



David P. Driscoll
Commissioner of Education

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Commissioner's "Back to School" Update

August 22, 2002

Dear Superintendents and Leaders of Charter Schools and Collaboratives:

After what has been a hotter summer than usual, and while the heat may have caused some discomfort, we all seem to find a sense of enthusiasm for the start of another school year.

I am mindful of the conditions you face this September as a result of the economy and the pressures that are certain to come with MCAS and the new accountability requirements of No Child Left Behind. For many of you who have found it necessary to cut staff over the summer I am genuinely sorry, especially in light of the effects that these reductions will have on your students and faculties, to say nothing of their impact on parents and families.

It is important, nonetheless, to do all we can with the energy we have, and I am confident you will do all that is possible to make this school year purposeful and productive.

The two topics, MCAS and NCLB, will garner most of the attention of this school year, but other very important issues will surface, as well. These include the completion of the History and Social Science Framework, bilingual education, Reading First, and the growing problem of teacher shortages, particularly in mathematics and science in urban districts across the state. Despite the hiring freeze in our own agency, we will do our best to be as responsive to you on each of these matters, and will be communicating with you about them as often as possible.

I have included in this "Back to School" Update the following announcements and items of interest that may be important for you. I would also urge you to take full advantage of our new [website](#) that we have been rebuilding to be of better help to you.

State Budget for Full Day Kindergarten

I am pleased to announce that just moments ago we were able to determine that full day kindergarten will be funded at 88% for this school year. I realize that this decision, made so close to the opening of school, created some anxiety, and I appreciate your patience.

Bilingual Education Law

In August 2002 the legislature passed and the Governor signed a new law pertaining to the education of Limited English Proficient (LEP). This new law is Chapter 218 of the Acts of 2002, and is scheduled to go into effect in 2003. To read the full text, go to the [General Court website](#). Briefly summarized, the new legislation:

1. Defines five (5) types of programs for English Language Learners. These are: a. transitional bilingual education; b. two-way bilingual education; c. structured English immersion; d. ESL (defined as a part-time program); and e. innovative programs approved by the Department of Education;
2. Requires districts enrolling 20 or more LEP students who speak the same first language to offer more than ESL, which is defined as a part-time program.
3. Requires districts enrolling 50 or more LEP students who speak the same first language to offer at least two (2) English Language Learner programs from the five approved types;
4. Requires districts enrolling LEP students to offer an ELL program for all their LEP students, no matter if there are fewer than 20 students who speak the same first language;
5. States that LEP students may stay in ELL programs for two years, or until English proficient, as determined by assessment, whichever comes first;
6. Requires districts with any LEP students to submit a district plan, containing specified elements, to the Commissioner every 3 years for approval.

We are continuing our analysis of the new law and its impact on schools and districts and we will provide more details and guidance in the near future.

Curriculum Frameworks, Supply and Access

Because of the costs involved with boxing and mailing copies of [curriculum frameworks](#) to districts, we will no longer be in a position to provide framework documents on request. We have stopped publishing hard-copy versions of the frameworks and will, henceforth, only make them available online. In the interim, please note that we still have a significant number of frameworks in our warehouse and will distribute them to any district that elects to pick them up at our offices in Malden. Hard copies of the framework may be picked up between September 1 and October 30, after which time we will send all remaining copies to the State House BookStore where they can be purchased at cost. Please let us know if you will be sending people to pick up copies by contacting [Mr. Ron Minervini](#) at ext. 6777.

Local Certificates

In response to concern that students may be denied a diploma this year because they cannot meet the 10th grade competency determination, the Board of Education is taking steps to authorize a state-sponsored certificate of completion to any student who successfully completes his/her high school requirements but does not pass MCAS. This certificate, in its present form, will be recognized for the purposes of admitting students to community colleges and the armed services. Please pay special attention to the developments of this project as it unfolds this fall.

Teacher Certifications and Waivers

Regarding the severe staffing shortage that we are experiencing within our Certification Office, we are continuing to process only those applications of candidates who have been hired by you for September. Getting your requests fulfilled is my main concern at this point, and I wanted to remind you that if you need assistance to certify staff, please call Jan O'Keefe directly. For waiver requests, you can manage these issues directly online. I appreciate your patience, and your support.

Test Wiz: Massachusetts Training Registration

To familiarize school personnel with the "Test Wiz: Massachusetts" software application, we will be sponsoring twenty Test Wiz instructional sessions between September 17 and October 18 at various locations around the Commonwealth. Each district is invited to send up to two individuals to one of the sessions. Registration needs to be submitted online no later than Friday, September 6 at <http://www.doemass.org/InfoServices/registration.asp>.

This excellent software, which can help your staff analyze student MCAS test scores, is now available free of cost to all districts. To gain access to it, you can follow the instructions provided on the [Test Wiz website](#).

Green Schools Program

The Massachusetts Technology Collaborative is now soliciting proposals for participation in Track II of the Green Schools Pilot Program. Selected projects will receive technical assistance and supplemental funding to help incorporate energy saving and environmentally friendly features in school construction projects. Further information is available on the [Green Schools website](#).

Superintendent Checklist

We have revised the superintendent checklist that was distributed to you earlier in the summer. I have included it in the list below and ask you to please use this newer version instead.

Here are the latest items posted on our website at www.doe.mass.edu/:

MCAS

- MCAS Administration Update

- Test Wiz

- MCAS Free Online Tutoring


"No Child Left Behind"

- McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act Advisories

- Unsafe Schools Option

- Supplemental Services Providers


Technical, Data and Surveys

- Checklist for Superintendents (revised, August 2002)

- SIMS:

1. End of Year Data 
 2. Fall 2002 and Directory Information 
 3. Foundation Enrollment 
 4. Career and Technical Education Data Training Sessions 
- Statewide Contract for E-Tutorials 
 - Technology Plan E-Update 
 - Alternative High School Completion Programs Survey deadline is September 6 

Other Items

- Legal Holidays in Massachusetts and Memo Regarding Religious Accommodation 
- Armed Services Recruiters Requests for Information 
- Master Teacher Program 
- "Spread the Word" Book Donation Program for 2003 

In closing, let me extend my very best wishes to you and your communities for a successful school year and an enjoyable first day "back." I wish you well and hope you know how very much I value the work you do. All the best, and

Sincerely,



David P. Driscoll
Commissioner of Education

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- [Parent Information Hotline](#)
1-866-MCAS220



Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System

Update on This Year's MCAS Administration and Beyond

To: Superintendents and Directors of Charter Schools, Educational Collaboratives, Approved Special Education Private Schools, and Institutional Schools

From: David P. Driscoll, Commissioner of Education

Date: August 15, 2002

We have completed the fifth year of successful MCAS test administration. While the overall administration was very successful, I acknowledge that there were some issues that required our attention. I am committed to making each successive MCAS administration run more smoothly.

To assist in your planning for the year, I want to share with you the latest information on MCAS tests, update the 2002-2003 testing schedule that was released last April, and inform you about a series of training sessions that will be held in the fall.

History and Social Science

There will be no testing in History and Social Science in grades 5, 8, and 10 in the spring of 2003. As you know, the new *Curriculum Framework* is not yet final and will be considered by the Board of Education this fall, after comments on the draft have been received from the field. It is expected that when the framework is approved, we will begin development of new History and Social Science tests at grades 5, 7 (rather than grade 8), and 10 (or 11).

Science and Technology/Engineering

Standard setting to determine performance level "cut scores" for the grade 5 and 8 Science and Technology/Engineering tests will be conducted during the summer of 2003. Therefore, student, school, and district performance level results will be reported for these tests in the late summer/early fall of 2003.

We plan to continue field-testing questions for high school, discipline-specific Science and Technology/Engineering tests in the spring of 2003. However, we are examining the specific disciplines and grade levels at which such tests will be administered in light of requirements under No Child Left Behind (NCLB). We intend to firm up our plans for these tests later this fall. I will keep you informed of any new developments.

Mathematics

In order to address concerns about the length of the MCAS Mathematics test, we have changed the schedule for grade 10 Mathematics to allow a full day for each of the two test sessions. This will apply to both the December and spring retests as well as the standard spring test.

Testing for Limited English Proficient Students

In response to new state and federal legislation, districts will be required to assess annually all LEP students' English proficiency beginning in the 2002-2003 school year. The Department's plan to comply with these new mandates is the following:

1. In April 2003, districts must use the LAS-R and the LAS-W to test reading and writing respectively.* These instruments are published by CTB-McGraw Hill.
2. Also next spring, to assess students' proficiency in speaking and understanding, districts will be required to test all LEP students locally with the Massachusetts English Language Assessment-Oral (MELA-O). This is a classroom assessment instrument designed by the Massachusetts Department of Education in collaboration with the Center for Applied Linguistics.

The Department plans to provide districts with training in the use of these instruments prior to the spring test administration. We also plan to make grants available to all districts with LEP students to assist them in administering the tests. More information on this grant program will be available in the fall. Beginning in spring 2004, the Department plans to administer a newly adopted statewide English Proficiency Test and assume all costs for administration, scoring, and reporting.

*Boston and Lynn may continue to use the assessment instruments that they used last year.

Planning to Meet Future Testing Requirements Under NCLB

The Department is planning to expand the current MCAS tests in math and reading to additional grades to meet the requirements under NCLB. We see this as an opportunity to further develop and refine our system to respond to federal, state, and local needs. To review the projected implementation schedule that was submitted as part of the Department's consolidated application for federal funds under NCLB, visit our Website at www.doe.mass.edu/nclb/news/csapp.pdf. The schedule, which can be found on page 6 of the application, covers all content areas for fiscal years 2003 through 2006. We will be consulting further with educators in the field and affected constituencies as we continue to solidify our plans.

2002 MCAS Reporting Workshops

MCAS Reporting Workshops will be conducted in several regions across the state beginning in the last week of September, following the release of 2002 local MCAS results. The workshops will focus on interpreting MCAS results as well as on the grade 10 MCAS Performance Appeals Process. Districts will be invited to send teams of two to three individuals, including central office staff and high school principals or their designees. More detailed information regarding the schedule, locations, and registration will be posted by early September.

TestWiz:Massachusetts Training Registration

The Department is sponsoring 20 training sessions at eight sites across the state to familiarize school personnel with the TestWiz:Massachusetts software application. This software, which helps school personnel analyze students' MCAS test scores, is available free of cost to all districts. Follow the instructions provided on the TestWiz web site <http://testwiz.com/mass/mass2.html> for access to the software. Each district is invited to send up to two individuals to one of the 20 sessions that will be held September 17 to October 18, 2002. Registration www.doe.mass.edu/infoservices/registration.asp must be submitted no later than **Friday, September 6, 2002**.

[Print View](#)



TestWiz:Massachusetts Training Registration Form

TestWiz:Massachusetts is a software application to help school personnel analyze students' MCAS test scores. This software is now available free of cost to all districts; please follow the instructions provided on the [TestWiz web site](#) for access to the software.

The Department of Education is sponsoring 20 training sessions around the state to familiarize school personnel with the software. Each district is invited to send up to 2 individuals to one of the 20 sessions. Our hope is to have these individuals train others in the district.



As the training will take place in computer labs, space will be limited. Registration must be submitted no later than Friday, September 6, 2002.

Agenda for the sessions:

- Morning sessions will be held from 9:00 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.
- Afternoon sessions will be held from 12:30 p.m. to 3:00 p.m.
- Refreshments upon arrival.
- Overview of the software.
- Hands-on segment in computer lab.
- **Important:** Bring your district's confidential Student CDs (at least one), so that you can work with your data.

Directions to Training Sessions

Registration:

- Only 2 people will be allowed to register per district.
- Confirmations and directions will be e-mailed to the email address entered below.
- Individuals must register no later than **Friday, September 6th**. Requests will be honored in the order received.

First Name:

Last Name:

Title:

District:

Session:

Phone: () -

Email:

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HEY!

Classes of
2003,
2004
& 2005

MCAS... *Help yourself to a brighter future*

The Massachusetts Department of Education, The Princeton Review, and the Virtual Education Space have teamed up to provide you with free online tutoring!!!!

What is this?

Your Homeroom Online Tutorial Course is an online practice course that helps you in Math and English Language Arts.

How do I get started?

It's easy! Go to <http://mcas.doe.mass.edu> and follow the log on instructions there.

Where can I log on?

You can access your FREE Homeroom Online Tutorial Course anywhere that you have Internet access.

- U At home
- U At school
- U In the library or computer lab
- U Anywhere!



Free Online Help

SWEET!

Improve your math
& English skills
online for free!

Just log on
the Web at

<http://mcas.doe.mass.edu>



This October ... on a computer near YOU!





Health, Safety and Student Support Services

August 16, 2002

McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act Advisories

The McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act, reauthorized in December 2001 as part of the federal No Child Left Behind Act, ensures educational rights and protections for children and youth experiencing homelessness and requires school districts to adapt to a new set of requirements regarding the education of this needy at-risk population.

To assist school systems implement the provisions of the new law, the Department is issuing Homeless Education Advisories on the following aspects of McKinney-Vento:

- [Advisory 2002-1: Definitions](#);
- [Advisory 2002-2: Enrollment of Homeless Students and School Records](#);
- [Advisory 2002-3: School Selection and Transportation Requirements for Homeless Students](#);
- [Advisory 2002-4: Homeless Students' Access to Child Nutrition Programs](#).

On one level the new requirements are simple: Homeless students should be provided with access to the same free, appropriate public education that is provided to other children and youth. Nonetheless, the Department is aware that the implementation of any new requirement may be complex. If you need any further information or assistance, contact Peter D. Cirioni, Coordinator, Office for the Education of Homeless Children and Youth, 781-338-6294, pcirioni@doe.mass.edu.

In addition, if your district has not yet designated a [Homeless Education Liaison](#) please take this opportunity to do so.

[Print View](#)



David P. Driscoll
Commissioner of Education



Mark McQuillan
Deputy Commissioner

No Child Left Behind

Unsafe Schools Option under the No Child Left Behind Act of 2002

The No Child Left Behind Act of 2002 (NCLB) requires State Education Agencies to establish a school choice policy for students attending a persistently dangerous school. Specifically, Section 9532 of NCLB requires that:

Each State receiving funds under the "No Child Left Behind" (NCLB) Act shall establish and implement a statewide policy requiring that a student attending a persistently dangerous public elementary school or secondary school, as determined by the State in consultation with a representative sample of local educational agencies, or who becomes a victim of a violent criminal offense, as determined by State law, while in or on the grounds of a public elementary school or secondary school that the student attends, be allowed to attend a safe public elementary school or secondary school within the local educational agency, including a public charter school.

NCLB stipulates that a school can be deemed unsafe as a whole entity or for an individual student. Therefore, state education agencies must establish and implement a policy regarding such schools that addresses both conditions. In meeting this federal requirement, the Massachusetts Department of Education seeks to establish and implement a policy that is preventative as well as responsive to parents' immediate concerns. Thus, corrective action will be part of the process of designating a school or schools as unsafe or persistently dangerous. In no way shall this process abridge a parent or guardian's right to declare that a school is unsafe for a child who has been a victim of a violent criminal offense as determined by State law.

Attached for your review and comments is a draft of the Massachusetts Policy to define an unsafe or persistently dangerous school. We are particularly interested in your recommendations in establishing the appropriate benchmarks regarding in school violence related incidents as well as resulting disciplinary action.

Draft Policy for Massachusetts

Under Section 9532 of the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001, Massachusetts Department of Education establishes the following criteria to define an unsafe or persistently dangerous school.

Whole School Option

To be designated as "persistently dangerous," a school must meet all of the following criteria for three consecutive years:

- *Have violence-related out-of-school suspensions (10 day or more) and/or expulsions for greater than X% of the student enrollment; and*
- *Have one or more students expelled for bringing a gun or weapon to school as defined by the federal Gun Free Schools Act and Chapter 37h section 1 of Massachusetts General Laws; and*
- *Have X% or more of the student enrollment exercising the individual option outlined below.*

For any school meeting at least two of these criteria in any given year, the district may declare the school in "greatest need" under Section 9532 of the No Child Left Behind Act. The district may therefore direct SDFSCA program funds and services to identify the problems and implement a corrective action plan to ensure a safe school environment for students, faculty, and other staff.

Any school meeting two or more of these criteria a second consecutive year will be required to evaluate and revise its corrective action plan to ensure a safe school environment for students, faculty, and other staff. The corrective action plan shall be filed with the Massachusetts Department of Education. The Massachusetts Department of Education will provide technical assistance as necessary.

Any school meeting all three criteria for three consecutive years will be designated as unsafe or persistently dangerous. Parents may then exercise their right to have their child attend a safe public elementary school or secondary school within the local educational agency, including a public charter school. To the extent feasible, the Department of Education will collaborate with other state and local agencies to provide support and technical assistance to the school and district.

Individual Student Option

Under the individual student option, any student who becomes a victim of a violent criminal offense* as defined by the Massachusetts General Laws must to the extent feasible be allowed to transfer immediately to a different school within the district.

[*while in or on the grounds of a public elementary school or secondary school that the student attends]

Violent Crime Definition: Massachusetts defines "violent crime" in G.L. c. 140, sec. 121 as follows:

"Violent crime", shall mean any crime punishable by imprisonment for a term exceeding one year, or any act of juvenile delinquency involving the use or possession of a deadly weapon that would be punishable by imprisonment for such term if committed by an adult, that: (i) has as an element the use, attempted use or threatened use of physical force or a deadly weapon against the person of another; (ii) is burglary, extortion, arson or kidnapping; (iii) involves the use of explosives; or (iv) otherwise involves conduct that presents a serious risk of physical injury to another.

Victim of Violent Crime: A victim of a violent crime is a victim of one or more of the crimes defined above.

Please submit written comments no later than **October 31, 2002** to:
 John L.G. Bynoe III, Acting Associate Commissioner
 Center for School Support Services
 Massachusetts Department of Education

350 Main Street
Malden MA 02148
email: jbynoe@doe.mass.edu

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Supplemental Educational Services

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[Q+A Overview](#)

[ESEA 2001 Title I Part A Section 1116 E](#)

[Draft Non-Regulatory Guidance](#) [[PDF](#) | [MSWORD](#)]

[No Child Left Behind Site](#)

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SUPERINTENDENTS' CHECKLIST (MA DOE Revised August 26, 2002)

July-August

Administrative /Legal

- | | |
|---|-----------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Special education discipline data report on incidents resulting in suspensions of SPED students sent to DOE | July 19 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Special education "exit" data report citing number of students who exit special education sent to DOE | July 19 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Student Exclusions reports for each instance of exclusion sent to DOE | July 19 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Transitional Bilingual Education Staff Data report sent to DOE, indicating number of TBE educators in districts (GL.c.71A) | July 19 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Year-End School Indicator Report on suspensions and retentions by grade, gender, race sent to DOE | July 19 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> SIMS End-of-Year data collection for individual students, sent to DOE | July 31 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> School and District "Report Cards" sent to parents as required by Title I of the ESEA of 2001 sent to DOE | August 30 |

Health, Safety and Student Conduct

- | | |
|---|-----------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Annual Five-year Asbestos Audits completed, to be placed in the principal's office | August 30 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> CORI checks on new hires completed (MGL c. 71, s. 38R) | August 30 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Radon testing completed in schools, as needed | August 30 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Water testing completed in schools, as needed | August 30 |

September -November

Administrative/Legal

- | | |
|--|--------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Administrative directory published, providing ongoing updating of school and district contact information | September 30 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Civil Rights Designated 504 Coordinator appointed for academic school year (603 CMR 26.00) | September 30 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Civil Rights and Equal Education notices sent to all staff, notifying of training dates (603 CMR 26.00) | September 30 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Employee/minimum wage information notice sent to all school employees | September 30 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> End-of-year Pupil and Financial Report submitted to DOE | September 30 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Local Consolidated Planning documents for <i>No Child Left Behind</i> sent to DOE | September 30 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> School Council elections for parent, teacher, and community representatives | September 30 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> School Instructional Costs Report sent to DOE | September 30 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> School Openings/Closings, notice report sent to DOE | |

COMPLETION/ DUE DATE

	September 30
<input type="checkbox"/> Statistical Data Forms for Title V Innovative Programs sent to DOE	September 30
<input type="checkbox"/> Student Records Notice to Parents: Annual notice regarding release of directory information (603 CMR 2.07(4)(a)) - <i>NB</i> : This can be included in the school/student handbook.	
<input type="checkbox"/> Data Collection reports sent to DOE	
<input type="checkbox"/> Education Reform School staff head count by race and gender	October 15
<input type="checkbox"/> Education Reform System staff head count by race and by gender	October 15
<input type="checkbox"/> Individual Private School Report	October 15
<input type="checkbox"/> School System Summary Staff (District FTE status x Certification Area)	October 15
<input type="checkbox"/> Math/Science/Engineering Indicators Report due to DOE	
<input type="checkbox"/> District Technology Plan updated and sent to DOE	October 15
<input type="checkbox"/> Return Drop-out reports submitted to DOE: Students over 16 who have left school permanently (MGL c. 76, s. 1)	October 15
<input type="checkbox"/> SIMS Oct. 1 Individual Student Data submitted to DOE	November 15

Health, Safety and Student Conduct

<input type="checkbox"/> Annual Evacuation Training for students (See Chapter 159 of the Acts of 2000, Section 363.)	October 30
<input type="checkbox"/> Annual Multi-hazard Evacuation Plan for each school completed	October 30
<input type="checkbox"/> Bus evacuation drills and vehicle evaluations conducted by chief of police	October 30
<input type="checkbox"/> Crisis/Evacuation Team for each school appointed by principals	October 30
<input type="checkbox"/> Schools' Multi-hazard Plans reviewed annually review by superintendent of schools, fire chief and police chief	October 30
<input type="checkbox"/> Sex education course information and opt-out information sent to parents/guardians (MGL c. 71, s. 32A)	October 30
<input type="checkbox"/> Student Handbook, published, including anti-hazing notice to students (MGL269, s.19 and 603 CMR 33.00)	October 30
<input type="checkbox"/> Nutrition Program Reports and Claim Forms (school lunch/breakfast) sent to parents/guardians	October 30
<input type="checkbox"/> Playground/PE safety check completed by chief of police and DP/W	October 30

December- March

Administrative/Legal

<input type="checkbox"/> Notification of Public Hearings on annual budget by School Committee	January-May
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- | | |
|--|------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Special Education Federal Count | January 15 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Data Collection reports submitted to DOE: | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Counts of School-Attending children (including Charter Schools and Regional Vocational/Technical Schools) | March 1 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Individual Professional Development plans leading to re-certification should be individually maintained | March 1 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Regional Student Advisory Council members appointed to the MA Board of Education (MGL C.15, S.1E) | March 1 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> School Charter Schools Claim Form completed by the school | March 1 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> SIMS March 1 Individual Student Data Collection | April 15 |

April-June

Administrative/Legal

- | | |
|--|----------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Curriculum Accommodation Plan (in-district activity, keep on file, not for submission) | April 15 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Education Accommodation Plans developed for students failing the MCAS and placed in student folders | April 15 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Advanced Placement student data submitted to DOE as Required by Title I, Section 1704 | May 15 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> District Professional Development Plan annually updated and sent to DOE (MGL c. 71, s. 38Q) | May 15 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Safe and Drug Free School data submitted to DOE for October Report to USED | May 15 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Title I Performance and Achievement data submitted to DOE for October Report to USED | May 15 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> State and Federal entitlement grants, competitive grants, and planning documents sent to DOE | June 1 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Evaluation of teachers and other educators completed (MGL c. 71, s. 38; 603 CMR 35.00) | June 15 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Revocations: Notice to Department regarding employee matters that might give cause for revocation of educator license (603 CMR 7.14(7)) | June 30 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> School Choice Participation vote by school committee certified and sent to DOE | June 30 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> School Improvement Plans for each school submitted to and approved by school committee (MGL c. 71, s. 59C) | June 30 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> K-12 Student Advisory Members appointed to local School Committee (MGL C.71, S.38M) | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> School Choice Claim Form submitted by receiving districts | June 30 |

Health, Safety and Conduct

- | | |
|--|---------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Child abuse reporting requirements sent to school personnel informing of their responsibilities (MGL c. 71, s. 37L) | May 15 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA) NCLB, Title IID, Sec.2414, notifications sent to parents and employees | June 30 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> E-Rate participation under Telecommunications Act of 1996 and FCC Order 97-1'57, Paragraph 573, Sec. 254 sent to | |

all employees

- | | |
|---|---------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Sexual Harassment policies reviewed, updated, and posted as needed | June 30 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Special Education reimbursement for Medicaid sent by districts | June 30 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Universal Health Precautions, reviewed annually with all staff | June 30 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Student Handbook Review by principal and school council and submit to DOE for filing (MGL c. 71, s. 37H) | June 30 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Fire drills completed annually by Fire Chief, bringing total to eight (8) drills each year | June 30 |



NEWS SEARCH

Keyword:

Target:

Dates:

 Past 30 days Past 90 days Date Range

Start:

End:



Monday, August 19, 2002

End of Year SIMS Data

To: Superintendents and Charter School Leaders

From: David P. Driscoll, Commissioner

Date: August 9, 2002

We have had a very successful end of year SIMS data collection. Nearly all districts transmitted their data by the last due date. We have begun processing the information and are posting back to you summaries of your district's data. It is imperative that you review this information and verify its accuracy. This data will be used to generate statistics on school dropouts and on the plans of high school graduates. We will also use this information to continue tracking the progress of the class of 2003 as well as other groups of students such as those in Transitional Bilingual Education.

The summaries are posted on the Department's secure portal, which is accessed through www4.doemass.org. Those staff in your district with the security role of MDCS for the district, not the school, will be able to access the files.

Corrections must be made by resubmitting your corrected SIMS data. Do not make corrections to the summary sheets. Department staff are also checking the data for students reported as enrolled in two or more districts. We will contact you if such a situation exists with your data. Please contact your field technologist if you have any questions or need assistance. Corrected data must be submitted by August 26th.

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Information Services

Fall 2002 SIMS and Directory Information

To: Superintendents and Charter School Leaders

From: David P. Driscoll, Commissioner

Date: August 20, 2002

SIMS

The next SIMS data collection will be in October. This data will be used for many important purposes, including the calculation of your district's foundation enrollment figures, the calculation of grant allocations, and the creation of student answer booklet labels for the 2003 MCAS administration. The memo posted to the [DOE website](#) outlines some of the changes we've made to the data coding to capture particular student populations.

Open/Closed Schools

Please notify Carolyn Faria (cfaria@doe.mass.edu, or 781-338-3667) of any schools that are opening or closing in your district, or any schools that are changing grade configuration. It is important that our files accurately reflect the composition of your district. Also, please inform us of any private schools that are opening or closing within the geographic boundaries of your district.

Directory Information

It is also important to make any necessary updates to district and school contact information, including any superintendent and principal staff changes. The updates should be made via the on-line Directory Administration application, which is accessed through the Department's [secure portal](#). The contact information is used for Department mailings. It is also available to the public on the [school and district profiles](#), which had over 21,000 visitors last month alone. Please check the profiles for your district and schools to make sure the contact information and other information provided there is accurate. If you have any questions contact Carolyn Faria (cfaria@doe.mass.edu, or 781-338-3667).

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Information Services

Student Information Management System (SIMS) and Foundation Enrollment

To: Superintendents and Charter School Leaders
 From: David P. Driscoll, Commissioner of Education
 Date: August 20, 2002

We have made substantial progress in the Student Information Management System (SIMS) and the many ways the student information can be utilized to inform decisions, report program information and streamline data collection. In an effort to further improve data accuracy and to reduce redundant reporting, we will be eliminating the Foundation Enrollment Report and relying on SIMS to provide the information collected therein. Beginning this fall, SIMS data will be used to calculate Chapter 70 state reimbursement.

In order for the SIMS data to replace the Foundation Enrollment report, a number of changes to the current system are necessary to capture specific grade levels and student populations. These changes have been communicated to your student software vendors and the modifications will be in place prior to the October 1, 2002 data collection.

1. The grade level codes of 13, 14, and PG will be removed, and the following grade level codes will be added (DOE016):

Code	Definition	Dependencies	Counted for Chapter 70 reimbursement
CT	Student is beyond grade 12 but participating in a Career and Technical Education program.		Post Graduate students Only (DOE035 = 10 or 11)
SP	Beyond grade 12 special education student.	DOE034>01 and is not 80	Yes

AO	(Aged Out) Special education student who has reached the maximum age for a public education and is no longer being educated by the district.	DOE034>01 and is not 80	No
KT	Full-time kindergarten, tuitioned - child attends school or school related activities at least 25 hours per week, and pays tuition.		Yes, but reimbursed as a half-time kindergarten pupil, not full-time.

2. The following SPED Placement Code will be added (DOE034):

Code	Definition	Dependencies	Counted for Chapter 70 reimbursement
05	General education student serving as a role model student in preK classes.		Yes

- Students who are receiving special education services through the public school system *but are educated in a private school at private expense or are being home-schooled* should not be reported in SIMS. However, districts should include the aforementioned students receiving services only on the December 1 Special Education data collection.
- Finally it will no longer be necessary for financially responsible districts to report students attending other public schools within Massachusetts. If a student is going out of district to a charter school, school choice district, vocational school or another district because of tuition agreements, the sending district no longer needs to report those students in SIMS. Districts need only report those sending students for whom the district is paying tuition to a private school, collaborative or out of state school.

If you have any questions regarding Chapter 70 reimbursement, please contact Roger Hatch in the Office of School Finance at 781-338-6527 or rhatch@doemass.org. If you have questions regarding SIMS, please contact Maureen Lovett at 781-338-6876 or mlovett@doemass.org.

Again, these changes will take place in the Fall of 2002. They do not impact your end of year reporting for the 2001-2002 school year.

Thank you for attention to this matter.



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Career & Technical Education

Career and Technical Education Report/SIMS CTE Data Training Sessions

To: Superintendents, Superintendent-Directors, CTE Directors
School Districts with Career and Technical Education Programs

From: David P. Driscoll, Commissioner of Education

Date: August 20, 2002

The Department of Education will provide training sessions in September to assist school districts in completing the annual Career and Technical Education (CTE) Report and the career and technical education field in the Department's Student Information Management System (SIMS). Every school district with a career and technical education program must complete both the CTE report and the CTE field in SIMS. The Career and Technical Education Report is due to the Department by October 31, 2002.

The presenters for these sessions will include staff from the Department's Career and Technical Education and Technology units and Jennifer Leonard of the Skills Library. The presentation will include:

- Career and Technical Education Report forms
- SIMS CTE definitions (field DOE035)
- Microsoft Access file for voluntary use in completing the CTE Report on diskette
- Microsoft Access file for voluntary local use in tracking CTE completers and follow-up status.

The training will be offered at least twice. One session will take place from 9:00 to noon on September 25 at Assabet Valley Regional Technical School in Marlboro. The training will also be offered from 9:00 to noon on September 26 at the Hogan Center at Holy Cross. Each of these sessions will be limited to 75 participants. If there is insufficient space for the number of interested participants, we will add an afternoon session at Assabet Valley on September 25. Directions to Assabet Valley and Holy Cross will be available on the [Career and Technical Education](#) page of the DOE website.

School districts may register up to three staff members for this training by completing the attached **registration form**  |  and returning it to:

Massachusetts Department of Education
Margie Roberts
Career and Technical Education
350 Main Street

Malden, MA 02148

You can fax the form to 781-338-3950 or e-mail it to mroberts@doe.mass.edu.

Suggested participants include career and technical education directors, staff responsible for completing the CTE Report and SIMS contacts. If you have questions concerning the training, you should contact your liaison at the Career and Technical Education unit. If you do not know your liaison's direct phone number, you can contact the CTE unit at 781-338-3949.

Registration Form  | 

- [Directions: Assabet Valley Vocational High School](#)
- [Directions: College of the Holy Cross - Hogan Center](#)

[Print View](#)



Department of Education Establishes Statewide Contract for Electronic Student Tutorial Services

**American Education Co., Edutron, MathMastery, Plato, Princeton Review, TestU
named in rollout of contract.**

The Massachusetts Department of Education has, along with the Operational Services Division, established a statewide contract to allow school districts to purchase electronic (Internet or integrated network software) tutorial services. These services are designed to supplement learning of the knowledge and skills contained in the Learning Standards of the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks.

These services, which are already used by many Massachusetts school districts, will determine a student's tutoring needs, address deficits and then indicate skill mastery or the need for further targeted work.

Vendors on this statewide contract are offering services to schools and districts:

- *At a discount from their standard pricing*
- *That have been qualified as being technically appropriate for Massachusetts schools*
- *That have been determined to be aligned to the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks.*

By buying services approved through a statewide contract, district business managers will enjoy the benefits of easier procurement.

The Department and the Operational Services Division have established this five-year contract to help promote the use of this

technology statewide, and to promote the Department's interest in making technically appropriate, Framework-aligned services readily available from the vendor community.

These services are intended to assist teachers in the education of their students, and will help to generate content for the individual student success plans required for each student who has not passed the MCAS. They will also help to create an action plan for parents, teachers and students.

To review the products and services offered, refer to both of the following resources:

- 1) *First, review the document titled the "OSD Update" relating to this contract.*
- 2) *Next, review the document titled: "E-Tutorial Contractors Qualified Under Statewide Contract 02DCAPM1."*

Both of these documents can be found at <http://www.comm-pass.com> by clicking on the "search" link at the bottom of the page and entering the contract number: 02DCAPM1.

For an e-mailed copy of these documents, send a request to softwarecontract@doe.mass.edu.

This contract may be expanded in the future, providing additional opportunities for vendors to participate and/or by adding more categories of electronic tutorial services.



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Tech Plan Update Electronic Forms

To: Superintendents and Charter School Leaders

From: David P. Driscoll, Commissioner of Education

Date: August 20, 2002

I would like to inform you that the *Tech Plan Update* electronic forms will be open from September 15, 2002 through October 31, 2002. These forms allow districts to update their technology plan data online.

As you know, in order to remain eligible for state and federal funds, as well as E-Rate discounts, school districts must have approved technology plans. The approval process is based on timely submission of the *Tech Plan Update*. The data submitted for the 2001-2002 fiscal year will be reviewed by Department staff to determine the progress districts have made in implementing their technology plans. Plan approval letters will be sent to districts after that review.

There are three forms in the *Tech Plan Update*: 1) the Data Collection Form, 2) the District Technology Profile Form, and 3) the Individual School Technology Profile Form. The questions on the electronic forms are aligned to the *Local Technology Plan Benchmark Standards for the Year 2003*, which can be found on the [Educational Technology website](#).

As in the past, the Department of Education is committed to working with school districts to meet the recommended benchmark standards. I thank you for your efforts in using technology to support student achievement. Please make sure that your *Tech Plan Update* is submitted by the October 31 deadline. If you have any questions, please contact Susan Hargrave at 781-338-6844 or shargrave@doe.mass.edu.



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General Educational Development (GED)

Survey of "Alternative" High School Completion Programs

August 15, 2002

Dear Superintendent of Schools:

The Department of Education is collecting information on all "alternative" high school completion programs that your school district may currently be running/sponsoring. We are particularly interested in programs that serve students who are not enrolled in the regular day program, i.e., evening high schools and adult / alternative / external diploma programs that serve students who dropped out. This effort is part of the Department's efforts to implement "**Keeping the Promise - Multiple Pathways to A High School Diploma**" that was issued by the Joint Committee on Educational Policy. This work needs to be completed by the fall, so that the Department can review the extent to which those programs do and do not meet program and graduation requirements as stipulated by Education Reform. Furthermore, we need to provide notice to high school seniors, their parents and guardians, teachers and school administrators about the pathways available to students who have not yet achieved a competency determination, which is required so that the district can award a high school diploma commencing in 2003.

The programs about which we are requesting information include the following (note that this does not include those programs that are currently for your "in-school" youth):

- *Adult / Alternative and/or External Diploma Programs for adults who are sixteen years or older and have dropped out of regular day school;*
- *Evening High School Programs for students who are sixteen years of age or older and who may or may not be considered to have "dropped out" of school.*

Please complete and return the **attached form** | by September 6th to:

Ruth Derfler, Director of GED and Alternative Adult Diploma Programs
Massachusetts Department of Education,
350 Main Street, Malden, Massachusetts 02148;
or, by fax to 781-338-3391; or, by email to rderfler@doe.mass.edu.

Thank you very much for your assistance.

Sincerely,



David P. Driscoll
Commissioner of Education

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Massachusetts Department of Education

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EVENTS CALENDAR

March 2003						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
26	27	28	29	30	31	1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31	1	2	3	4	5

Legal Holidays: Accommodation for Religious Observances

With this memo I am enclosing a [list of Massachusetts legal holidays and major religious holidays](#) for the 2002-2003, 2003-2004 and 2004-2005 school years. School officials have said these documents are useful in planning the school calendar, accommodating students and staff who observe religious holidays, and determining possible days of low attendance. For information on other religious holidays observed by members of religions represented in your school community, I encourage you to contact local clergy.

State and federal law require schools to make reasonable accommodation to the religious needs of students and employees in observance of holy days. Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 151B, section 4 (1)(A) addresses this issue with respect to employees. With respect to students, Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 151C, section 2B reads in relevant part as follows:

Any student in an educational or vocational training institution...who is unable, because of his religious beliefs, to attend classes or to participate in any examination, study or work requirement on a particular day shall be excused from any such examination or study or work requirement, and shall be provided with any opportunity to make up such examination, study or work requirement which he may have missed because of such absence on any particular day; provided, however, that such makeup examination or work shall not create an unreasonable burden upon such school. No fees of any kind shall be charged by the institution for making available to the said student such opportunity. No adverse or prejudicial effects shall result to any student because of his availing himself of the provisions of this section.

Schools may meet their obligation to accommodate students by excusing individual absences for religious observance, or by adjusting the school calendar to provide a school year of at least 180 school days, while taking into account possible days of low attendance due to religious holidays.

Please share this information with your school building administrators. We hope you will find it helpful.

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Education Laws and Regulations

Armed Services Recruiters' Requests for Student Information

To: School Superintendents, High School Principals and Leaders of Charter Schools and Collaboratives

From: David P. Driscoll, Commissioner of Education

Date: August 15, 2002

Many of you are receiving requests from armed forces recruiters asking for the names, addresses and telephone numbers of secondary school students for recruitment and scholarship purposes. You have asked us to clarify the law regarding release of this information from student records.

The new federal No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) contains a provision regarding the disclosure of secondary students' names, addresses and telephone listings to military recruiters and institutions of higher education. The National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) for Fiscal Year 2002 contains similar language. The United States Department of Education has stated that it is currently reviewing the provisions contained in NCLB and NDAA and expects to send guidance soon to school districts.

Both laws require all school districts that receive federal funds under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, as reauthorized by NCLB, to provide, upon request, the names, addresses and telephone listings of secondary students to military recruiters and institutions of higher education, provided that the school notifies parents and students of their right to request that this information not be released without their prior written consent and that the school complies with such requests.

The release of student record information is regulated by the federal Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), which applies to all schools that receive federal funds, and the Massachusetts Student Records Regulations. Both the federal and state student records regulations allow schools to release the names, addresses and telephone listings of students, as well as other "directory" information, without prior parental consent, provided that the school or district publishes notice of its policy to release such information, and notifies parents and "eligible students" (i.e., students age 14+ or in at least 9th grade) that they may request that this information not be released without their prior written consent. Therefore the release of students' names, addresses and telephone listings to military recruiters and institutions of higher education without prior consent, as required by NCLB and NDAA, is consistent with FERPA and the Massachusetts Student Records Regulations, provided schools notify parents and students of their right to request that this information not be released without their prior written consent.

The Department recommends the following to all school districts and secondary schools that receive federal funds:

1. Include in the student handbook, or in the routine information letter the school publishes under section 23.10(1) of the [Massachusetts Student Records Regulations](#), notice that the school will release the names, addresses and telephone listings of students to military recruiters and institutions of higher education upon request, as required by federal law, unless the parent or eligible student objects to such release.
2. Keep a record of any such objection that the school receives from a parent or eligible student, and comply with it.
3. Upon receipt of a request from armed services recruiters or institutions of higher education to provide the names, addresses and telephone listings of secondary school students for recruitment and scholarship purposes,
 - a. release the requested information from the student records (except for information on any student for whom the parent or eligible student filed an objection), as long as the school published the notice (per #1 above) during that school year.
 - b. if the school did not publish the notice (per #1 above) during that school year, it should do so at the time it receives the request from armed services recruiters or institutions of higher education. After the notice has been published, follow #3 (a) above.

I hope this information is of assistance. A copy of the applicable provision of NCLB is attached for your convenience.

**SEC. 9528(a), NO CHILD LEFT BEHIND ACT OF 2001.
ARMED FORCES RECRUITER ACCESS TO STUDENTS AND
STUDENT RECRUITING INFORMATION.**

(a) POLICY-

(1) ACCESS TO STUDENT RECRUITING INFORMATION- Notwithstanding section 444(a)(5)(B) of the General Education Provisions Act and except as provided in paragraph (2), each local educational agency receiving assistance under this Act shall provide, on a request made by military recruiters or an institution of higher education, access to secondary school students names, addresses, and telephone listings.

(2) CONSENT- A secondary school student or the parent of the student may request that the student's name, address, and telephone listing described in paragraph (1) not be released without prior written parental consent, and the local educational agency or private school shall notify parents of the option to make a request and shall comply with any request.

(3) SAME ACCESS TO STUDENTS- Each local educational agency receiving assistance under this Act shall provide military recruiters the same access to secondary school students as is provided generally to post secondary educational institutions or to prospective employers of those students.



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The Master Teacher Program The National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS)

Master Teacher Program

To: Superintendents, and Leaders of Charter Schools and Collaboratives

From: David P. Driscoll, Commissioner of Education

Date: August 21, 2002

Due to limited funding, the Department has temporarily suspended the Massachusetts Master Teacher Program and has modified the bonus payment schedule by issuing individuals who earned Master Teacher status for the 2001-2002 school year their \$5,000 bonus over the course of the next year. The Master Teacher Program is funded through the annual interest earned on the endowed *Teacher, Principal, and Superintendent Quality Endowment Fund*. The current decreases in interest rates have resulted in a decrease in the amount of funds that can be spent on the Master Teacher Program. I remain committed to this program and have worked with the Massachusetts Teachers' Association and the Massachusetts Federation of Teachers to discuss proposed amendments to the *Teacher, Principal, and Superintendent Quality Endowment Fund*. The proposed changes will allow the Department to spend down the principle of the endowment for 5 years and maintain the program and allow it to grow modestly. All parties are meeting with key legislators to endorse the proposed changes.

Though the Master Teacher Program has been suspended, the Department will continue to recognize the importance of the National Board certification process. As in the past, the Department will administer federal subsidy funds allocated by the National Board to support individuals interested in submitting an application to become involved in the certification process. These funds will help subsidize \$1,000 of the \$2,300 application fee for up to 151 candidates and will be administered on a first come, first served basis. In the past the Department has used the endowment fund to subsidize \$2,000 of the NBPTS \$2,300 application fee, however, due to the current status of the fund we can no longer provide subsidies for candidate applications.

I encourage you to continue supporting the Master Teacher Program as well as the National Board certification process at the local level. Your district's NCLB Title II, Part A funds may be used to cover the entire application fee or a portion thereof as well as to provide release time for candidate support and salary increases for individuals who have completed the certification process. I realize that you have already submitted your grant proposals, however, keep in mind that amendments can be made throughout the course of the school year. For more information about how the Title II, Part A funds can be used or about the National Board subsidy funds, please contact Kristin LaMonica for additional information, (Klamonica@doe.mass.edu, 781-338-3237).

Spread the Word is coordinated by:

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Department of Education
David P. Driscoll
Commissioner of Education

With support from
Governor Jane Swift



and

Barnes & Noble
New England Mobile Bookfair
Talbots • Region 1 - Fight for Literacy
and thousands of children across
Massachusetts



Place
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here

The Massachusetts Department of Education
Spread the Word
Attn: Lynn Boston
350 Main Street
Malden, MA 02148

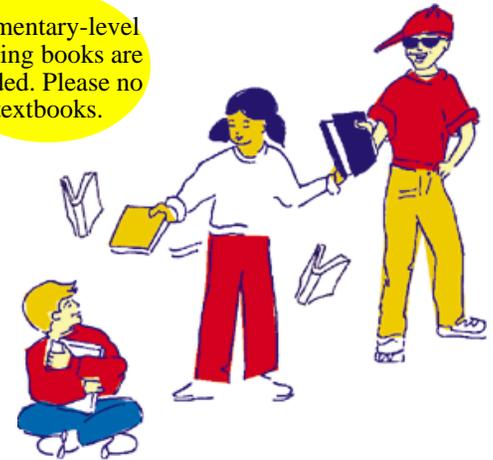
Inspire a child ... share the gift of reading.

kids-to-kids

Spread the Word

a book recycling program

Elementary-level
reading books are
needed. Please no
textbooks.

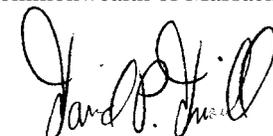


Dear Friends,

Thank you for your participation in this exciting and inspirational book distribution program. Spread the Word has won the prestigious [Council of State Governments \(CSG\) 2000 Innovations Award](#) and is recognized as one of the nation's most innovative government programs.

Thank you for helping us to achieve this major accomplishment.


Governor Jane Swift
Commonwealth of Massachusetts


Commissioner David P. Driscoll
Massachusetts Department of Education

August 2002

What is SPREAD THE WORD?

Many children in Massachusetts do not own books for entertainment, enlightenment, or for the expansion of their hopes, dreams, and futures. On the other hand, many Massachusetts families have bookshelves that are literally overflowing with extra books that their children have outgrown.

In 1995, the Governor's office initiated the Spread the Word Program to collect books from children and families who have extra books at home and distribute them to children who have few books at home.

In 2001, Massachusetts Governor Jane Swift expanded Spread the Word to include all elementary school children. To date, Spread the Word has collected and distributed over 763,000 books to more than 150,000+ children in the Commonwealth.

What about Public Libraries?

Public libraries are essential centers of learning in every community, but access to books at the library is not enough. The ownership of books is a critical feature of every child's intellectual development. Young children who own books will read them over and over again, memorizing the stories and learning to follow the words on each page.

By putting books into the homes of needy youngsters, Spread the Word will give children the opportunity to develop their reading and writing skills at home while knowing that these books are theirs to keep and treasure.

**OUR GOAL: 60,000 books to
12,000 students each school year**

Who gets the books?

The focus of Spread the Word is to provide books to elementary school children. Although most of the books given are recycled, we are happy to accept donations of new books, as well. Donors can be anyone at all, including individuals, Cub Scouts, Girl Scouts, businesses, women's groups, as well as public and private schools.

Recipients are determined by a question on the MCAS test that asks fourth graders how many books they have at home. The schools with the highest percentage of students who claim the lowest ownership receive the books. Recipient districts include Boston, Chelsea, Fall River, Holyoke, Lawrence, Lowell, New Bedford, Springfield and Worcester.

How are these books distributed?

Book drives run between September and June. Collectors screen the books for age-appropriateness and condition, then count, **sort by grade level**, and pack the gently used books in boxes. They contact the Department of Education who arrange to have the books picked up and transported to the recipient school. Elementary school students will then receive five books each to take home and keep. **Textbooks are not needed.**

How can I participate?

Anyone wishing to participate in Spread the Word may contact:
The Massachusetts Department of Education
Spread the Word Program
Attn: Lynn Boston
350 Main Street, Malden, MA 02148-5023
Tel: 781•338•3120
email: lboston@doe.mass.edu

Visit our Web site!

www.doe.mass.edu/stw/

SPREAD THE WORD REGISTRATION FORM

Our School/Organization is:

Our Contact Person is:

and can be reached at:

phone #: (____) ____ - ____

WRITE TO US

We want to hear from you!

- This is our first time collecting books for the Spread the Word Program.
- We have previously collected books for Spread the Word. I would like to say:



(please attach a note if you want to say more).

Please help to Spread the Word about this great program by copying, distributing and/or posting this brochure.

You can register via mail, email or phone