides comparability studies between this test and nationally normed tests such as the Iowa, the Stanford, and the Metropolitan? From a psychometrician's point of view, it is remarkable that we are able to compare the English/Language Arts MCAS 4th grade results with the Iowa 3rd grade results. Even after two years of testing, it's the same kids. What does it tell us?

It tells me something I've known since the day I became Commissioner, I'm going to keep faith with the average kid in this Commonwealth. I'm not going to set too high a bar because some people think that's what should be done. You don't do it to your own children, why would you do it to other people's children? There are 960,000 children in the Commonwealth. Are we going to set a bar too high just because that's what some people say? Or the other way around, are we going to set it too low, are we going to make it too easy? Are we worried about the numbers? Clearly with a passing threshold of 220, which the Chairman and I are recommending, we are going to see large numbers of students who will not pass that level in 2001 for the class of 2003. For me, it's about getting the standard right. Let other people get the headline right. You can't lower a standard before you've set it. Look at the results, understand the challenge.

Our whole school and district accountability system is established on the idea that if you're in a suburb, you want to get every kid you can into Proficient and Advanced. If you're in an urban area, you really have to start by getting them out of Failing. That's a clear fact of life and in this way we have established all of our parameters.

So what does it mean to set the initial threshold at 220? It means when we look at the probability studies, that the kids by and large, Proficient and Advanced, scored at the 57th percentile or above on nationally normed tests. We have known all along we do okay when compared to other states, but that's not good enough. Good isn't good enough anymore if our kids are going to compete in the 21st century. The kids in the Needs Improvement category

by and large scored in the 50th percentile or above on nationally normed tests. On that basis I rest my case and I say to you that 220 is a fair, reasonable, and meaningful first step as we raise standards for all the students in Massachusetts.

**MR. IRWIN:** I'd like to commend the Commissioner and the Chairman for coming forth with this motion today. I think it's a reasonable threshold that we are looking at. The Commissioner just spoke about headlines -- we are not lowering our standards, we are establishing standards where none exist. I hope people will take that into account, especially when things start hitting the news saying we are lowering the standards. That's not the case. We are establishing standards today and I wholeheartedly support this.

**DR. THERNSTROM:** Commissioner, I detected a tone of anger in your voice aimed at the headline news this morning. I share that. I understand that reasonable decisions on the part of the Board do not make newspaper headlines, and so it seems to me that headlines were manufactured this morning telegraphing the message that the Board was dumbing down standards and expectations. But, of course, the point of educational reform is to end up with students better educated than they are now. We are not today where we want to be, of course not, and getting there is going to take time. What we will be doing today is to say to the student who clearly does not have the skills and knowledge for further education, for the workplace or for citizenship, that they are in the Failing category. We will be raising the bar over time but we are starting at the right place. There's been a lot of thought that has gone into this decision, it is not arbitrary. I think that this Board deserves more respect than it has gotten in the newspapers this morning.

**MS. CRUTCHFIELD:** Respect for our process, respect for the thought that we have put into it. I would say, in words of support, that what stands out for me are several obvious things. First of all, it seems to be a pretty long stretch between requiring a year of American history and four years of physical education to testing a standards-based education. This is a beginning; it's a fair beginning. The thing that I hold onto is the fact that it's a beginning. It continues to hold all students responsible to the same standard. We continue to support the certificate of mastery and we know that we will come back and revisit this, and the standard will be raised.

**DR. DELATTRE:** I would like to ask one question and make some comments. Dave, you said that the Needs Improvement category generally falls in the 50th percentile nationally. What's the percentile for 220?

**COMMISSIONER DRISCOLL:** If you look at the Needs Improvement category, with that whole box of missed whiskers, whatever they are called, you will see that a great majority of our kids in that category are in the 50th percentile or above. The kids in Needs Improvement obviously range from 50 percent up.

**DR. DELATTRE:** So 220 is not below 50 percent? The one point above Failing is the 50th percentile.

**COMMISSIONER DRISCOLL:** Generally speaking, statistically that's correct.

**CHAIRMAN PEYSER:** I don't know. Jeff, is there's any further kind of resolution on that?

**MR. NELLHAUS:** It varies a little bit by subject area and grade level but, generally speaking, I would say that for approximately half of the students, the middle half of the students, their percentile ranking is about anywhere from the 45th to the 60th, 75th percentile in the Needs Improvement category. It really varies across the test a little bit. It doesn't match up exactly. It isn't as if you can look at the 220 cut score and say that 50 percent or 75 percent of the students rate at the 50th percentile at that point. Clearly, and I think Jim points this out, students in the Failing category are scoring well below the 50th percentile. In other words, students scoring between 200 and 219 on the test, the vast majority of those students are scoring anywhere from the 6th percentile maybe up to about the 45th percentile.

**COMMISSIONER DRISCOLL:** Let me ask it my way. Obviously, if you put any line anywhere, you're going to have some above it, below it. It's a continuum. We are talking about hundreds of thousands of kids. Is it fair to say that, generally speaking, kids in the Needs Improvement category scored at 50th percentile or above?



**MR. NELLHAUS:** Yes.

**DR. DELATTRE:** Is it fair to say that kids scoring 220 are at the 50th percentile or above?

**MR. NELLHAUS:** Again, I don't have the data right in front of me to refer to that but I believe that's true.

**DR. DELATTRE:** All right. It's odd that the same thing should be true of the very bottom number that should be true of the range.

**MR. NELLHAUS:** The range really goes from, as the Commissioner said, about the 45th or the 50th percentile. That's the bottom of the Needs Improvement category, all the way up to nearly the 80th percentile. We have a great range of performance there.

**DR. DELATTRE:** That doesn't address what I said, but it's okay. I don't want to dwell on that. I want to say a few things, if I may.

I'm not angry about the media this morning and the headlines because I don't give a damn what the headlines are and never did. I think the proposed standard is too low, I think it threatens the integrity of Education Reform, and it delays the delivery of educational opportunity. If this is approved, as I believe it will be, it will be ironic to see the number of students in Massachusetts who satisfy the state requirement of graduation do not satisfy the requirements of their local districts. Education Reform at the state level six or ten years from now, by the time this takes effect, will be behind reform in individual districts. I think the argument about timing is implausible because the fundamentals of punctuation and grammar and composition and English did not come into existence in 1993, they are what they were. Two plus two equals four did not become true in 1993 or with the writing of the frameworks or the implementation of MCAS. What was true in math and English is true in math and English. It's not as though these came as some kind of a surprise in the last six years. Arguing that one point above Failing is not good enough as a place to begin does not deny that we have to begin somewhere. It is certainly not an argument for perfection. It is simply an argument that in terms of reasonable standards of English and mathematics, the only two tests that are involved, this standard is too low. Here are a couple of samples of the sort of work we will be saying should receive a high school diploma. These are taken from state-released materials.

If you go to the website at the Department and look at the work in mathematics that qualifies in 1998 on the 10th grade test as Needs Improvement, you will be stunned. Most of the exercises are reducible to arithmetic exercises. It doesn't demand much to get Needs Improvement. In English, here are samples from 1999 and 1998 of Needs Improvement. I infer from that that some of them are above 220. This is question 45 in the 10th grade English MCAS: "Yes, I feel that paragraph 16 is an effective concluding paragraph for the story. I think it was because it gives the last facts that it wants to get *acrossed* and they are the most important to the *writter*. It sums up *there* differences and the importance that *there* meeting and *aggreements* had on the history and future of the country."

Next. "In the play *Faust* by *Gothe*, there was the Walpurgis Night. This scene was an illusion created by Mephistopheles to aid in tricking Faust. Mephistopheles needs to trick Faust into having complete happiness because Faust is one, *to* smart for many of Mepho's tricks and two, Faust knows if he *acquires* complete happiness his *soal* will be taken to hell. In the illusion that Mephistopheles creates there are witches dancing around fires with trolls and *nomes*. There are also feasts and music. Faust is *mesmorized* by this but is not tricked." There are punctuation errors as well in 1998. I will not read the whole thing, but only a portion of the Needs Improvement composition: "I think that the opening paragraph has many clues and is also very well written. It makes me picture Mrs. Freeman perfectly. I see a very stubborn woman whom is very difficult to be around and is *compleatly* reliant on other people. The opening *sentance* I feel is a good one, it has good word choice and is very descriptive, also it *grabbes* your attention." The punctuation is flawed throughout that sentence. "It is hard to tell whom is telling the story because it doesn't tell you how the narrator knows Mrs. Freeman, but *mabey* it is part of the story and it will come out a little later." Now, if you read essays that fall just immediately below the Needs Improvement category, they amount to virtually nothing, and that's what we are close to in our standard. I will vote against this proposal.

**DR. KOPLIK:** As I stated yesterday, I support the recommendation coming before us from the Chairman and the Commissioner. Like my colleague, Ed Delattre, I'm less interested in the headline than I am in making the right decision. I think that we must recognize that the most thoughtful input in arriving at where we will likely be in a few moments has been contributed by members of this Board, the Commissioner, and the staff who have spent hours pouring over data, giving us analyses by which to inform our decision. I don't think that should be lost here in terms of making a decision palatable to the greatest number of people. I thought that the Chairman and the Commissioner were very persuasive in their remarks, particularly the Chairman, in giving us an evolution of the thought process influencing his arriving at the recommendation. I thought that the Commissioner joined that discussion very well indicating, again, a punctuation of the important elements in establishing a standard for the first time. A standard which will, by all of our expectations, move upward over time. We are clearly looking at continuous improvement. Finally, I really want to applaud the remarks we heard earlier this morning from Susan Kiernan and John Lozada. These people were not giving us commentary as props on the part of some particular campaign. If you listened carefully, they gave us comments that were very, very thoughtful. They came to us as parents just as concerned as we are about setting standards, high standards, and the right standards for students. I really want to congratulate Susan and John for taking time out from their other activities to join our meeting this morning.

This Board will make the right decisions, not decisions that result in a headline in which we can applaud ourselves or congratulate ourselves. That is not our business. Our business is doing the things we believe to be fundamentally right.

**DR. SCHAEFER:** I intend to support the recommendation of the Chairman and the Commissioner. None of us is happy with the scores as they exist but we have to start someplace. We have been presented with a case where this is a very reasonable start. Perhaps, some of the examples that Dr. Delattre gave will provide an indication to school districts of what they need to do. I think that they have gotten the message that some of the approaches used in past years, such as inventive spelling or creative math, don't have the kind of place under the standards system we are establishing. It has taken us a generation to get to the low level we are; it may take close to a generation to get out. We are about the business of trying to get us out of that and move the standards up.

**MR. LaFLAMME:** I would agree with Dr. Schaefer and the intent of Dean Delattre's comments, if not with his conclusion. I think there's general agreement that 220 is not enough. I don't think that anyone is saying that it is. Certainly, the examples he cited provide ample evidence to that point. My understanding of Ed Reform and MCAS centers around progress, moving upward, and beginning at a level which is a feasible - a level that represents where students in Massachusetts are today and charting progress beyond that. It's about being able to say, "This is where we are, this is where we're going, and this is what's happening along the way." That's why we have this data in front of us. That is part of the value of the data we are gathering.

I would like to point out to the Board that at our meeting, Thursday, the state Student Advisory Council took a preliminary vote on Mass Insight Education's statement which echoes many of the points in the motion before us today. The council, comprised of students from high schools across the state, voted overwhelmingly to support the threshold as it was established and setting the graduation standard in the first place. As a student, I am proud to be in a position to support the establishment of that requirement with the knowledge that we are moving forward from there. I agree with the Chairman. The establishment of it is itself momentous, historic, and a fine place to start.

**MR. BAKER:** I share some of Ed's concerns about where you set the bar. I have never been shy about sharing that with you. One of the things I have been thinking about a lot is that we are really asking students, parents, teachers, and school administrators to stretch over the course of the next few years. There are two critical components to getting people on board. They have to believe the objective is achievable, and they have to believe that it's fair. There's lots of public policy and failed initiatives that change things in big complicated enterprises. People weren't able to create consensus about fairness and about possibility. If you can't get people to believe that they can stretch to achieve the goal you're establishing, and that wherever you draw the line it's fair, then your ability to keep them engaged through that stretch exercise is dramatically dissipated. The real test of all of this is going to be about participation and engagement, and getting students, teachers, administrators, and parents to stay engaged through this stretch exercise.

I can't believe that anyone would argue that this standard sets up an expectation that is unfair. Because of that, I think it's the right place to start. I do agree that it is just a place to start. As we move in that direction, and as the target is achieved, we must move it again and again. In the grand scheme of things, 220 is not where we belong.

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

**VOTED:** that the Board of Education, in accordance with Chapter 69, section 1D of the General Laws, hereby approve for dissemination and public comment the following standard for the Competency Determination for students in the high school graduating class of 2003:

**Students in the graduating class of 2003 shall meet or exceed the *Needs Improvement* threshold scaled score of 220 on both the English Language Arts and the Mathematics MCAS grade 10 tests in order to satisfy the requirements of the Competency Determination.**

The motion was made by Mr. Irwin and seconded by Ms. Crutchfield. The motion passed 8-1. Dr. Delattre opposed.

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

**VOTED:** that the Board of Education reaffirms its intent to raise the threshold scaled score required for the Competency Determination in future years.

The motion was made by Dr. Schaefer and seconded by Ms. Crutchfield. The vote was unanimous.

### **3. EDUCATOR QUALITY: OUTLINE OF PROPOSED NEW SYSTEM OF EDUCATOR PREPARATION, CERTIFICATION AND EVALUATION - Continuing Discussion**

**CHAIRMAN PEYSER:** Let's move on to the next item on the agenda. This picks up from where we left off in terms of the conversation yesterday around suggested changes in the form of the draft concept paper on certification regulations. We went through this in some detail yesterday. The Deputy Commissioner will now walk us through all of that. Your two-page cover memo outlining the basic points would be a useful place to start and we can have some additional discussion.

**MS. STOTSKY:** I'm very pleased today to give a highlighting of the major directions for this document for the revision of the certification regulations. Let me make clear what this document is, for everyone's benefit. It is the means by which the state tries to ensure the quality of our teaching profession and the preparation of future teachers. That is what this document is basically all about. We have regulations that enable us to safeguard parents and children, and all other citizens, the quality of what they will encounter in the teaching force in the public schools of Massachusetts. The regulations have been designed with a number of directions that are listed in this concept paper. It is a concept paper because we hope it will be released by the Board of Education so that the different groups, possibly affected by its content, can respond over the next couple of months.

I will give a clearer time frame for the process in a few minutes so that you will understand the entire time frame for this revision of the certification regulations. We hope that we will hear from all of those who have something to add with regard to different pieces of this paper. This document reflects the thinking of the committee that I worked with very intensely for the last several months. I do want to mention all their names because they deserve as much credit as I can give them: Georgia Parafestas, Carol Gilbert, Margaret Cassidy, Margaret Regan, Melanie Winklowsky, and Peg Wood. I think most of them are here today. They were invaluable to me as resources, as founts of great knowledge of historic background on licenses and the history of particular certificates that we are now calling licenses.

The first point that I want to make is that we have changed the wording. We are trying to have more current wording. I won't go into all of the changes but we are changing "certificate" to "license" and making other changes that will be in line with that.

One of the major pieces of this document is our creation of multiple routes to licensure. We have created four different routes for prospective teachers to become members of a school's teaching staff. Let me just describe them briefly. The first one is a traditional route for those who are working for a BA or BS degree. This will probably be the route that will continue to be followed by most prospective elementary and early childhood teachers. We have laid out what we think are the requirements for that route that will continue to exist under the new regulations.

We have a second route that will be for those who have already completed a BA or BS degree and wish to receive some practical or practicum training, including some training in pedagogy, before they seek a full-time job in a school system. This could be during a summer program, or postgraduate program at a university. It could also be in other settings, but it would be after the BS or BA degree is achieved and before they seek a position in a school system.

The third route would also be for those who have a BS or BA degree, but would like to go into a school system under an apprenticeship program, with or without pay. This would be under the supervision of a cooperating teacher where they would acquire the very important firsthand experience of a classroom. Then, through evaluation of satisfactory performance they would be able to become a teacher of record in the classroom.

The fourth route is a route that enables people qualified to teach a particular subject to be hired immediately by a school system, as long as there is a support system in place. Of course, as all of the others will have to do, they must pass our communications literacy skills and subject matter tests. A support system will also be in place for all new teachers through an induction program, beginning teacher program, or a mentoring system.

I would like to point out that this was the route I took years ago when I went into teaching. I was a French literature major, but the superintendent of the Easton Schools needed a third grade teacher for 40 children. I went into teaching without one course in pedagogy behind me. The mentoring system was not then a fleshed-out concept, but it existed in the three-room schoolhouse that I taught in because we taught together and they helped me. I was there as a liberal arts graduate. There were many others like me in those days. This was not unusual at all. Schools needed people immediately due to the classroom expansion of the Baby Boom years. That route is still there only now there would be a subject matter test and a communications literacy skills test. That raises one of the more interesting issues behind much of the revision of the individual licenses.

Years ago one could assume a uniform level of intellectual or academic achievement with a BA degree from college. Today we can no longer make that safe assumption. Those who wish to become teachers and graduate with majors in different subjects aren't necessarily of the same caliber. That is part of the reason why we have to have the subject matter competency test. We know that the instructional factor with the highest correlation with student learning is teacher's competence in subject matter. That is a good part of what is underlying much of what we did.

We have, as another feature of this document, a required passing score on a performance assessment for *professional license* as opposed to standard certification. We are suggesting that this will be done locally, with trained supervisors. We hope to offer much support and training for increasing the capacity of local school systems to evaluate their new teachers in context. There is no better way to evaluate the quality of a teacher in his or her classroom than through observation. This would include looking at a portfolio prepared by the teacher in the context of that school, that classroom, that community, with standards established by the state, and recommendations made to the Department of Ed as to the teacher's performance.

We have separated pedagogy as much as we can from subject matter knowledge. We have tried in all of the licenses spelled out in the concept paper to have subject matter knowledge as opposed to pedagogical knowledge. Subject matter knowledge is what we would expect these prospective teachers to be learning or acquiring in their arts and sciences courses and what we'll test in their competency or subject matter tests.

We have a document that will include all of the pieces that are now in separate documents, bulletins, or monographs. We include in this draft concept paper the document that was the certification regulations document. It will include the document that was called Principles of Effective Teaching and Effective Administrative Leadership's evaluation criteria. It will also include the recertification regulations that the Board of Education has already approved. We will

have all of this together in one document for the first time. This will enable us to have consistent standards that we can then use across all the other programs the Department is involved in such as the mentor institutes. It will all be in one document and we'll have consistency across various projects.

We have, in addition, not only separated subject matter knowledge from pedagogical knowledge, but we have also strengthened subject matter knowledge for each license. We have suggested appropriate majors for prospective elementary school teachers because they reflect the basic subject matter taught in our elementary schools and the major curriculum frameworks.

We have also increased the requirements for reading instruction certificates or licenses. We have removed unnecessary barriers for those professional support positions that we believe the professions themselves provide the criteria for evaluating. Those are the major highlights of what we have done.

We certainly have not precluded colleges and universities from requiring more than what we are asking here. They can certainly always add more. We are providing what we think is a baseline for academic achievement in the subject the teacher wishes to teach. We are not mandating any particular kind of school organization, but we are enabling schools to make sure that they have people who are licensed to deal with different ways of addressing the content. As Richard Hoffstetter said many years ago, "Teachers don't just teach students and they don't just teach a subject; teachers teach something to students." Let me conclude by outlining how we proceed with this.

We expect this concept paper to go out for two months. It will come back, and we will finish a final form of the certification regulation revision. We hope by the May Board meeting that that final draft will then go out for final public comment. By next summer, we would expect a final vote on that document. It would then take effect a year from September, so that there would be a lead time for colleges, universities and others to be able to make the adjustments and deal with their programs. That's the normal span for this kind of a document. The document that will go out in another week or so, if the Board approves it, will be more fully developed than the document you received. You all have just received a copy of the Academically Advanced Certificate. It was in the process of being developed just a few days ago. I wanted you to see that because it would also be included in the particular draft that we'll send out. We also have some reordering to do to make the document more coherent. We will have a special e-mail address included in the document for those who wish to make comments via the web. We may be able to have some public forums to deal with questions and concerns by large groups. We still have to work that out.

We would like very much to sponsor institutes to help local schools develop their capacity for performance assessment and for training supervisors. This is a responsibility they already have, and it will be a major piece of making all of this work. It depends on giving more local control to the community, in meaningful ways, for what they are doing in their educational systems. I'd be happy to answer any questions.

**CHAIRMAN PEYSER:** First, I want to thank the Deputy Commissioner for coming forward so early in the process. Too often boards like ours see documents only after they are pretty much done. What we have here is the ability to look at a concept paper in the early stages of development giving us some opportunity for feedback. As we move down this path we will be in sync with one another. When the final proposals do come back they will be consistent with Board attempts.

In that regard, it is worth noting that this is not in the form of draft regulations. This is still a concept paper. This does not require a vote on the part of the Board to send it out for public comment. I think the Commissioner and Deputy Commissioner will seek input and certainly will be responsive to that input, but we don't need to make a formal motion to have a vote to take this forward. There is one other procedural point. There is a Joint Commission on Educator Preparation that is looking at some of these areas at the same time. One would hope, based on their schedule, that their input would be integrated in the proposal that ultimately comes back to this Board. From my own personal standpoint, I think the approach taken in this concept paper is extremely important and positive. I embrace it wholeheartedly. There are a couple of issues that came up yesterday, which I will reiterate. I don't think they need to be resolved in terms of the draft concept paper, but for keeping in mind as we move forward.

I am concerned that the administrative certification process is not as flexible as that for teachers. There's a strong argument for providing alternative paths that allow people from nontraditional backgrounds to become principals and superintendents. I also have concerns about the performance assessments prior to professional licensure, particularly in terms of using colleagues within the school or within the district to perform those assessments. Another issue that was discussed at length yesterday, was whether or not to specify two college science lab courses as part of the elementary education preparation program. Having said that, this is a tremendous step forward and represents a direction that the Board ought to move in. I hope we will as we go through this process.

**DR. DELATTRE:** Thank you. I wanted to comment first on item 9 on page 1 at the bottom regarding the updated list of licenses. You mention eliminating licenses no longer deemed academically desirable, e.g., Middle School Teacher and General Science. It seems to me that we should take steps to eliminate licensure in social studies. The Reform Act specifies as academic core subjects history and social science, and we have treated political science, economics, and geography as social science and as relevant academic core subjects under the Reform Act. There is no reference to social studies. It seems clear to me that the purpose of the Reform Act is to emphasize history and cognitive disciplines rather than social studies. I don't think we should have licensure in social studies.

**CHAIRMAN PEYSER:** Can I interrupt for clarification?

**MS. STOTSKY:** We don't. We've eliminated that already. We have history as history. We also have political science to take care of government or civics, and we have decided to add a slash after political science and put philosophy because we see that together. You will see that reflected in the actual details for the license.

**DR. DELATTRE:** I'm grateful for that. It seems to me that ought to be explicit because the public comment is likely to be furious. I don't want us to be in a position where people are saying we didn't tell them.

**MS. STOTSKY:** We can make that explicit.

**DR. DELATTRE:** The third bold heading from the bottom, "Interdisciplinary Major: A Major for Prospective Elementary School Teachers Drawing on Only the Majors in the Basic Subjects Taught in the Elementary School." Those are reversed on page 4 under the group at the top under the second arrowhead halfway down. "Appropriate majors for the elementary school license are: English, history or other social science (economics, political science, or geography), mathematics, and a domain of science, (e.g., physics, chemistry, biology, or earth science). Interdisciplinary majors must consist of combinations of these disciplines." In a moment, I will read what I said and what appeared in the minutes of the last meeting on this subject.

First, let me point out that many of us are hopeful that the elementary teaching in the Commonwealth will include foreign languages. We wrote the foreign language framework and adopted it, in part, because we hoped there would be study starting with young children in foreign languages, and that we would, in time, overcome the fact that only 29 high schools in Massachusetts now have any foreign language requirement for graduation. It seems it has to be in this list. Also, the arts have to be part of the curriculum according to the Reform Act. It seems to be inappropriate to rule out or replace arts in the elementary curriculum given the arts are an academic core subject and that the arts have to be included along with foreign languages. That, of course, is that arts are separate in the broader argument I sought to make last time. I will read that if I may from the minutes. On page 18 from the minutes of the last meeting I said near the top of the page, the second paragraph:

“As you know, the interdisciplinary major is routinely used for prospective elementary and early childhood teachers. I believe that disciplines and subject areas that are mentioned here as eligible are included because they are drawn from the list of academic core subjects in the Reform Act.” And then I mention foreign languages and the arts. “For the elementary interdisciplinary, we may want to expand the list of disciplines that qualify. I would suggest that we consider the inclusion in the interdisciplinary majors of philosophy, religion, classics, and foreign languages, and, if it seems necessary, to make explicit that history includes intellectual history, history of ideas, and art history. If the interdisciplinary major provision is to cover early childhood as well as elementary, then child development needs to be included in the major.”

My view, I hope it's clear, is that the disciplines traditionally associated with the liberal arts and the natural sciences seem a suitable part of the elementary interdisciplinary major. To exclude a number of those disciplines seems to raise the risk of our weakening, in the long run, what our elementary school teachers know. I have a couple other comments.

If you turn to page 13 of the draft, "Subject Matter Knowledge Required For Teacher Licenses, Adult Basic Education," the first bullet is, "History of adult education including its current practices, policies, sources of support and measures of accountability." Almost all of the current teaching of adult education with which I'm familiar treats adult education as if it were a new subject area somehow developed in the last 25 years. It neglects the great classics of the history of adult education. For example, the Sermon on the Mount, the Platonic Dialogues in which Socrates is always talking with adults except for the slave boy. This idea of history has to become explicit because it's not part of the contemporary curriculum.

On page 14, under the early childhood levels, and this occurs again in the physical education, reading theory, research, and practice, the first square bullet says, "Reading (e.g., Spaulding, Orton-Gillingham, whole language), and then Principles of Phonics." I think that emphasis merely on principles of phonics is not enough. People have to know phonics through and through, including the principles. That ought to be emphasized, and for my part, I don't think whole language ought to appear before phonics in the document.

By the way, I share wholeheartedly the view that this is spectacular progress over the certification materials with which we've been working and the work that's being done to replace the Principles of Effective Teaching and Effective Administration Leadership, a remarkably misnamed document. The work is just wonderful and I'm grateful.

**DR. SCHAEFER:** I have two quick comments about the Minimum Practicum Requirements on page 7. At some point the distinction could be made about why early childhood and elementary are 300 hours and secondary is 100 hours.

**MS. STOTSKY:** There are a lot of practicum requirements for early childhood, in a variety of settings with or without special needs children, so they have to have a very extensive set of practica that require 300 hours. For elementary teachers, we recommended an increase to 300 rather than 200 originally, but we will wait to see what input comes in. We have already increased secondary to 150. That isn't reflected in this document. The distinction is a reflection of the difference between what an elementary school teacher, in a self-contained classroom, needs by way of experience as opposed to a subject matter teacher at the high school.

**DR. SCHAEFER:** The only other point I want to make at this time is page 33 at the bottom, the Board of Education review. I'm just looking at this and wondering what kind of staff would be required in the Department in order to perform such a feat and what the implications of this were. That's a long discussion.

**MS. STOTSKY:** This is a reflection of something we are supposed to be doing and we have to work out the details. We can't say anything more. I just want to be sure to have it here so people wouldn't think we were dropping it or losing it.

**DR. THERNSTROM:** A comment and a question. As those of you who were here yesterday know, I believe, ideally, that an elementary school's math and science should be taught by specialists in math and science. I would allow schools to hire elementary school teachers without two college level science lab courses, but with the idea that those teachers would not teach science and math. I would eliminate that requirement. I think we are excluding from elementary school licensure too many talented people by including that as a requirement.

I also have a question for Dr. Delattre. What disciplines, if any, would you leave out of the permissible mix? That is, is psychology all right, anthropology? Where would you draw the line between the legitimate and the illegitimate?

**DR. DELATTRE:** You can work from the trivium and quadrivium to what that would most likely embrace. I did not mention psychology except child development as part of the early childhood interdisciplinary

program. The reason I specifically did not mention psychology is that when schools of education were formed in this country, and control was maintained over the academic and scientific disciplines by the arts and sciences colleges, and colleges of arts and sciences in universities, the only thing left was developmental psychology. Most of the curricula in schools of education are driven by psychology, as are most of the programs in school counseling. There's already so much of that it's catastrophic, and so beyond child development I haven't included it, but would explicitly exclude it from the interdisciplinary majors. As far as anthropology and the rest, I'm prepared to be instructed.

**DR. THERNSTROM:** So you're down to one that you would exclude at the moment.

**DR. DELATTRE:** Well, certainly that, but there are many social sciences that are not traditionally associated. I confess I have never understood what earth science is, so --

**CHAIRMAN PEYSER:** That's about to come up. That's a subsequent agenda item.

**DR. THERNSTROM:** I think there's a line-drawing problem here. I'm sympathetic with what you're saying but I do think there is a line-drawing problem.

**CHAIRMAN PEYSER:** Well, I would like to keep the pace going here. Obviously, if Board members have other comments, they should certainly make them known to Sandra or Dave or me. Again, this was a draft concept paper, it's not regulation, it's not even draft regulation. This is a very malleable document. I hope you will continue to maintain communication with the Department as this goes forward. I'm looking forward, obviously, to hearing back with a formalized presentation later.

**DR. KOPLIK:** Explain what we're going to do here. We have a draft document that was presented to us yesterday and again this morning. A number of Board members have said I would change page 7, I'd do this, do that. We didn't vote on any of that so my assumption is that we are not changing anything today, is that correct?

**CHAIRMAN PEYSER:** The short answer is yes, we are not doing anything formally today. I would hope that Sandra and her colleagues go back and revisit the document in light of our comments and make the changes they think are appropriate. They may not agree with us, in which case we'll have this discussion at a later date and we'll resolve it. The folks around this table will resolve it. What we are looking at is an early stage document and an opportunity to guide the Department so we don't end up, down the road, looking at regulations that are not what Board members are comfortable with.

**MS. STOTSKY:** I would suggest that we look at more routes for administrators before this document goes out. This was something we did want to do but did not have enough time. We might also raise the issue of science lab courses by questionnaire, or raise the question of majors for the prospective elementary teacher. That way we can draw people's attention explicitly to those points that seem to be of concern.

**COMMISSIONER DRISCOLL:** It's a little bit of an unusual process, Stanley, but I think we have accomplished what we wanted to accomplish. Roberta's comment about working towards that made so much sense. There are a lot of things that make sense that we'll change, so we've accomplished what we want to accomplish.

**CHAIRMAN PEYSER:** The things that don't make sense we'll change later.

**COMMISSIONER DRISCOLL:** Right. The Board reserves the right to make illogical changes.



**5. CHARTER SCHOOL RENEWALS: Lawrence Family Development Charter School and Lowell Middlesex Academy Charter School - Discussion and Vote**

**COMMISSIONER DRISCOLL:** The Board received a separate document, a summary review of the applications for the two charter renewals before you, the Lawrence Family Development Charter School, and the Lowell Middlesex Academy Charter School. Ed, perhaps you want to make a brief comment before we have the Board consider a vote.

**MR. KIRBY:** Thank you. Good morning. I'd like to begin with a quick update on the charter school renewal process.

Today marks the eighth and ninth recommendations for renewal of the 14 schools that are concluding their first five-year term. In December and January, we will make recommendations regarding the balance of the five schools left to conclude the process. At the risk of under-representing the success stories of each of these schools in a public forum, I would like to direct my comments to areas of each school's operation not yet fully implemented. We have paid special attention to those areas in the review of each school's candidacy for renewal because of time and because that's what most of you might address.

Let me begin with Lawrence Family Development School. As you read in the review documentation, the school has made clear progress in terms of its academic program over four years, as well as its organizational development. It's being very well managed and governed. Perhaps of all of the charter schools in the state, this school has demonstrated the greatest attention to assessing its deficiencies and responding to them in a timely manner. That is especially true in the last two school years under new academic leadership. There are two areas that I would like to address explicitly, which are elaborated on in the review materials. One is the school's two-way language program.

The school was chartered with an original intent by the school to have a full dual language program from grades K-8, in other words, 50 percent of instruction roughly in each of the two languages, English and Spanish, through the entire course of its grade levels. The school realized early on that it could not attain the staffing needed to implement that approach. What it has done is modified its approach. While it has a full two-way language approach in the first couple of years, in grades 2 and beyond the academic emphasis is on English language instruction with maybe 20 percent Spanish instruction. The school hopes this approach will attain and/or retain the Spanish language fluency of its students. The school has kept us informed of its modifications. Because its modifications do represent a material change to its charter, the school has not yet amended the charter, nor have we approved such an amendment. We'll begin that process with the school as we review this aspect of its operation as well as its standards implementation for all schools concluding their fifth year, including an accountability plan review. As I've mentioned in the past, accountability plans in all charter schools are perhaps the weakest link in this accountability process. Before any fifth-year school enters a second term, we're going to revise those plans with schools according to a new format.

The second area for Lawrence Family Development, though not fully developed, is incorporation of the school's internal academic standards into its curriculum and assessments across all of its grade levels and core subject areas including Spanish fluency. The school and the Department expect full implementation by the end of the year. If you remember, this is another problem common to many schools in the fifth year, not just this one. There are one or two schools who have demonstrated complete incorporation and implementation of internal standards. This is one of the many that hasn't finished that work but we are paying special attention to this. In the accountability plan revision with the school we will address their progress on that count.

Next is Lowell Middlesex Academy Charter School located in the city of Lowell. This is a school program serving students who have dropped out of the Lowell Public Schools. A few students do come from surrounding districts. This renewal recommendation, while important on its own terms, is significant for a special reason. We are including two special conditions with the recommendation for renewal, which I will go into those each in a moment.

Charter school statutes and regulations allow the Board of Education to set conditions for any charter school at any point in time, whether it's at the renewal process or some other point in the school's charter. It's the expectation of the Department that oversees the school's progress towards meeting those conditions on a set timeline. Here are the two aspects that we are addressing with special conditions.

The first is that most students who enroll at Lowell Academy Middlesex Charter School do not finish out the program through its graduation requirements. By extension we have a clear sense of progress and performance of students who have graduated but the school doesn't yet have a method for systematically reviewing what students attain if they are there for a shorter period of time. The school has also not yet developed a systematic way for tracking the exit of students. Anecdotally, the school can attest to the many students who don't graduate but still meet success. For example, students who return to Lowell High School or another high school, students who move to G.E.D. programs to attain high school proficiency more quickly to enter employment, students who move directly to full-time employment. This school, again, is not systematically tracking the exit of those students. It has already started to implement a system tied to clear graduation and retention rates without setting up a perverse incentive for the school to advertise itself or recruit only those students most likely to graduate. Its mission is, in fact, to go after students who are least likely to get back into school engagement.

The second condition is related to internal standards. The school mission is to develop a competency-based program. While there are clear competencies within certain courses, the school has not yet sufficiently articulated, nor aligned with the state's frameworks, its internal academic standards across its core subject areas and at various levels of proficiency. The condition asks both for the completion of that work as well as the demonstration by the school that it has incorporated those institutional standards into the curriculum assessment of the program. The model at the school for this work is probably in English Language Arts. It's my understanding that the school is using that area as a model for the incorporation of the other areas.

**CHAIRMAN PEYSER:** I have one technical question in terms of the motion. The conditions essentially as I understand them would require the Department to make a determination by 2000, therefore it would not require it to come back to the Board for final approval.

**MR. KIRBY:** That's correct.

**CHAIRMAN PEYSER:** I would like to make a couple of comments about these two schools.

I think both of them serve, as an explicit part of their mission, a very challenging population of students. Both have had to struggle to bring their visions and strategies in line with its challenges. In the process, some of these schools have had remarkable individual successes.

In addition, both schools have shown high levels of commitment and persistence as they have sought to approve and establish concrete and comprehensive academic standards. While both schools still have some distance to travel to meet their own expectations and ours, these evaluations show, at least to me, that they are making rapid progress and are poised for future success. So I endorse the motion that will be put before us and hope that we move to renew these two charters.

**MR. IRWIN:** Mr. Chairman, I have a question on the motion. What happens on June 30 if Lowell Middlesex County Charter School doesn't meet these conditions?

**MR. KIRBY:** As I said earlier, the Commissioner or the Board can set specific conditions for any charter school at any time. We have done so in several cases, especially at startup. When a school has been at risk of its organizational viability. We have had four or five cases like that. It's important to note the conditions relate to the school's next term. Even though we are asking them to finish out this work prior to that next term, in practical terms we will work with the school in the spring to determine that it's met the conditions by June 30. I think it has. We would make a determination that's appropriate if the school hadn't met the conditions. I can envision a range of what "hadn't" might look like. It might be no movement at all toward meeting the condition, hypothetically, a school flagrantly disregarding the condition. In that case, I imagine the Commissioner would recommend that the Board place the school on probation and begin proceedings to revoke its charter. On the other side of the spectrum, I can imagine a school that demonstrates a hundred percent attainments of the condition, in that case, the Commissioner would merely approve that work. It's going to be difficult in terms of both conditions, especially around academic standards, to define what a hundred percent means. It's the burden of our office, representing the Commissioner, to ascertain how far the school has gone in attaining the condition we have established.

**MR. IRWIN:** But the vote that we are taking today grants until 2005. I don't want to see the kids getting lost.

**COMMISSIONER DRISCOLL:** That's right. What the condition allows is that if we are not satisfied, we can come back to this Board.

**CHAIRMAN PEYSER:** That's my question. But essentially we'd be entertaining the renewal motion.

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

**VOTED:** that the Board of Education, in accordance with General Laws chapter 71, section 89 and 603 CMR 1.00, and subject to the conditions set forth below, hereby grants a renewal of a public school charter the following school for the five-year period from July 1, 2000, through June 30, 2005, as recommended by the Commissioner:

**Commonwealth Charter:**

- 1. Lawrence Family Development Charter School**  
**Location: Lawrence**

**Said charter school shall be operated in accordance with the provisions of General Laws chapter 71, section 89 and 603 CMR 1.00 and all other applicable state and federal laws and regulations and such conditions as the Commissioner may from time to time establish, all of which shall be deemed conditions of the charter.**

**VOTED:** that the Board of Education, in accordance with General Laws chapter 71, section 89 and 603 CMR 1.00, and subject to the general and specific conditions set forth below, hereby grants a renewal of a public school charter the following school

**for the five-year period from July 1, 2000, through June 30, 2005, as recommended by the Commissioner:**

**Commonwealth Charter:**

**2. Lowell Middlesex Academy Charter School**

**Location: Lowell**

**Said charter school shall be operated in accordance with the provisions of General Laws chapter 71, section 89 and 603 CMR 1.00 and all other applicable state and federal laws and regulations and such conditions as the Commissioner may from time to time establish, all of which shall be deemed conditions of the charter.**

**Said charter school shall, by June 30, 2000, demonstrate an operational system for objectively monitoring student enrollment, withdrawal, and reasons for withdrawal. This system must provide clear and credible information regarding the academic and non-academic performance and progress of each student regardless of his/her duration of enrollment or completion/non-completion of graduation requirements. For any student who leaves the school prior to completing graduation requirements, this system will provide clear and specific information about each student's reason(s) for exit. The school must also determine clear institutional goals for rates of graduation and retention that meet the Department's approval.**

**Said charter school shall, by June 30, 2000, demonstrate full articulation, in writing, of the academic standards in core subject areas that determine promotion within the program and graduation. These standards must meet the Department's approval. The school must also demonstrate that it has incorporated these academic standards into its curriculum and has developed a**

The motion was made by Ms. Crutchfield and seconded by Dr. Schaefer. The vote was unanimous.

**4. UPDATE ON SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY/ENGINEERING FRAMEWORK - Discussion and Vote**

**CHAIRMAN PEYSER:** Now we will jump back to Sandra and number 4 on the agenda, which is science. We have a few things left to do even though we have fewer and fewer people interested. In any event, it's important. I don't know how we want to handle this. Maybe we ought to send it back to Sandra and Tom to discuss the memo.

**MS. STOTSKY:** This is a memo based on a reading of all of the public comments that came back for the science framework. The public comment period ended the beginning of November. I went through all of the comments. Tom Noonan, Director of the Office of Math and Science and Barbara Libby, Professional Development Administrator for that office, also went through them. The direction of these responses seems fairly clear on four key issues. The reason I wanted these issues brought before the Board is that we need to develop a timetable and framework for the revision process for the document. Having the Board vote on these issues now would help us considerably in moving forward with a plan of action. Each one has major effects on what we can do. Since we felt the direction was fairly clear at that time, and now that we have the comments analyzed, we have complete evidence to support all of the issues that we are raising here. There is no problem about the field supporting what we are saying. This was a true grassroots response. We had over 500 communications. I think it was the largest number of communications that we have ever received on documents in the past.

**MR. NOONAN:** Yes, that's correct.

**MS. STOTSKY:** So this was heartening, we had clear response from the field on what was going to affect them at the high school level.

The first issue deals with the question of putting earth science back into the high school curriculum. This was an area that we received a lot of comments on. The second deals with the end-of-course assessment - that is a critical question. There was a large majority in favor of single-course disciplines at the high school level with end-of-course assessments. One major reason being that it is best to assess students after they have taken a full-year course in a science rather than wait two or even three years. Most science teachers said they want to teach to their strength. They are trained in single disciplines. They probably will always continue to be trained in single disciplines, we see no change on the horizon for the training they will receive in single discipline science majors at the university level. For all of these reasons we want to have this start happening. We need to tell school systems that from now on, at the high school level, end-of-course assessments would be something we can work for.

Based on the comments from school system supervisors and superintendents, it was very clear that they wanted to defer any assessment of the technology engineering standards. They simply are unequipped with personnel, equipment, or materials resources to do any assessment of those standards at that level. That is why we would like that to be removed from the assessment for a few years. We plan to develop a timetable at which point we will make sure that those become part of any framework and somehow accessible. In further support I would like to mention that we received comments from no more than six or seven technology instructors which tells you there are hardly any of them out there. That's a real problem.

The last issue one involves Appendix I, the Historical and Social Context for Science/Engineering. There was a clear majority for keeping it optional.

These are the issues that we would like your votes on so that we can then proceed with a timetable and framework.

**CHAIRMAN PEYSER:** I want to make a couple of brief comments to start off.

I'm generally supportive of the direction you're heading here but I still have some questions. I'm not sure we necessarily need to resolve them today since this will come back to us eventually. I do want to make them known.

One is in terms of earth science. This, in part, relates to some of the comments we heard earlier today. I am concerned that we are expanding without making any other tradeoffs in the frameworks. Essentially, we are making the framework more dense by including more material to cover without reducing the amount covered elsewhere. So we are adding earth science but not taking anything away as I understand it.

**MS. STOTSKY:** We are allowing those high schools who already offer earth science to be able to have standards by which they can assess their students. It would inform the existing curriculum that is already in the schools.

**CHAIRMAN PEYSER:** So this is in the context of the second assessment. If you don't take earth science, you wouldn't be taking that assessment. It will provide districts with more flexibility as to which course or strands to offer and which end-of-course assessments the student will take. I have another comment regarding end-of-course assessments. I do support the general notion that as you move into subject areas

that are more discrete and knowledge based, as opposed to those more cumulative and skills based, in terms of the general balance, it may make more sense to move to end-of-course assessments.

I am concerned about two things. One is the extent to which students taking an exam for the first time in 11th grade or 12th grade will have sufficient remediation time given the extent to which it becomes a critical part of their graduation requirement. My second related concern is that some students will be taking certain tests in the 9th grade, while others will do so at higher grade levels. Are they really comparable? Is the distinction between the kind of material and expectations you would provide in 9th grade really on the same plane as something you provide in 11th or 12th grade, even in the same subject area? Depending on the sequence, a school might actually adopt 9th grade biology versus 11th grade biology. I think this is the right way to go but I'm concerned about how it would actually be implemented.

**MR. LaFLAMME:** In response to the Chairman's last comments, it would seem that if explicit standards are in place for biology, then regardless of whether it's a 9th grade or 11th grade biology class, the expectations would be the same.

Regarding issue 4, dealing with Appendix I, the last sentence reads, "We plan to begin sponsoring summer institutes for history, science, and other teachers on the history and philosophy of science." This suggests that there may not currently be teachers ready to teach that towards an assessment, but it is the direction in which we are going. Seeing as, in point 3, we specifically say that, "We would like to postpone assessment of these standards," it would be appropriate at this time to qualify number 4 where we say, "We recommend keeping the topics in this Appendix as optional units of study."

**MS. STOTSKY:** That's what we plan to do. We weren't going to get rid of it; we want to keep it there.

**MR. LaFLAMME:** But meaning that it would ultimately be included in the assessment once these institutes are --

**MS. STOTSKY:** That's a possibility that would come up once we felt that enough science teachers and others felt that they could teach what was in the appendix. That was part of the feedback we got.

**DR. DELATTRE:** There's a serious problem about what that means because there's some ambiguity here. If you look in the first line, the phrase is "the historical and social context for science." If you look in the fourth line, it's "the history of science." The history of science is not the historical and social context of science. The history of science is the history of science and it doesn't belong in history courses. It belongs in science courses, the same as Euclid is part of the history of mathematics and belongs in mathematics courses, along with Einstein's special theory of relativity. Are you going to sponsor summer institutes on historical context or on the history of science? There's a profound difference. And one belongs in the science curriculum and it shouldn't be in the appendix, while the other should never be more than an appendix. It's impossible to understand what that fourth unit in the motion means, right?

**MS. STOTSKY:** If you look at the appendix itself, it may be a little clearer.

**DR. DELATTRE:** I understand that but it seems to me this is a moment where you have a chance to make a gain, namely to focus on the history of science rather than historical and social context.

**MS. STOTSKY:** Which is what we want to do.

**DR. DELATTRE:** It's all well to know what kind of problems Kepler faced, but if you want to have historical science, you want to know how Kepler invented the calibrator.

**MS. STOTSKY:** Part of it might have been simply finding a title for an appendix that might not have been quite as accurate.

**DR. DELATTRE:** On another note, it seems to me there ought to be discussion at some point about choice within those end-of-course tests. I don't see how we can do science responsibly without the students having some choice of questions inside the test.

**CHAIRMAN PEYSER:** Not choice among the tests, but inside the test?

**DR. DELATTRE:** Inside, given that you're not going to do all of biology or all of physics in a year.

**CHAIRMAN PEYSER:** This ties back to the comments made earlier about what we actually define as the core requirements for various disciplines, and what we will assess. The moment here is implicit in the discussion of assessments, but as we get further into it, it needs to be more explicit.

**DR. DELATTRE:** I'm in a box because there are some I want to vote for and some I don't.

**CHAIRMAN PEYSER:** I think we can break it up.

**MR. LaFLAMME:** Not that this deals with the motion at hand, and perhaps this is a discussion for another day, but even if a school would have Chemistry I and Chemistry II, would I have to take both? Would I have to take an end-of-course assessment after Chemistry II, or is that something you'll address?

**MS. STOTSKY:** It's one. We are looking for the first full high school course in these disciplines. That's usually what is assessed in an end-of-course assessment.

**COMMISSIONER DRISCOLL:** Mr. Chairman, I think there are a number of issues. We knew this to begin with. I think your first point is well taken that this is not to be left aside. As Dr. Noyce said at an earlier meeting, earth science is something people like to teach and students like to take. The question in the original recommendation was whether or not to include it because there should be an emphasis on chemistry, biology and physics. It's a reasonable question. If we agree with development standards in earth science, there are some tradeoffs. It's a question.

And then there's the point raised by the Chairman's and Marcel's comments. If someone takes physics, biology, and chemistry, or physics, chemistry and biology, which is now the case in Brookline and Newton, as opposed to traditional biology, chemistry and physics, can you say the 9th grade physics course is equivalent to the 11th grade physics course? Especially given the correlation with mathematical concepts, et cetera.

Mr. Chairman, I don't know if the Board is comfortable. You brought the issues forward. I think they are the right issues. I think there's a lot of discussion and investigation that we have to do. If the Board is willing to understand that we are trying to react to the public comments and are looking into this, after all, it's only another month, maybe we get something back on the agenda next month. We raised more questions than perhaps answers but these are areas we want to explore as we go forward.

**CHAIRMAN PEYSER:** Maybe we are not in a position as you're implying to take a vote on this. Perhaps we should give a more informal signal as to whether these are paths worth pursuing even though the ultimate destination may have problems that plague individual Board members or all of us. Does anyone have

sufficiently strong objections to these four directions and providing some guidance or that further work in this area should stop?

**MS. CRUTCHFIELD:** What I'm hearing is that there will be work done over the next 3 month and that we are perhaps uncomfortable thinking about those issues today. That's where my feet are planted.

**COMMISSIONER DRISCOLL:** I think that's reasonable. You accomplished what you wanted to accomplish. You brought these issues forward and allowed us to pursue them. No one is saying don't go in this direction. They want certain things before they endorse something.

**MS. STOTSKY:** That would help us if we knew the Board was at least supportive of us going in this direction. We will then bring in a more detailed plan when we have time to work that one out.

**6. CERTIFICATE OF MASTERY: Consideration of Additional Criteria**

**CHAIRMAN PEYSER:** Moving somewhat more quickly here now, the next item is certificate of mastery. I guess the only point I would make here is that we have taken votes in the past on this issue. If I'm not mistaken, regulations at the moment to implement a certificate of mastery do not yet exist. We are still in the stage of defining policy rather than specific regulations. However, what is before you is a memo that assigns adding criteria to the issuance of certificate of mastery that would say that students would be eligible if they scored in the Proficient or Advanced categories on the MCAS.

The reason this is significant is, first of all, it provides a certain incentive for students who have not performed in the Proficient level to continue work towards Proficiency. Then it would allow us, prior to the issuance of a competency determination, to begin issuing certificates of mastery possibly as early as the spring of 2000. Therefore, the issue before us today, is whether to add the criteria that students must score in the Proficient or Advanced categories to be eligible for a certificate of mastery, and to state our intention to move forward to issue certificates of mastery in the year 2000.

**MR. LaFLAMME:** I would certainly support the addition of those criteria. I'm just curious myself how realistic that timetable is as far as spring of 2000.

**CHAIRMAN PEYSER:** This year's seniors would have taken the original MCAS test in 1998.

**MR. LaFLAMME:** You had said the regulations were not yet in place. Does that seem like something that --

**CHAIRMAN PEYSER:** If we were to vote on this in December, I think we would have time to complete the cycle of review and final vote on the regulations in time for graduation.

**DR. DELATTRE:** For reasons that follow from my dissent from the graduation score we agreed on this morning, I don't think proficiency means mastery. I think we should limit mastery to those who score in the Advanced category in the MCAS tests, whichever ones are required.

**CHAIRMAN PEYSER:** Would other board members comment on that point?

**COMMISSIONER DRISCOLL:** This is coming back in December. Perhaps we could provide some materials and statistics then.

**CHAIRMAN PEYSER:** Samples of students' work.



**MS. CRUTCHFIELD:** It would be very helpful for me to see more so that I could make a more informed decision.

**DR. KOPLIK:** I'm inclined to agree with Ed if I can understand what the designation really means.

**CHAIRMAN PEYSER:** At the moment, it's like graduating with honors. We've had some general discussions but obviously we need further discussions with you and the Board of Higher Education as to whether there is something more concrete that can be attached to this. For example, eligibility for scholarships, admission to UMASS, or whatever it might be. Those are all important things for us to discuss as we work to provide something for students to strive for rather than something that's irrelevant.

**DR. DELATTRE:** You're exactly right that you have to have a certificate of mastery. The question is not whether; it's what qualifies for it.

**MS. CRUTCHFIELD:** That's exactly the right discussion to have.

**DR. KOPLIK:** It is going to come back. We'll think about it between now and December.

**MR. LaFLAMME:** It seems whatever the MCAS threshold would be, it would be fairly consistent with the level of academic achievement with the other mastery criteria approved in August of 97. Not that we might have a correlation between the MCAS and Advanced Placement test, for example, but I think it would be safe to say that the number of students who score 4 or better in the Advanced Placement tests will be significantly smaller than those who scored in the Proficient category on the MCAS.

**COMMISSIONER DRISCOLL:** That's right, and we should be providing those statistics.

**DR. DELATTRE:** The argument against my own position will be that the graduation score is one point above Failing in the Needs Improvement category. If you demand the advanced performance on MCAS, you're ignoring achievement, all those who score in Proficient. That isn't fair, right? That argument is very difficult to contend with once you've set the standard for graduation where the Board has, right? Then you have this long reach. The problem is how to be fair without defining down mastery.

**CHAIRMAN PEYSER:** That's exactly the question we need to address.

## **7. APPOINTMENT OF ADVISORY COUNCIL MEMBERS - Vote**

**CHAIRMAN PEYSER:** Next is the recommended list of appointees to advisory councils. I think you all have a green version.

**COMMISSIONER DRISCOLL:** These reflect two additions to the list and, after our feedback from members, there are three deletions. This is the list that I'm now recommending.

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

**VOTED:**           **that the Board of Education, in accordance with Chapter 15, Section 1G of the General Laws, hereby appoint, to three-year terms, the Advisory Council members as recommended by the Commissioner.**

The motion was made by Mr. Irwin and seconded by Ms. Crutchfield. The vote was unanimous.

**8. APPROVAL OF GRANTS - Vote**

**CHAIRMAN PEYSER:** The grants are at the bottom of your pile.

**COMMISSIONER DRISCOLL:** If there's no discussion, there are two grants.

**CHAIRMAN PEYSER:** I think we still have five members.

**COMMISSIONER DRISCOLL:** I don't think there will be any discussion.

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

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

The motion was made by Mr. Irwin and seconded by Ms. Crutchfield. The vote was unanimous.

**CHAIRMAN PEYSER:** There's a memo from Sandra Stotsky that describes the test development process and it reflects not only a concrete description of what that process is, but also represents some suggested modifications to the process and suggested changes in the roles that various players happen to play in fulfilling that process. There is more to discuss here. Ed in particular has had some comments that may be reflected in subsequent documents. I think it's something that deserves more time than we currently have. I think this would be useful to come back to in December.

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

**VOTED: that the meeting adjourn at 12:20 p.m., subject to the call of the Chairman.**

The motion was made by Mr. Irwin and seconded by Ms. Crutchfield.

Respectfully submitted

David P. Driscoll  
Secretary to the Board