



- › BESE Home
- › Board Meeting Schedule
- › Board in Brief
- › Board Meeting Minutes
- › BESE Members
- › Board Documents
- › BESE Advisory Councils
- › Chairman's Statements

[District/School Administration](#) › [Administration](#) ›

The Massachusetts Board of Elementary and Secondary Education

Board Documents - Tuesday, February 26, 2008

Regular Meeting Agenda
 Massachusetts Board of Education
 Lilla G. Frederick Pilot Middle School
 270 Columbia Road
 Dorchester, MA 02121
 Tuesday, February 26, 2008
 9:00 a.m.

Comments from the Chairman
Comments from the Commissioner
Statements from the Public

Routine Business:

Approval of the Minutes of the January 22, 2008 Regular Meeting and the January 17, 2008 Special Meeting - Vote




Items for Discussion and Action:

1. [Commissioner's Salary](#) - **Discussion and Vote**
2. [Randolph Public Schools: Report and Recommendations on Next Steps](#) - **Discussion and Vote**
3. [Proposed Technical Amendments to Regulations on Underperforming Schools and Districts \(603 CMR 2.00\)](#) - **Initial Discussion and Vote to Solicit Public Comment**
4. [Educator Effectiveness: Overview of Statewide Initiatives in Preparation and Licensure](#) - **Discussion**
5. [Updated Massachusetts Technology Literacy Standards](#) - **Discussion and Possible Vote**
6. Charter Schools
 1. [Recommendations to Grant New Charters: Silver Hill Horace Mann Charter School, Dorchester Collegiate Academy Charter School, Hampden Charter School of Science, and International Charter School of Southeastern Massachusetts](#) - **Discussion and Vote**
 2. [Charter Renewal for New Leadership Charter School](#) - **Discussion and Possible Vote**

3. [Charter Amendments for Innovation Academy Charter School and Boston Preparatory Charter Public School](#) - **Discussion and Vote**

7. Approval of Grants - **Vote**

Other Items for Information:

8. Education-Related News Clippings
9. [Initial Report on Expanded Learning Time](#)
10. [Tough Choices, Tough Times: Executive Summary](#) 
11. [Chairman Reville's Testimony on Education Governance Proposals](#) 
12. [Proficiency, Opportunity and Efficiency: Superintendent's Acceleration Agenda for the Boston Public Schools](#)  [no longer available]
13. [Massachusetts Teaching, Learning and Leading Survey \(MassTeLLS\)](#) 
14. [Update on Six Commonwealth Priority Schools](#)
15. [Directions to the meeting](#)

[Briefing](#)

last updated: February 22, 2008

[E-mail this page](#) | [Print View](#) | [Print Pdf](#)



- › [BESE Home](#)
- › [Board Meeting Schedule](#)
- › [Board in Brief](#)
- › [Board Meeting Minutes](#)
- › [BESE Members](#)
- › [Board Documents](#)
- › [BESE Advisory Councils](#)
- › [Chairman's Statements](#)

[District/School Administration](#) › [Administration](#) ›

The Massachusetts Board of Elementary and Secondary Education

Commissioner's Salary

To: Members of the Board of Education

From: Paul Reville, Chairman, Board of Education

Date: February 26, 2008

The Board of Education voted on January 17, 2008, to appoint Mitchell Dan Chester as Commissioner of Education. Under Mass. General Laws chapter 15, section 1F, "the commissioner shall receive a salary to be set by the board." Following the Board's vote in January, I began discussions with Dr. Chester about setting a salary level for him as well as the terms and conditions of his employment. I am pleased to report that we have negotiated a very appropriate agreement, subject to the Board's approval. The terms are as set forth in the attached draft letter to Dr. Chester.

Given the significant responsibilities that Dr. Chester will be assuming as Commissioner, I am recommending that the Board set his salary at an annual rate of \$206,000, effective May 19, 2008. A motion to that effect is attached.

Attachments:

  Draft Letter from Paul Reville to Mitchell Chester

last updated: February 22, 2008

[E-mail this page](#) | [Print View](#) | [Print Pdf](#)



- › [BESE Home](#)
- › [Board Meeting Schedule](#)
- › [Board in Brief](#)
- › [Board Meeting Minutes](#)
- › [BESE Members](#)
- › [Board Documents](#)
- › [BESE Advisory Councils](#)
- › [Chairman's Statements](#)

[District/School Administration](#) › [Administration](#) ›

The Massachusetts Board of Elementary and Secondary Education

District Leadership Evaluation Report - Randolph Public Schools

To: Members of the Board of Education

From: Jeffrey Nellhaus, Acting Commissioner of Education

Date: February 18, 2008

In November 2007, the Board voted to designate the Randolph Public School District as an underperforming district. The Board further directed the Department to conduct a review of current leadership within the school community to determine whether the capacity to address identified problems and improve the quality of educational services to Randolph students was present. To that end, a team of three educational consultants appointed by the Department visited the district in December, where they reviewed data and documents provided by the Department and by the district and conducted a series of interviews with individuals and groups across the community. The District Leadership Evaluation Report written by that team is provided for your review and discussion at this month's Board meeting.

The report sets out a series of findings regarding the Superintendent's leadership in critical areas of need, such as the quality of teaching and learning, school climate and culture, discipline and safety and parent participation. The report also addresses the leadership challenges facing the Randolph School Committee and the role of municipal leaders and parents in supporting educational improvements in the district.

The report highlights the need for district and school leaders to establish a few key priorities and develop an immediate plan to focus on those priorities. There is a pressing need to take steps to bring the community together in support of its schools: elected officials, school and district leaders, town citizens and parents must agree to put past mistakes behind them and move forward with a specific plan built on open communication and compromise.

One issue of concern has been the stability of district leadership. Here is an update: On February 12, 2008, the Randolph School Committee approved a new three-year contract for Superintendent Richard Silverman. Both parties have signed the contract.

After reviewing the District Leadership Evaluation Report, I am making the following recommendations for the

Board's consideration:

- The Board will defer action on the question of chronic underperformance and state receivership for the district for a period of 120 days in order to allow district leaders, School Committee members and the Board of Selectmen to prepare a focused Turnaround Plan to guide next steps. This plan must have the demonstrated support of all the parties and must be submitted to the Department no later than May 30, 2008.
- The Commissioner will appoint a District Support Team to:
 - assist the parties noted above in their efforts to define priority actions to be taken during the next 24 months, and
 - assist in the community-wide, consensus-building effort that must be launched in order to create the conditions for positive change and collaboration.

The District Support Team would consist of 3-5 individuals who have sufficient knowledge of the current situation in Randolph and who have expertise in district leadership, management practices and building collaboration.

- The Department will convene the Randolph District Support Team to set out the objectives of the assignment, share pertinent information and consider the need to recruit other supporting parties whose contributions may be desirable in this effort. Those supporting parties may include a higher education partner, professional association representatives, parent organization advisers and others.
- Representatives from Randolph will be expected to present the Turnaround Plan to the Board at its June 24, 2008 meeting. If the Board agrees that the Plan is viable and there is evidence of a unified commitment in the community, the Board may approve the Plan at that time. If consensus among key stakeholder groups has not been reached, the Board will consider a decision to place the Randolph Public School District in receivership.

Superintendent Richard Silverman, School Committee Chairman Larry Azar and Board of Selectmen Chairman Paul Connors have been invited to attend the February Board meeting to hear the discussion and respond to questions.

Juliane Dow and Lynda Foisy will be present to respond to questions about the Department's role in the Randolph effort.

Enclosed is the Randolph Public School District Leadership Evaluation Report   and a suggested motion.

last updated: February 22, 2008

[E-mail this page](#) | [Print View](#) | [Print Pdf](#)



- › [BESE Home](#)
- › [Board Meeting Schedule](#)
- › [Board in Brief](#)
- › [Board Meeting Minutes](#)
- › [BESE Members](#)
- › [Board Documents](#)
- › [BESE Advisory Councils](#)
- › [Chairman's Statements](#)

[District/School Administration](#) › [Administration](#) ›

The Massachusetts Board of Elementary and Secondary Education

Proposed Technical Amendments to Regulations on Under-Performing Schools (603 CMR 2.00)

To: Members of the Board of Education

From: Jeffrey Nellhaus, Acting Commissioner of Education

Date: February 19, 2008

I am recommending that the Board of Education amend the Regulations on Under-Performing Schools and School Districts, 603 CMR 2.00, to incorporate the term "Priority 1 School" as equivalent to the term "chronically under-performing school" in the statute, Mass. Gen. Laws c. 69, § 1J. In practice, the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education has been using the term "Priority 1 Schools." This proposed amendment to the regulations would formalize it. As the Board has noted, at times the terminology of "under-performing" and "chronically under-performing" schools has been a distraction from the important business of improving teaching and learning in those schools. The proposed change would correspond to the amendment to the regulations that the Board adopted in October 2006, defining "Commonwealth Priority School" as equivalent to the term "under-performing school" used in the statute.

Attached is a copy of the regulations, indicating the amendments that are being proposed. These are technical changes and do not alter the substantive standards in the regulations. Later this year, we may propose amendments to the sections of the regulations dealing with school districts, but it makes sense to defer action on those provisions until the Legislature and the Administration have decided whether and how to change the structure of the Office of Educational Quality and Accountability.

I recommend that the Board review the proposed technical amendments and authorize me to disseminate them for public comment, in accordance with the Administrative Procedure Act. After the public comment period, we will bring the proposed amendments back to the Board later in the spring for a final vote.

Enclosure:   Proposed Technical Amendments to Regulations on Underperforming Schools and Districts (603 CMR 2.00)



- › [BESE Home](#)
- › [Board Meeting Schedule](#)
- › [Board in Brief](#)
- › [Board Meeting Minutes](#)
- › [BESE Members](#)
- › [Board Documents](#)
- › [BESE Advisory Councils](#)
- › [Chairman's Statements](#)

[District/School Administration](#) › [Administration](#) ›

The Massachusetts Board of Elementary and Secondary Education

Statewide Initiatives to Improve Educator Effectiveness

To: Members of the Board of Education

From: Jeffrey Nellhaus, Acting Commissioner of Education

Date: February 19, 2008

At the February 26th meeting, the Board of Education will resume its discussion of issues and initiatives related to educator effectiveness. This discussion will lay the foundation for the Board's consideration of proposals to strengthen and streamline our educator preparation, licensure and professional development systems later this spring.

Under state law, the Board establishes standards for certifying (licensing) teachers, administrators, and other educational personnel in public schools; adopts regulations concerning educator preparation and licensure; and approves the state plan for professional development of educational personnel. We issue guidance on these and many related areas, such as promoting the use of the professional standards for teachers and administrators as a basis for supervision and evaluation. Our work benefits from our collaboration with the Board's Educational Personnel Advisory Council. The advisory council is broadly representative of teachers, administrators, preparation institutions and others who are knowledgeable about and committed to improving educator quality at every level, especially in the areas of recruitment and retention, induction and mentoring, preparation program approval, and resources for educators.

At the February meeting, we will provide an overview of our current licensure system and highlight four statewide initiatives that are aimed at strengthening educator effectiveness in the Commonwealth:

- An Act Relative to Educator Excellence (H.451 / S.284)
- Governor Patrick's Readiness Project: Subcommittee on Recruiting and Retaining Educators
- The Teaching, Learning and Leading Survey
- Proposals developed by the Board's Educational Personnel Advisory Council

I have included for your review the paper, "Elements of a New System for Educator Effectiveness," which the Board

discussed last year. Our discussion this month will likely be brief since we have several other important items on our agenda. We will continue to address educator effectiveness initiatives at future meetings.

Attachment:   Elements of a New System for Educator Effectiveness in Massachusetts (Discussion Draft April 2007)

last updated: February 22, 2008

[E-mail this page](#) | [Print View](#) | [Print Pdf](#)

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[Search](#) · [Site Index](#) · [Policies](#) · [Site Info](#) · [Contact ESE](#)



- › [BESE Home](#)
- › [Board Meeting Schedule](#)
- › [Board in Brief](#)
- › [Board Meeting Minutes](#)
- › [BESE Members](#)
- › [Board Documents](#)
- › [BESE Advisory Councils](#)
- › [Chairman's Statements](#)

[District/School Administration](#) › [Administration](#) ›

The Massachusetts Board of Elementary and Secondary Education

Review and Approval of Updated Massachusetts Technology Literacy Standards

To: Members of the Board of Education

From: Jeffrey Nellhaus, Acting Commissioner of Education

Date: February 15, 2008

I recommend that the Board of Education review and approve the updated *Massachusetts Technology Literacy Standards*. The updated standards are enclosed for your review.

Background

Mass. Gen. Laws c. 69, § 1D authorizes the Board to "direct the commissioner to institute a process to develop academic standards for the core subjects of mathematics, science and technology, history and social science, English, foreign languages and the arts." The Board adopted and published the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks under this authority.

The statute further provides: "The board may also include in the standards a fundamental knowledge of technology education and computer science and keyboarding skills." Accordingly, in October 2001 the Board approved and published the *Massachusetts Recommended PreK-12 Instructional Technology Standards*, defining what K-12 students should know and be able to do in order to use technologies for learning. The intent was and is to integrate teaching of the standards into the curriculum, rather than teaching "technology literacy" as a separate subject. The updated *Massachusetts Technology Literacy Standards* document that we are presenting this month is a revision of the document that the Board approved in October 2001.

Starting in 2007, the federal No Child Left Behind Act requires states to report 8th grade technology literacy on a yearly basis. The Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education is reporting this through its annual EdFacts report to the U.S. Department of Education. We gather the information through the annual technology plan data collection. School districts report students' technology proficiency using the state's technology literacy standards.

Purpose of the Revision

Technology has changed substantially since 2001. Massachusetts students need to graduate knowing how to use technology tools skillfully, ethically, and responsibly. The purpose of this document is to assist schools in teaching students how to use technology to learn the content of the curriculum and to be well prepared for higher education, careers, and adult life. These technology literacy skills will help students function effectively in a world where technologies are constantly changing and information grows ever more abundant.

Key Changes in the Updated Standards

In this revision we have made four key changes to the 2001 document:

- The revised document focuses on the research, problem-solving, and communication skills that are recommended by the Partnership for 21st Century Skills in its policy paper, *The Road to 21st Century Learning*. The policy paper is available online at: http://www.21stcenturyskills.org/images/stories/otherdocs/p21up_Policy_Paper.pdf. The Partnership is a national network of states, businesses, and other organizations. In June 2007, Governor Deval Patrick announced that Massachusetts has become a leadership state in this network.
- The revised document devotes more attention to digital citizenship, ethics, society, and safety. It includes clear guidelines for students to be responsible in the use of technology, to understand general rules for safe Internet practices, to understand federal and state laws regarding computer crimes, and to exhibit leadership for digital citizenship.
- The revised document groups specific technology skills under four grade spans: K-2, 3-5, 6-8, and 9-12, instead of three grade spans.
- The title has been changed from *The Massachusetts Recommended PreK-12 Instructional Technology Standards* to *Massachusetts Technology Literacy Standards*.

Process for the Revision

In May 2006, the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education collaborated with the Massachusetts Technology Leadership Council and the Board's Educational Technology Advisory Council to bring together a group of educators from higher education, K-12 school districts, and educational organizations to review and update the 2001 document. The working group reviewed, compared, and evaluated a number of national, state, and local standards documents in order to ensure that the Massachusetts standards would be as comprehensive as possible.

In October 2006, the Department shared the draft of the updated standards with business representatives from the Massachusetts Technology Leadership Council. In addition, over 300 educators across the Commonwealth had an opportunity to review and comment on the draft at two roundtable discussion meetings in January 2007. The Department of Elementary and Secondary Education has posted drafts of the standards on our website since 2006 so that educators and others could submit comments and suggestions to the Department using electronic feedback forms and e-mail. We have reviewed all the feedback and made revisions to the updated standards where necessary. At the November 2007 meeting of the Educational Technology Advisory Council, the members voted to endorse the

document that we are now presenting to the Board.

Next Steps

I am pleased to present the revised standards to the Board for review and approval. The Department has collaborated with a wide range of representatives from the education, business, and technology sectors to update the standards in order to reflect 21st century skills as well as current ethical guidelines. These revised standards have been subject to extensive review and public comment. Because the document has been well vetted and the revisions are relatively minor, the Board could vote to approve the updated standards at this month's meeting.

With the Board's approval of the standards, the Department will publicize the updated standards and will work with school districts, organizations, and businesses to support professional development for teachers to assist them in integrating the teaching of technology skills into the general curriculum. We will make available federal technology grants for schools to use for professional development and to disseminate promising practices in the teaching and assessment of these standards. The Department will also develop guidelines to help schools and districts incorporate the standards into their technology planning.

If you have any questions about the updated *Massachusetts Technology Literacy Standards*, we would be pleased to respond.

Enclosure:   Updated Massachusetts Technology Literacy Standards

last updated: February 22, 2008

[E-mail this page](#) | [Print View](#) | [Print Pdf](#)



- › BESE Home
- › Board Meeting Schedule
- › Board in Brief
- › Board Meeting Minutes
- › BESE Members
- › Board Documents
- › BESE Advisory Councils
- › Chairman's Statements

District/School Administration › Administration ›

The Massachusetts Board of Elementary and Secondary Education

Charter School Applications-Recommendations for Awarding New Charters

To: Members of the Board of Education

From: Jeffrey Nellhaus, Acting Commissioner of Education

Date: February 15, 2008

In this charter application cycle, the Department received ten prospectuses in August 2007. Based upon the results of the prospectus review, five applicant groups were invited to submit final applications and did so on November 13, 2007. We have concluded our review of the final applications for public school charters. I am recommending the awarding of four new charters in this application cycle.

Included in this packet are the summaries of the applications we are recommending for charters and a motion to grant one Horace Mann charter and three Commonwealth charters. The applicant group not receiving a charter will have an opportunity to receive feedback and may reapply in next year's application cycle if additional enrollment is possible under the 9% of net school spending cap. In this packet you will also find an overview of the review process, including a list of all submitted applications, a list of reviewers, the final application review criteria, and a schedule of public hearings. The packet also includes the written record of the interview with the applicant group, data on the overall student performance of its composite proposed sending district, information related to net school spending in each of the proposed districts, and copies of written comments submitted to the Charter School Office by superintendents and public officials. Copies of all written public comment are available at your request. The full text of the final applications is available on the Department's website at: <http://www.doe.mass.edu/news/news.asp?id=3800>.

Based upon the results of our review, I recommend that the Board of Education award the following charters:

Silver Hill Horace Mann Charter School

Location: Haverhill

Number of Students: 580
Grade level: K-5
Opening year: 2008

Dorchester Collegiate Academy Charter School

Location: Boston
Number of students: 240
Grade levels: 4-12
Opening year: 2009

Hampden Charter School of Science (Regional)

Location: within region
Districts in region: Chicopee, Ludlow, Springfield, and West Springfield
Number of students: 350
Grade levels: 4-12
Opening year: 2009

International Charter School of Southeastern Massachusetts (Regional)

Location: Brockton
Districts in region: Abington, Avon, Bridgewater-Raynham, Brockton, East Bridgewater, Easton, Holbrook, Middleborough, Randolph, Stoughton, West Bridgewater, Weymouth, and Whitman-Hanson
Number of students: 1,300
Grade levels: K-12
Opening year: 2008

The charter school statute allows for a total of 120 charter schools: forty-eight Horace Mann and seventy-two Commonwealth. Fifty-four Commonwealth charter schools are currently in operation, and eighteen Commonwealth charters remain available. Seven Horace Mann charter schools are in operation and forty-one Horace Mann charters remain available.

If you have any questions or require additional information, please contact Jeff Wulfson, Associate Commissioner, at 781 338-6500, Mary Street, Director of Charter Schools, at 781 338-3200, or me.

Attachments:

 Overview of the Review Process

 List of Submitted Applications

List of Prospectus and Final Application Reviewers

 Summary of Final Application Review Criteria

 Schedule of Public Hearings



Information on applications recommended for a charter:

Silver Hill Horace Mann Charter School

  Charter Applicant Information Sheet



  Application Summary

  Proposed Board of Trustees

  Summary of Public Comment



  Interview Record

Dorchester Collegiate Academy Charter School

  Charter Applicant Information Sheet



  Application Summary

  Proposed Board of Trustees

  Summary of Public Comment



  Interview Record

Hampden Charter School of Science

  Charter Applicant Information Sheet

  Application Summary

  Proposed Board of Trustees

  Summary of Public Comment



  Interview Record

International Charter School of Southeastern Massachusetts

  Charter Applicant Information Sheet

  Application Summary

  Proposed Board of Trustees

  Summary of Public Comment

  Interview Record

  Summary of Public Comment on Applicant Not Recommended

  MCAS Performance and Net School Spending of Proposed Sending Districts

last updated: February 22, 2008

[E-mail this page](#) | [Print View](#) | [Print Pdf](#)

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[Search](#) · [Site Index](#) · [Policies](#) · [Site Info](#) · [Contact ESE](#)



- › [BESE Home](#)
- › [Board Meeting Schedule](#)
- › [Board in Brief](#)
- › [Board Meeting Minutes](#)
- › [BESE Members](#)
- › [Board Documents](#)
- › [BESE Advisory Councils](#)
- › [Chairman's Statements](#)

[District/School Administration](#) › [Administration](#) ›

The Massachusetts Board of Elementary and Secondary Education

Charter Renewal - New Leadership Charter School

To: Members of the Board of Education

From: Jeffrey Nellhaus, Acting Commissioner of Education

Date: February 15, 2008

This month, the Board will discuss the charter renewal application of New Leadership Charter School (NLCS). The charter school regulations (at 603 CMR 1.12(1)) require that applicants for renewal of a charter be notified of the Board's decision no later than March 1. If the Board would like to discuss the renewal this month and wait until the March meeting to vote, the Board should waive the regulation that sets the March 1 deadline. Accordingly, enclosed is a motion to waive 603 CMR 1.12(1). Alternatively, the Board may choose to waive the provision of its bylaws, Article II, Section 7, that calls for discussion at one meeting and a vote at a subsequent meeting, in order to discuss and vote on this renewal at its meeting on February 26, 2008.

New Leadership Charter School

New Leadership Charter School (NLCS), a Horace Mann charter school, is located in Springfield. Under the charter school statute, a Horace Mann charter school is a public school operated under a charter approved by the local school committee and by the local collective bargaining agent, with the charter granted by the Board of Education. Horace Mann charter schools are operated and managed by a board of trustees independent of the school committee that approved the school.

The school opened in 1998 and had its charter renewed in 2003. It is chartered to serve grades 6 through 12 with a maximum enrollment of 375 students. In 2007-08, NLCS is serving approximately 490 students, which is approximately 115 students over its enrollment cap, in grades 6 through 12. The school draws 100% of its students from Springfield. The mission of NLCS is "to develop young people in the sixth through twelfth grades morally, mentally, and physically; and to imbue them with the highest ideals of duty, honor, and loyalty. Graduates will be academically prepared to attend the college or university of their choice. They will embody three cardinal principles of leadership: vision, integrity, and compassion."

Recommendation for Renewal

New Leadership Charter School has seen limited success over the first decade of its operation. The school is in Corrective Action for English language arts (ELA) and Restructuring for mathematics. Simply stated, this means that too few students in the school are achieving proficiency or approaching proficiency to meet annual performance targets. A number of fiscal, facility, and leadership issues also challenge the school. These problems notwithstanding, some improvements have been evidenced over the past two years:

- An instructional leader was hired in 2005 and a new school leader was hired in 2006.
- The school adopted a curriculum in core content areas.
- The school made adequate yearly progress in ELA and mathematics in the aggregate and for subgroups in 2007. It will move out of accountability status if it makes AYP in 2008.
- The school's attendance rate has ranged between 90.6% and 92.4% between 2003 and 2007. The four-year graduation rate in 2006 was 58.8% with a subsequent five-year rate of 76.5%. In 2007, the four-year graduation rate was 81.5%. The school reported, in 2006-07, that 96% of the students in its senior class were accepted into college.
- There is continuing parent and community support for the school, as evidenced by its increasing enrollment as well as the approval of the school committee and the local collective bargaining unit for renewal of the charter.

Accordingly, it is my recommendation that the Board of Education renew the school's charter with conditions. The conditions outlined later in this memorandum call for major improvements in several areas, including:

- academic performance by making Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) in 2008 and 2009;
- organizational viability by stabilizing and improving fiscal, facility, and governance issues; and
- faithfulness to the school's charter by providing evidence of consistent implementation of the leadership component of its mission.

Basis of Recommendations Regarding the Renewal of Charters

The charter school regulations state that "[t]he decision by the Board to renew a charter shall be based upon the presentation of affirmative evidence regarding the success of the school's academic program; the viability of the school as an organization; and the faithfulness of the school to the terms of its charter" 603 CMR 1.12. Consistent with the regulations, the recommendations regarding renewal are based upon the Department's evaluation of the school's performance in these areas. In its review, the Department has considered both the school's absolute performance at the time of the application for renewal and the progress the school has made during the first four years of the current charter.

The summary document that follows this memorandum was prepared for you as a compilation of the school's record for the term of this charter. The accountability process for charter schools recognizes that in exchange for increased freedom, a school must demonstrate results within the term of its five-year charter or risk non-renewal. The evidence gathered in the attached Summary of Review is further summarized below.

I. Academic Success

- The school made Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) in the aggregate in English language arts (ELA) and mathematics and for subgroups in ELA in 2007.
- The school was identified for Corrective Action in ELA and Restructuring-Year 2 in math. In January 2005, the Commissioner determined that the school was Underperforming after a panel review conducted by the Department's office of Accountability and Targeted Assistance (ATA). New Leadership administrators, board members, and teachers participated in performance improvement mapping (PIM) and school improvement planning with support from ATA.
- The school has demonstrated persistently low rates of academic proficiency, despite notable improvement in 2007:
 - In ELA, 50% or fewer students reached proficiency in all tested grades for all years from 2003 to 2007;
 - In math, fewer than 20% of students have achieved proficiency for all grades in all years, with the exception of grade 10 in 2006 (30%) and 2007 (37%).
- An instructional leader was hired in the 2005-06 school year, following a significant period of time in which the school lacked instructional leadership.
- The school also hired a new head of school in 2006.
- The school lagged in developing and implementing curriculum and in aligning curriculum with the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks. Curriculum was not fully developed until the end of Year 9, when the school finalized adoption of the Springfield Public Schools' curriculum in all core content areas.
- The school has not consistently used internal or external assessment instruments other than MCAS during this second charter term that might provide additional evidence of academic success.

II. Organizational Viability

- Unplanned deficits were recorded every year from FY03 to FY06; a surplus of \$60,391 is expected for FY07.
- The school's FY08 budget is based on an enrollment of 525 students, but enrollment as of October 1, 2007 was 490.
- The last audit indicates the school's net assets at negative \$428,818 on June 30, 2006.
- The school has delayed payments to vendors and is making only interest payments on an outstanding \$199,000 line of credit, based on information contained in the Renewal Inspection Report.
- The Department has not yet received the school's FY07 audit, which was due on or before January 1, 2008 (per M.G.L. c71 § 89 (hh)).
- The school's board of trustees and administrative leadership did not consistently take the initiative to address persistent problems, including inadequate instructional leadership, inadequate curriculum and standards, poor MCAS performance, recurring fiscal issues, and the need for a Memorandum of Understanding with the Springfield Public Schools outlining the relationship with the district, including the basis for tuition income and provision of services.
- The school's current facility is not adequate to support the educational program.

III. Faithfulness to Charter

- The school shows evidence of success in members of its graduating classes being accepted to college (part of the school's mission). In its 2006-07 Annual Report, the school states that 96% of the 28 students in the 12th grade were accepted to college.
- The school demonstrates inconsistent implementation of the character education and leadership elements of its mission.

- The school currently enrolls 490 students, which exceeds the charter's enrollment limit of 375 students.
- The school has not provided a 230-day school year as proposed in its charter; it provided a 180-day school year in 2006-07 after Department intervention to ensure compliance with the minimum state standard.
- The Department's March 2007 Coordinated Program Review found:
 - several ongoing programmatic issues related to the implementation of special education;
 - non-implementation of criteria related to English Language Learner identification, assessment, or services for Limited English Proficient students;
 - the school's required Corrective Action Plan is overdue.
- The Renewal Inspection Report from October 2007 noted that the school provides inclusion and pull-out services for students with disabilities and operates a Student Teacher Assistance Team. The report also noted that some staff had been trained to perform language proficiency testing of potentially limited English proficient students, but indicated that actual assessments had not yet been performed.
- The school did not operate with or provide evidence of progress against a required Accountability Plan throughout the charter term.

Conditions for Renewal

I recommend that the following conditions be imposed on renewal of the charter for New Leadership Charter School in accordance with General Laws chapter 71, section 89, and 603 CMR 1.00:

1. No later than March 31, 2008, New Leadership Charter School shall submit all of the following items to the Charter School Office at the Department:
 - A charter school Accountability Plan, including goals and annual benchmarks regarding academic success, organizational viability, and faithfulness to charter. The Accountability Plan must be aligned to the school's current District Plan for School Intervention and School Improvement Plan, and must include as goals that the school will annually achieve Adequate Yearly Progress in the aggregate and for all statistically significant subgroups in English language arts and mathematics.
 - All relevant amendments to its charter, as determined through work with the Charter School Office, in accordance with 603 CMR 1.11.
 - The bylaws of the board of trustees.

The School shall work with the Charter School Office to receive approval of these items by the Department no later than June 30, 2008.

2. No later than June 30, 2008, New Leadership Charter School shall submit all required documentation and must provide evidence that it has taken corrective actions required by the Department's Program Quality Assurance Unit based upon the most recent Coordinated Program Review of the School.
3. By December 2009, New Leadership Charter School shall demonstrate that it is an academic success by:
 - providing evidence to the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education that the school has met or is making substantial progress toward meeting all benchmarks in its 2008-2013 Accountability Plan; and
 - making Adequate Yearly Progress in the aggregate and for all statistically significant subgroups in English language arts and mathematics in 2008 and 2009.
4. By January 2010, New Leadership Charter School shall demonstrate significant improvement in its financial

condition in both FY08 and FY09 as evidenced by:

- unqualified audit opinions with no material weakness findings;
 - annual surpluses as determined by audited income statements;
 - current assets exceeding current liabilities as determined by audited balance sheets; and
 - positive unrestricted net assets balances.
5. By December 2009, New Leadership Charter School shall provide evidence, written and as documented through the site visit process, of consistent implementation of the leadership component of its mission, integrated across the school and school community.
 6. By September 30, 2008, the New Leadership Charter School Board of Trustees shall have received approval from the Commissioner for the minimum number of members required in the approved bylaws of the school through the identification and recruitment of additional members who bring appropriate educational and financial expertise to the school. Requests for approval must be submitted to the Department no later than September 1, 2008.
 7. By January 2010, New Leadership Charter School and the Springfield Public Schools shall complete all activities necessary to permit a relocation of the school to an adequate, programmatically accessible facility no later than September 2010. These activities include, but are not limited to, the School conducting all necessary property acquisition, fundraising, and negotiations.

These conditions give the school until January of 2010 to demonstrate satisfactory progress through annual results from the MCAS, site visits by the Charter School Office, information submitted by the school in its annual reports, and other means as necessary.

Enrollment Cap

As noted earlier, the school currently has an enrollment of approximately 490 students, significantly above the 375-student cap set by the Board of Education at the time of the school's last charter renewal. The school requested an amendment to its charter in March 2006 to increase its maximum enrollment to 525 students, but Commissioner Driscoll declined to take the request to the Board due to the school's Underperforming designation. No further action was taken at that time.

I recommend that the Board renew the school's charter with an enrollment cap of 500 students. This will allow the school to maintain its current level of enrollment, and recognizes that any requirement to reduce enrollment will exacerbate the school's financial problems.

Enclosed is the Department's Summary of Review, which summarizes information from a number of sources, including Charter School Office site visits in the school's seventh, eighth, and ninth years; visits facilitated by the Department's Accountability and Targeted Assistance (ATA) unit related to the school's identification as Underperforming, the school's annual reports and financial audits; information from the Department's Program Quality Assurance (PQA) unit; the renewal inspection report prepared under contract to the Office of Education Quality and Accountability (EQA); and other relevant documents. If you need copies of any of these source documents, or any other information, please contact me, Associate Commissioner Jeff Wulfson, or Director of Charter Schools Mary Street.

Enclosure:   Summary of Review

last updated: February 22, 2008

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- › [BESE Home](#)
- › [Board Meeting Schedule](#)
- › [Board in Brief](#)
- › [Board Meeting Minutes](#)
- › [BESE Members](#)
- › [Board Documents](#)
- › [BESE Advisory Councils](#)
- › [Chairman's Statements](#)

[District/School Administration](#) › [Administration](#) ›

The Massachusetts Board of Elementary and Secondary Education

Charter Schools - Approval of Charter Amendments for Boston Preparatory Charter Public School and Innovation Academy Charter School

To: Members of the Board of Education

From: Jeffrey Nellhaus, Acting Commissioner of Education

Date: February 19, 2008

Pursuant to the Charter School Regulations, 603 CMR 1.11(1), the Board of Education must approve major changes in the material terms of a school's charter. Boston Preparatory Charter Public School requests approval to fully expand its grade span to include grade 12 as proposed in its original charter application. Innovation Academy Charter School requests approval to become a regional charter school and to move the location of its facility from Chelmsford to Tyngsborough. I recommend that the Board approve these requests. Details are provided below.

As required by 603 CMR 1.11(5) for requests that seek to change a charter school's grade span, the municipality of its location, or the districts specified in its region, comment was solicited from the superintendents in the school districts within each charter school's district or proposed region and is summarized below. Copies of the letters received from superintendents are also attached.

Boston Preparatory Charter Public School

The Board of Trustees of Boston Preparatory Charter Public School (BPCPS) requests approval for a charter amendment to fully expand its grade span to include grade 12. The school was originally chartered in February of 2003 to serve a maximum of 300 students in grades 6 through 11. BPCPS opened its doors in 2004 to sixth graders and has expanded by one grade per year. In October of 2005, the Board approved an amendment to the school's charter to increase its maximum enrollment to 350 students. The school currently serves students in grades 6 through 9. This amendment request would allow the school to serve students through grade 12 as proposed in its original charter application.

Superintendent comment: The superintendent of the Boston Public Schools did not submit comment regarding this amendment request.

Innovation Academy Charter School

Innovation Academy Charter School is currently chartered to serve the district of Chelmsford. The Board of Trustees of Innovation Academy Charter School (IACS) requests approval for two charter amendments: (1) to become a regional charter school serving the districts of Billerica, Chelmsford, Dracut, Groton-Dunstable, Littleton, Lowell, Tewksbury, Tyngsborough, and Westford; and (2) to relocate the school's facilities from Chelmsford to Tyngsboro. The first amendment request must be approved for the second request to be approved.

IACS opened in 1996 and most recently had its charter renewed for a third, five-year charter term that expires on June 30, 2011. In April of 2006, the Board of Education granted the school's request to amend its charter to expand from a grade 5-8 middle school serving 300 students to a grade 5-12 middle-high school serving a total of 600 students. The school opened its high school this fall with forty-nine students in grade 9 in a second Chelmsford facility. The Board of IACS hopes to unite both middle school and high school campuses in a new facility in Tyngsborough and to formalize the current regional make up of its student body. IACS currently serves 347 students in grade 5 through 9: 124 (36%) of these students come from Chelmsford; 214 (62%) come from the other districts listed in the proposed region; and the remaining nine students (2%) come from seven other school districts.

IACS is currently working on the details of a purchase and sales agreement to acquire a large Tyngsborough property that would allow the school to fully expand in the same facility and provide access to playing fields and other outdoor educational opportunities that are currently not available to its students.

Superintendent comment: The superintendent of the Chelmsford Public Schools expressed no objection to the amendments requested by IACS. The superintendent of the Dracut Public Schools expressed opposition to the regionalization and move of IACS because it would negatively impact the district's budget and its ability to provide adequate services for Dracut Public Schools students. The superintendent of the Tyngsborough Public Schools and Tyngsborough School Committee question whether the regionalization of IACS would create a more diverse community of students due to the similar racial and income demographics shared by Tyngsborough and Chelmsford. They also express concern that a move to Tyngsborough by IACS would have a negative financial impact on the Tyngsborough Public Schools, particularly in relation to their obligation to provide transportation to Tyngsborough residents. (The Tyngsborough Teachers Association requests the amendment requests of IACS be denied for similar reasons)

The Department has reviewed these requests and they appear reasonable and consistent with the charter school statute and regulations. If you have questions regarding these amendments or require additional information, please contact Jeff Wulfson, Associate Commissioner, at 781- 338-6500; Mary Street, Director of Charter Schools, at 781-338-3200; or me.

Enclosures: Correspondence from Boston Preparatory Charter Public School

Correspondence from Innovation Academy Charter School
Superintendent Comment re: Innovation Academy Charter School

last updated: February 22, 2008

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- › [Board Meeting Schedule](#)
- › [Board in Brief](#)
- › [Board Meeting Minutes](#)
- › [BESE Members](#)
- › [Board Documents](#)
- › [BESE Advisory Councils](#)
- › [Chairman's Statements](#)

[District/School Administration](#) › [Administration](#) ›

The Massachusetts Board of Education

Evaluation of the Expanded Learning Time Initiative: Year One Report, 2006-2007

Executive Summary

Ensuring that all students in the United States achieve academic proficiency is at the forefront of today's domestic policy agenda, and over the past decade there has been a heavy emphasis on standards and accountability as a way to achieve this goal. Responding to the call to action, many districts and schools are undertaking reform initiatives that challenge traditional images of public education. Providing additional instructional time-in the school day and year-is one reform initiative that holds promise to help achieve the desired goals. With additional time devoted to teaching and learning, schools may be able to attain the ultimate goal of universal proficiency.

The Massachusetts Expanded Learning Time Initiative

In 2005, the Massachusetts state legislature authorized funding for the Expanded Learning Time (ELT) Planning and Early Implementation Grant program as a way to further its longstanding commitment to improving student outcomes and reducing the achievement gap.

The ELT Planning and Early Implementation Grant program was created to "provide resources for districts to plan the innovative redesign of selected schools that will offer challenging, research-based, and varied learning experiences focused on raising student achievement."¹ The paramount requirement was that redesigned schools must expand their days and/or year to include 30 percent more time than their previous schedules. Further, three specific objectives were set out for use of the additional time:

- provide more instructional opportunities in math, literacy, science, and other core subjects to support student achievement;
- integrate enrichment opportunities into student learning; and
- provide educators with increased opportunities to plan and to participate in professional development.²

Ten schools in five districts successfully planned for ELT and were ultimately awarded Implementation Grants to begin operating their expanded schedules in September 2006.³ The awards to individual schools ranged from \$195,000 to \$1,527,500, amounting to an additional \$1,300 per enrolled student, which represents an increase of

between five and 12 percent of the districts' regular per pupil expenditures.

The Evaluation of Expanded Learning Time

The evaluation of ELT is a three-year study that is being conducted as two interrelated parts—a planning and implementation component that explores the early decision-making phases and subsequent execution of ELT programs in the funded districts and schools, and an outcomes component that examines the outcomes of ELT for districts, schools, teachers, and students. Ultimately, the implementation and outcomes components will be linked to determine if the approaches to implementation are related to the outcomes achieved.

The Year One report presents findings in two parts. The first part addresses the planning and early implementation phases for the first cohort of Expanded Learning Time (ELT) schools (Cohort 1) and is primarily descriptive. Planning and implementation data were collected using interviews and focus groups with school and district administrators, teachers, parents, and community partners, as well as teacher and student surveys developed and administered by Massachusetts 2020.

The second part of the report presents a look at early outcomes for the first cohort of ELT schools. The outcomes component of the evaluation utilizes a matched comparison design, in which extant data for ELT schools are examined relative to their matched comparison schools. Using a well-executed matched comparison design will allow us to suggest that differences observed between ELT schools and their matched comparison schools are attributable to the ELT program in individual schools. We found that the student and teacher populations in the ELT and matched comparison schools are comparable on specific characteristics of interest over time with only minor, non-statistically significant changes in the first year of ELT, which is important for the integrity of future student achievement analyses.

Major Findings

The 10 Cohort 1 schools started out with enthusiasm, learned some important lessons along the way, and made plans to tweak and refine their initial plans to continue their participation for the 2007-08 school year. Although survey results suggest that teachers and students had high expectations in the fall and somewhat less enthusiasm in the spring, overall our interview findings suggest that despite some criticisms and unanticipated logistical issues, the early implementation of ELT has been successful. Teachers, principals, parents, and community partners continue to be supportive of the idea of expanded learning time and embrace it in concept, even if there are some challenges to work out in its execution.

Our analysis of the implementation and early outcomes data rendered the following notable findings:

- By the end of the first year of ELT implementation, schools had made the most progress in adding instructional time in core academics, which is among the initiative's paramount objectives aimed at improving student achievement. All schools were also able to create new or enhance existing enrichment offerings with the expanded day. Overall, schools had the greatest difficulty incorporating time for teacher planning, collaboration, and professional development into the expanded day.
- Schools also made strides in fostering better connections and more meaningful relationships between students and staff—particularly through the introduction or expansion of enrichment activities.
- Though schools were given great flexibility in designing their expanded programs, the 10 ELT schools

developed and adopted schedules that essentially fit into one of three categories: an *integrated schedule* in which the traditional school day was reconfigured to include lengthened academic blocks, a *divided schedule* in which the traditional school day remained intact but was augmented with a distinct expanded day program, and a *mixed schedule* that included elements of both the integrated and divided schedules.

- The distinction of schools by schedule type nearly mirrors schools' grade spans: the three elementary schools adopted integrated schedules while the four middle schools adopted divided schedules; two of the three K-8 schools adopted mixed schedules. It may be that a school's grade span dictates logistical or procedural decisions and/or reduces the flexibility of the school schedule.
- All 10 Cohort 1 schools reported that the level of funding limits their programs, especially with regard to staffing.
- Districts were required to obtain letters of support from teachers unions to plan for ELT. Districts that were interested in ELT but unable to garner union support could not proceed with planning and/or implementation. Districts and schools that involved the unions early in the process and maintained open communication tended to arrive at agreements that were more aligned with the schools' proposed staffing models than districts and schools that had less union involvement in planning for ELT.
- Near the end of the first year of ELT, almost two-thirds of teacher survey respondents reported that they perceived positive effects of the expanded schedule on several dimensions of classroom instruction. In addition, more than half of teacher survey respondents indicated that student academic performance and engagement in school were improved as a result of ELT.
- Students' feelings about the expanded day varied significantly by grade level, with younger students reporting positive feelings about ELT with more frequency than older students. Specifically, nearly two-thirds of students in elementary grades were happy or very happy about a longer school day as compared to 35 percent or less of students in middle school grades.
- The teacher surveys asked respondents to list the advantages and disadvantages of the expanded day. The most frequently cited advantages were increased instructional time, enrichment opportunities, and student safety. The most common disadvantages were student fatigue, teacher and staff fatigue, and scheduling issues.
- We found no effect of ELT on indicators of student behavior, including rates of attendance, truancy, in-school suspension, and out-of-school suspension, as compared to non-ELT matched comparison schools.

One school administrator summed up the first year evaluation findings quite nicely, noting that this year "has been about working out the procedural kinks [i.e., logistics and operations]. Improving instructional quality is next." With a short planning period, and eleventh hour notification that grants had been received, Cohort 1 schools are pioneering the initiative. Subsequent cohorts have had more opportunity to plan, and as each year of funding is approved by the legislature we hypothesize that schools will perceive a stronger likelihood that funding will come through and will be less hesitant to make commitments to major schedule changes and to community partners. Thus we might also expect to see faster or greater improvements in student outcomes in schools in later years. For the early implementation sites, we are not expecting dramatic early improvements in student outcomes given the complexities they experienced in implementation. As schools are better able to consistently provide teachers with adequate individual and collaborative planning time and professional development, and to offer student-centered enrichment opportunities, the added instructional time likely will be put to even more productive use.

Future Analyses

In the second year of the ELT evaluation, the study team will continue to track the implementation and outcomes for Cohort 1 and begin collecting data in the nine Cohort 2 schools implementing ELT in 2007-08. The following is a

look ahead to future reports:

- Planning and implementation topics that may be examined in future reports include technical assistance to schools, the actual financial costs of implementing ELT versus the grant award, and the characteristics of districts or schools that do not proceed past the planning phase.
- Subsequent evaluation reports will include analyses of student MCAS achievement data, which will center on a comparative interrupted time series (ITS) analysis of the impact of ELT on student achievement. A comparative ITS design is the most rigorous possible given the grant award process, and this type of design is strongest when there are at least five years of prior achievement data and at least two years of post-intervention achievement data available. Hence, we will conduct ITS analyses after Cohort 1 schools have completed their second year of ELT.

1 Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education.

2 FY2006 Planning and Early Implementation grant proposal, Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education.

3 The five districts were Boston, Cambridge, Fall River, Malden, and Worcester.

last updated: February 22, 2008

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A close-up, vertical view of the American flag, showing the stars and stripes. The flag is slightly out of focus, with a soft, glowing effect around the edges, particularly the stripes. The colors are vibrant, with the red and white stripes and the blue field with white stars.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

TOUGH CHOICES *OR* TOUGH TIMES

THE REPORT OF THE *new* COMMISSION ON
THE SKILLS OF THE AMERICAN WORKFORCE

NATIONAL CENTER
ON EDUCATION
AND THE ECONOMY

WHERE TO GET COPIES OF THE FULL REPORT

This report, in book form, was published by Jossey-Bass, a Wiley Imprint, www.josseybass.com and is available through bookstores, Amazon.com, other internet book retailers and on the Commission's Web site. Other materials relating to the report, including various research reports done by the staff and others to support the work of the Commission can be accessed through the Commission's Web site at www.skillscommission.org

IN PRAISE OF *Tough Choices or Tough Times*

“While *Tough Choices or Tough Times* does a tremendous job in identifying and articulating the challenges we face, what truly sets it apart is the specific and highly innovative policy prescriptions it advocates to reverse the “education deficit.” I encourage every policymaker, at every level, to read this compelling and comprehensive report.” —WILLIAM E. KIRWAN, CHANCELLOR, UNIVERSITY SYSTEM OF MARYLAND

“*Tough Choices or Tough Times* is must reading for policymakers, educators, businesspeople, and citizens who want America to be prosperous and competitive in the 21st century. The report pulls no punches about the economic threats facing our country. The Commission advances thought-provoking recommendations that should stimulate debate and then galvanize every sector of society to muster the will to ensure that America’s workforce is the best educated and prepared in the world.” —HUGH PRICE, SENIOR FELLOW, BROOKINGS INSTITUTION, AND FORMER PRESIDENT, NATIONAL URBAN LEAGUE

“*Tough Choices or Tough Times* provides a bold and specific road map for transforming all levels of education—preschool through postsecondary education—to meet the challenges of a rapidly changing global economy. It calls for massive fundamental change in education structure, curriculum, teacher compensation, and assessment, as well as in the roles of virtually all our education institutions.” —MIKE KIRST, PROFESSOR OF EDUCATION EMERITUS, STANFORD UNIVERSITY

“The steps proposed in *Tough Choices or Tough Times* will move us dramatically forward, fostering a 21st century skills development pipeline that meets the needs of working adults, and enables them to engage in the lifelong learning necessary to meet the changing demands of the workplace.” —MARLENE SELTZER, PRESIDENT AND CEO, JOBS FOR THE FUTURE

“The Commission provides a 21st century formula for workforce development: think regional, eliminate structures that no longer serve our needs, and create universal access to quality education and training.” —JOSEPH CARBONE, PRESIDENT AND CEO, THE WORKPLACE, INC., SOUTHWESTERN CONNECTICUT’S WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD

“Efforts at bringing together the three integral components of a successful workforce investment system—education, training, and economic development—have been haphazard at best. The recommendation to encourage the creation of high level jobs/skills/economic growth authorities with the ability to issue tax exempt bonds holds real promise for the development of a rational, sustainable, and politically supportable system.” —MARION PINES, DIRECTOR, SAR LEVITAN CENTER, JOHNS HOPKINS UNIVERSITY

“Anyone who hopes to hold a job in the next several decades should read—if not memorize—this extraordinary report. Hopefully the report will motivate our nation’s leaders to promptly take the steps needed to assure that our nation’s citizenry can enjoy a decent quality of life in the years ahead.” —
NORMAN R. AUGUSTINE, RETIRED CHAIRMAN AND CEO, LOCKHEED MARTIN CORPORATION,
AND CHAIRMAN, THE NATIONAL ACADEMIES’ COMMITTEE ON PROSPERING IN THE GLOBAL
ECONOMY OF THE 21ST CENTURY

“*Tough Choices or Tough Times* is an exciting vision of a reformed and revitalized American education system. It has many important ideas that should generate considerable debate and are worthy of serious consideration.” —SUSAN FUHRMAN, PRESIDENT, TEACHERS COLLEGE, COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY

“*Tough Choices or Tough Times* calls into question whether we are willing to invest in the future of America’s workforce.” —BOB GILOTH, DIRECTOR, FAMILY ECONOMIC SUCCESS, ANNIE E. CASEY FOUNDATION

“This penetrating, scary analysis and astute, far-reaching recommendations amount to *A Nation at Risk* for the next generation, a brave, clear call for top-to-bottom reforms in U.S. education. While overturning plenty of creaky applecarts, *Tough Choices* sketches a bold and efficient new vehicle for equipping 21st century Americans with the skills and knowledge they will need—and that the nation needs.”
—CHESTER E. FINN JR., SENIOR FELLOW, HOOVER INSTITUTION, STANFORD UNIVERSITY,
AND PRESIDENT, THOMAS B. FORDHAM FOUNDATION

“The Commission’s report joins a chorus of voices warning us of the looming consequences facing our nation because of the poor level of preparation of students and members of the workforce. What is different is that this report recommends bold steps for action. To do any less will result only in more half-measures that over time have had too little effect and have left us vulnerable as we face growing competition in a changed world economy.” —G. WAYNE CLOUGH, PRESIDENT, GEORGIA TECH,
AND VICE CHAIRMAN, U.S. COUNCIL ON COMPETITIVENESS

“This is a remarkably bold and refreshing report. It is time for us to stop tinkering at the edges of the educational enterprise. What I find most appealing about the Commission’s recommendations is that it represents a total overhaul of how we do the business of education. The Commission is telling us that we need to stop rearranging the deck chairs on the Titanic, reinvest the resources we have, and turn the ship in a new direction.” —JAMES W. PELLEGRINO, DISTINGUISHED PROFESSOR OF COGNITIVE
PSYCHOLOGY AND EDUCATION, UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS AT CHICAGO

“The current public education system at the K–12 level is broken. Can it be fixed? This report says no, it has to be replaced. This is more than a wake-up call. It is a call to arms. The reasons to be alarmed are clearly and persuasively documented. Out-of-the-box, stretch recommendations are offered.” —ALBERT
J. SIMONE, PRESIDENT, ROCHESTER INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

When the report of the first Commission on the Skills of the American Workforce, *America's Choice: high skills or low wages!*, was released in 1990, the globalization of the world's economy was just getting underway. That Commission understood the threat in the straightforward terms captured in the report's subtitle. A worldwide market was developing in low-skill labor, it said, and the work requiring low-skills would go to those countries where the price of low-skill labor was the lowest. If the United States wanted to continue to compete in that market, it could look forward to a continued decline in wages and very long working hours. Alternatively, it could abandon low-skill work and concentrate on competing in the worldwide market for high-value-added products and services. To do that, it would have to adopt internationally benchmarked standards for educating its students and its workers, because only countries with highly skilled workforces could successfully compete in that market.

A swiftly rising number of American workers at every skill level are in direct competition with workers in every corner of the globe.



If someone can figure out the algorithm for a routine job, chances are that it is economic to automate it. Many good well-paying, middle-class jobs involve routine work of this kind and are rapidly being automated.

The first Commission never dreamed that we would end up competing with countries that could offer large numbers of highly educated workers willing to work for low wages. But China and India are doing exactly that. Indeed, it turns out that China and India are only the tip of the iceberg. Whereas for most of the 20th century the United States could take pride in having the best-educated workforce in the world, that is no longer true. Over the past 30 years, one country after another has surpassed us in the proportion of their entering workforce with the equivalent of a high school diploma, and many more are on the verge of doing so. Thirty years ago, the United States could lay claim to having 30 percent of the world's population of college students. Today that proportion has fallen to 14 percent and is continuing to fall.

While our international counterparts are increasingly getting more education, their young people are getting a better education as well. American students and young adults place anywhere from the middle to the bottom of the pack in all three continuing comparative studies of achievement in mathematics, science, and general literacy in the advanced industrial nations.

While our relative position in the world's education league tables has continued its long slow decline, the structure of the global economy has continued to evolve. Every day, more and more of the work that people do ends up in a digitized form. From X-rays used for medical diagnostic purposes, to songs, movies, architectural drawings, technical papers, and novels, that work is saved on a hard disk and transmitted instantly over the Internet to someone near or far who makes use of it in an endless variety of ways. Because this is

so, employers everywhere have access to a worldwide workforce composed of people who do not have to move to participate in work teams that are truly global. Because this is so, a swiftly rising number of American workers at every skill level are in direct competition with workers in every corner of the globe. So it matters very much that, increasingly, it is easier and easier for employers everywhere to get workers who are better skilled at lower cost than American workers.

Another important trend in the global economy bears on this point. A century ago, the United States led the world in the process of vertical integration, where corporations performed every function necessary to get their products to market, from the mining of the raw materials right through to the sale of those products through retail outlets to the final customer. Today, the United States is once again a leader, this time in the deconstruction of the vertically integrated firm. Corporate analysts identify each step in the process and ask whether the firm is a leader in that step, and, if not, who in the world can do that work at the needed level of quality at the lowest possible cost. The firm then contracts with the best providers of each of those services and keeps only those functions that it can do best. This is outsourcing. Firms that do not do this will inevitably be put out of business by firms that do. In this way, many functions that have always been performed by American workers in American firms will be outsourced to workers in other countries who do them better and cheaper.

In many cases, the work will be done not by people in other countries, but rather by machines. With the rapid advance of new

technologies, it is becoming progressively less expensive to automate functions that used to be performed by people. As the cost of labor rises and the cost of automating jobs continues to fall, it becomes both possible and necessary for firms simply to eliminate job after job now being done by humans. Earlier, almost all the jobs subject to automation were low-skill jobs. That is no longer true. Now it is more accurate to say that the jobs that are most vulnerable are the jobs involving routine work. If someone can figure out the algorithm for a routine job, chances are that it is economical to automate it. Many good, well-paying, middle-class jobs involve routine work of this kind and are rapidly being automated.

In this environment, it makes sense to ask how American workers can possibly maintain, to say nothing of improve, their current standard of living. Today, Indian engineers make \$7,500 a year against \$45,000 for an American engineer with the same qualifications. If we succeed in matching the very high levels of mastery of mathematics and science of these Indian engineers — an enormous challenge for this country — why would the world's employers pay us more than they have to pay the Indians to do their work? They would be willing to do that only if we could offer something that the Chinese and Indians, and others, cannot.

Those countries that produce the most important new products and services can capture a premium in world markets that will enable them to pay high wages to their citizens. In many industries, producing the most important new products and services depends on maintaining the worldwide

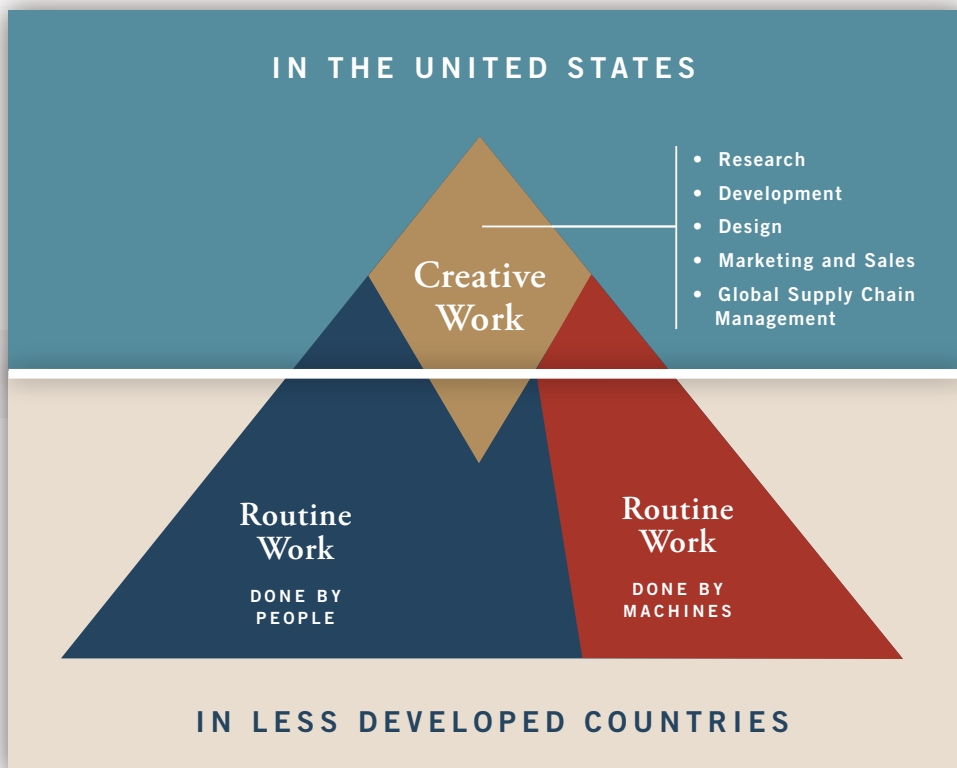
technological lead, year in and year out, in that industry and in the new industries that new technologies generate. But that kind of leadership does not depend on technology alone. It depends on a deep vein of creativity that is constantly renewing itself, and on a myriad of people who can imagine how people can use things that have never been available before, create ingenious marketing and sales campaigns, write books, build furniture, make

movies, and imagine new kinds of software that will capture people's imagination and become indispensable to millions.

This is a world in which a very high level of preparation in reading, writing, speaking, mathematics, science, literature, history, and the arts will be an indispensable foundation for everything that comes after for most members of the workforce. It is a world in which comfort with ideas and abstractions is

PROTOTYPICAL U.S. INDUSTRY

in 10 years if all goes well



the passport to a good job, in which creativity and innovation are the key to the good life, in which high levels of education — a very different kind of education than most of us have had — are going to be the only security there is.

A world in which routine work is largely done by machines is a world in which mathematical reasoning will be no less important than math facts, in which line workers who cannot contribute to the design of the products they are fabricating may be as obsolete as the last model of that product, in which auto mechanics will have to figure out what to do when the many computers in the cars they are working on do not function as they were designed to function, in which software engineers who are also musicians and artists will have an edge over those who are not as the entertainment industry evolves, in which it will pay architects to know something about nanotechnology, and small businesspeople who build custom yachts and fishing boats will be able to survive only if they quickly learn a lot about the scientific foundations of carbon fiber composites.

It is a world in which the rewards will go to the marketing director who sees the opportunity to build a global business in cars selling for \$2,000 each, where others see only poor people who can't afford cars; the clothing designer whose grasp of the direction of fashion is uniquely matched to her understanding of the new fabrics that the new technologies are making possible, and creates the perfect match of fabric and taste . . .

The best employers the world over will be looking for the most competent, most creative, and most innovative people on the face of the earth and will be willing to pay them top dollar for their services. This will be true not just for

This is a world in which a very high level of preparation in reading, writing, speaking, mathematics, science, literature, history and the arts will be an indispensable foundation for everything that comes after for most members of the workforce.



The best employers the world over will be looking for the most competent, most creative and most innovative people on the face of the earth and will be willing to pay them top dollar for their services. This will be true not just for the top professionals and managers, but up and down the length and breadth of the workforce. Those countries that produce the most important new products and services can capture a premium in world markets that will enable them to pay high wages to their citizens.

That kind of leadership does not depend on technology alone. It depends on a deep vein of creativity that is constantly renewing itself. Now many students just slide through high school, because they know that all they have to do is get passes in their courses or a satisfactory score on an 8th or 9th grade level literacy test to go to college. With this system, they will know that they have to work hard in school to get anywhere, and, the evidence shows, that is exactly what they will do.



The core problem is that our education and training systems were built for another era. We can get where we must go only by changing the system itself.

the top professionals and managers, but up and down the length and breadth of the workforce.

Strong skills in English, mathematics, technology, and science, as well as literature, history, and the arts will be essential for many; beyond this, candidates will have to be comfortable with ideas and abstractions, good at both analysis and synthesis, creative and innovative, self-disciplined and well organized, able to learn very quickly and work well as a member of a team and have the flexibility to adapt quickly to frequent changes in the labor market as the shifts in the economy become ever faster and more dramatic.

If we continue on our current course, and the number of nations outpacing us in the education race continues to grow at its current rate, the American standard of living will steadily fall relative to those nations, rich and poor, that are doing a better job. If the gap gets to a certain — but unknowable — point, the world's investors will conclude that they can get a greater return on their funds elsewhere, and it will be almost impossible to reverse course. Although it is possible to construct a scenario for improving our standard of living, the clear and present danger is that it will fall for most Americans.

The core problem is that our education and training systems were built for another era, an era in which most workers needed only a rudimentary education. It is not possible to get where we have to go by patching that system. There is not enough money available at any level of our intergovernmental system to fix this problem by spending more on the system we have. We can get where we must go only by changing the system itself.

To do that, we must face a few facts. The first is that we recruit a disproportionate share

of our teachers from among the less able of the high school students who go to college. The second is that we tolerate an enormous amount of waste in the system, failing our students in the early years when the cost of doing the job right would be relatively low, and trying to remediate it later at much higher cost. The third is that this inherently inefficient system has gotten progressively more inefficient over time. While the standards movement has produced real gains, especially for minority students, in recent years, those gains have been leveling off, and the gains have been modest in relation to the increase in per pupil expenditures over the last thirty years. The fourth is that the growing inequality in family incomes is contributing heavily to the growing disparities in student achievement. The fifth is that we have failed to motivate most of our students to take tough courses and work hard, thus missing one of the most important drivers of success in the best-performing nations. The sixth is that our teacher compensation system is designed to reward time in service, rather than to attract the best and brightest of our college students and reward the best of our teachers. The seventh is that, too often, our testing system rewards students who will be good at routine work, while not providing opportunities for students to display creative and innovative thinking and analysis. The eighth is that, too often, we have built a bureaucracy in our schools in which, apart from the superintendent of schools, the people who have the responsibility do not have the power, and the people who have the power do not have the responsibility. The ninth is that most of the people who will be in our workforce

are already in it, and if they cannot master the new literacy at high levels, it will not matter what we do in our schools. And the tenth is that although we have an elaborate funding mechanism to provide funds to send young people to college and university to launch them in the careers of their choice, we have done a very poor job of making it possible for adults who have full-time jobs and family responsibilities to get the continuing education and training they need to survive in the world that is coming.

But the most important truth is none of these. It is that we do not need new programs, and we need less money than one might think. The one thing that is indispensable is a new system. The problem is not with our educators. It is with the system in which they work. That is what the new Commission focused on. And it is the implementation of this system that will take courage and leadership.

Our recommendations follow.

STEP 1:

Assume that we will do the job right the first time

A number of other countries assume that their students are ready for college — really ready for college — when they are 16 years old. So let's start out assuming that we can match or even exceed their performance if we are doing everything right. Further assume for the moment that we want to send everyone, or almost everyone, to college. Now set up a system to do it. Our first step is creating a set of Board Examinations. States will have their own Board Examinations, and some national

We propose a system that has its own integrity, though it can be implemented in many ways.



These changes would enable the nation to pay beginning teachers about \$45,000 per year, which is now the median teachers' pay, and to pay about \$95,000 per year to the typical teachers working at the top of new career ladders for a regular teaching year and as much as \$110,000 per year to teachers willing to work the same hours per year as other professionals typically do.

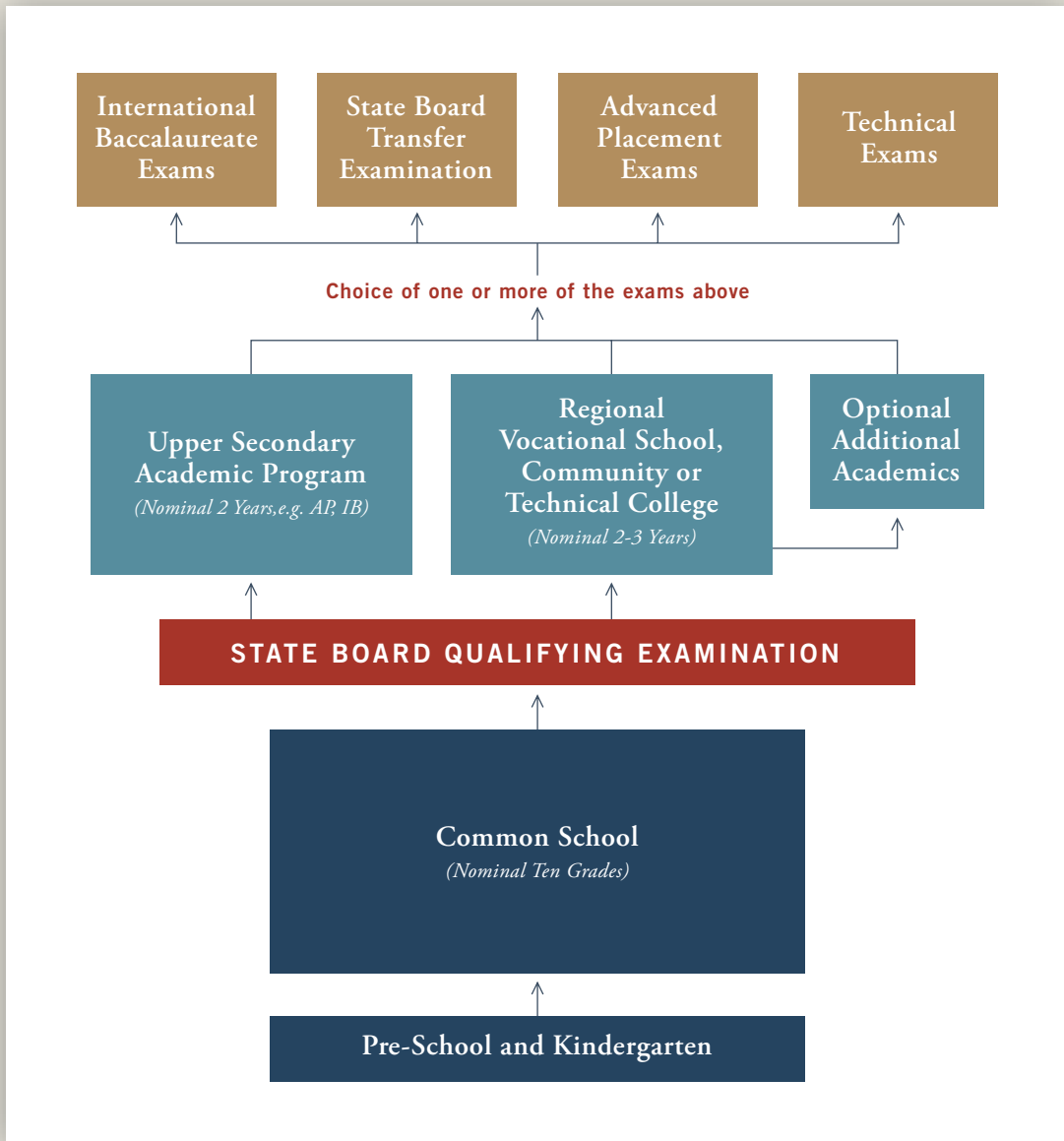
and even international organizations will offer their own. A Board Exam is an exam in a set of core subjects that is based on a syllabus provided by the Board. So the point of the exam is to find out whether the student has learned from the course what he or she was supposed to learn.

For most students, the first Board Exam will come at the end of 10th grade. A few might take it earlier — some might not succeed on their first try, so they might take another year to two to succeed. The standards will be set at the expectations incorporated in the exams given by the countries that do the best job educating their students. But it will in any case be set no lower than the standard for entering community colleges in the state without remediation. We believe that when all of our recommendations are implemented, 95 percent of our students will meet this standard.

Students who score well enough will be guaranteed the right to go to their community college to begin a program leading to a two-year technical degree or a two-year program designed to enable the student to transfer later into a four-year state college. The students who get a good enough score can stay in high school to prepare for a second Board Exam, like the ones given by the International Baccalaureate program, or the Advanced Placement exams, or another state or private equivalent. When those students are finished with their program, assuming they do well enough on their second set of Board Exams, they can go off to a selective college or university and might or might not be given college credit for the courses they took in high school. These students and the ones who went the community college route will have the option when they finish their programs of taking a second set of state Board

New Commission on the Skills of the American Workforce

SCHEMA FOR STUDENT PROGRESSION THROUGH THE SYSTEM



Exams, and if they hit certain scores, they will be guaranteed the right to go to their state colleges and some state universities as juniors.

Our full report provides a lot more detail, but that is the essence of the idea. Students could challenge these Board Exams as soon as they were ready, and they could keep challenging them all their lives, if necessary. No one would fail. If they did not succeed, they would just try again.

Now many students just slide through high school, because they know that all they have to do is get passes in their courses or a satisfactory score on an 8th- or 9th-grade-level literacy test to go to college. With this system, they will know that they have to work hard in school to get anywhere, and, the evidence shows, that is exactly what they will do.

But they will have a lot of help along the way, as you will see in the next section.

STEP 2:
Make much more efficient use of the available resources

The changes just described, plus a couple we will describe in a moment, will save \$60 billion nationally. Some of this will be offset by the fact that many, many fewer students will become dropouts, and we will have to pay for the students to complete school who would otherwise have dropped out. We asked ourselves what would happen if we took the savings and deployed it in roughly equal amounts against three buckets of expenditure: (1) recruiting, training, and deploying a teaching force for the nation's schools recruited from the top third of the

high school students going on to college; (2) building a high-quality full-service early childhood education system for every 3- and 4-year-old student in the United States, and (3) giving the nation's disadvantaged students the resources they need to succeed against internationally benchmarked education standards. If we do not do these things, there is not a prayer that we will be able to get our 10th graders to do college-level work. But if we actually do these things, along with the other things we recommend here, there is every reason to believe that we can send almost everyone to college and have them do well there. This redeployment of resources is a key feature of the plan to do just that.

STEP 3:
Recruit from the top third of the high school graduates going on to college for the next generation of school teachers

It is simply not possible for our students to graduate from our schools by the millions with very strong mathematical reasoning skills, a sound conceptual grasp of science, strong writing skills, world-beating capacity for creativity and innovation, and everything else we talk about in this report unless their teachers have the knowledge and skills we want our children to have.

Many of our teachers are superb. But we have for a long time gotten better teachers than we deserved because of the limited opportunities for women and minorities in our workforce. Those opportunities are far wider now, and we are left with the reality that we are now recruiting more of our teachers from the bottom third of the high school students going to college than is

wise. To succeed, we must recruit many more from the top third.

To get this group requires us, first, to change the shape of teacher compensation, which is currently backloaded, in the sense that it is weak on cash compensation, especially up front, and heavy on pensions and health benefits for the retired teacher. This is what one would want if the idea were to retain the teachers with the most years of service, but it makes no sense if what we are after is to attract young people who are thinking most about how they are going to get the cash they need to enjoy themselves, buy a home, support a family, and pay for college for their children. The first step in our plan is to make retirement benefits comparable to those of the better firms in the private sector and use the money that is saved from this measure to increase teachers' cash compensation. We would add to this a substantial amount from what is saved by changing the progression of students through the system. These changes would enable the nation to pay beginning teachers about \$45,000 per year, which is now the median teachers' pay, and to pay about \$95,000 per year to the typical teachers working at the top of new career ladders for a regular teaching year and as much as \$110,000 per year to teachers willing to work the same hours per year as other professionals typically do.

These figures are on average for the nation as a whole. Higher-cost states would have higher salary scales, and lower-cost states would pay less. And within many states, adjustments would be made to take account of differences within the state in the cost of living. But salaries would rise substantially everywhere.

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We asked ourselves what would happen if we took the savings and deployed it in roughly equal amounts against three buckets of expenditure: (1) recruiting, training and deploying a teaching force for the nation's schools recruited from the top third of the high school students going on to college; (2) building a high-quality full-service early childhood education system for every 3- and 4-year old student in the United States, and (3) giving the nation's disadvantaged students the resources they need to succeed against internationally benchmarked education standards.



Moving from America's tests to the kinds of examinations and assessments that will capture these and other qualities at the level of accomplishment required will entail a major overhaul of the American testing industry.

We would have teachers be employed by the state, not the local districts, on a statewide salary schedule. There would be salary increments for especially effective teachers, teachers at higher points on a new career ladder, those willing to teach in remote or especially tough urban areas, and teachers in shortage fields like mathematics and special education. Those teachers would be licensed by the state and put on a list of available teachers, but none would actually be paid until they were hired by schools (see below).

In the new system, it would be relatively easy for teachers to reach out to other teachers and form organizations to operate schools themselves, much like doctors, attorneys, and architects form partnerships to offer their services to the public.

The current policies regarding teacher education would be scrapped. The state would create a new Teacher Development Agency charged with recruiting, training, and certifying teachers. The state would launch national recruiting campaigns, allocate slots for training the needed number of teachers, and write performance contracts with schools of education, but also teachers' collaboratives, school districts, and others interested in training teachers. Those providers that meet the state's performance requirements would get a larger number of slots than providers whose graduates perform less well. To get listed by the state on its register of available teachers, candidates would have to show that they had at least a bachelor's degree in the subject they propose to teach and would have to pass a rigorous teaching performance assessment.

In states with collective bargaining laws, legislatures would need to work closely with the organizations that represent teachers to effect the kinds of changes we have in mind, for it is obviously easier to implement such changes with strong union support.

STEP 4:
Develop standards, assessments, and curriculum that reflect today's needs and tomorrow's requirements

Many states have tests that students must pass to graduate from high school. But few require more than an 8th-grade-level of literacy in international terms. While many states have increased the proportion of the test that enables students to construct their own answers to questions rather than select an answer from a preselected list, these tests still have a way to go to provide the kinds of information that the world's best high school exit examinations provide. On balance, they are designed to measure the acquisition of discipline-based knowledge in the core subjects in the curriculum, but, more often than not, little or nothing is done to measure many of the other qualities that we have suggested may spell the difference between success and failure for the students who will grow up to be the workers of 21st century America: creativity and innovation, facility with the use of ideas and abstractions, the self-discipline and organization needed to manage one's work and drive it through to a successful conclusion, the ability to function well as a member of a team, and so on.

Moving from America's tests to the kinds of examinations and assessments that will capture these and other qualities at the level

of accomplishment required will entail a major overhaul of the American testing industry. If that is not done, then nothing else will matter, because the old saw that what gets measured is what gets taught is essentially true. A system that pursues the wrong goals more efficiently is not a system this nation needs.

When we have the right assessments, and they are connected to the right syllabi, then the task will be to create instructional materials fashioned in the same spirit and train our teachers to use the standards, assessments, syllabi, and materials as well as possible, just as we train our physicians to use the techniques, tools, and pharmaceuticals at their command as well as possible. But it all starts with the standards and assessments.

STEP 5:
Create high performance schools and districts everywhere — how the system should be governed, financed, organized, and managed

The governance, organizational, and management scheme of American schools was created in the early years of the 20th century to match the industrial organization of the time. It was no doubt appropriate for an era when most work required relatively low literacy levels, most teachers had little more education than their students, and efficiency of a rather mechanical sort was the highest value of the system.

In recent years, American industry has shed this management model in favor of high-performance management models designed to produce high-quality products and services with highly educated workers. Some school districts are moving in this direction. That movement needs to be accelerated, formalized, and brought

The schools would have complete discretion over the way its funds are spent, the staffing schedule, the organization and management of the school, the school's schedule and its program, as long as it provided the curriculum and met the testing and other accountability requirements imposed by the state.

to scale. We share here one way to make that work. No doubt there are others that would work as well.

First, the role of school boards would change. Schools would no longer be owned by local school districts. Instead, schools would be operated by independent contractors, many of them limited-liability corporations owned and run by teachers. The primary role of school district central offices would be to write performance contracts with the operators of these schools, monitor their operations, cancel or decide not to renew the contracts of those providers that did not perform well, and find others that could do better. The local boards would also be responsible for collecting a wide range of data from the operators specified by the state, verifying these data, forwarding them to the state, and sharing them with the public and with parents of children in the schools. They would also be responsible for connecting the schools to a wide range of social services in the community, a function made easier in those cases in which the mayor is responsible for both those services and the schools.

The contract schools would be public schools, subject to all of the safety, curriculum, testing, and other accountability requirements of public schools. The teachers in these schools would be employees of the state, as previously noted.

The schools would be funded directly by the state, according to a pupil-weighting formula as described below. The schools would have complete discretion over the way their funds are spent, the staffing schedule, their organization and management, their schedule, and their program, as long as they provided

the curriculum and met the testing and other accountability requirements imposed by the state.

Both the state and the district could create a wide range of performance incentives for the schools to improve the performance of their students. Schools would be encouraged to reach out to the community and parents and would have strong incentives to do so. Districts could provide support services to the schools, but the schools would be free to obtain the services they needed wherever they wished.

No organization could operate a school that was not affiliated with a helping organization approved by the state, unless the school was itself such an organization. These helping organizations — which could range from schools of education to teachers' collaboratives to for-profit and nonprofit organizations — would have to have the capacity to provide technical assistance and training to the schools in their network on a wide range of matters ranging from management and accounting to curriculum and pedagogy.

Parents and students could choose among all the available contract schools, taking advantage of the performance data these schools would be obligated to produce. Oversubscribed schools would not be permitted to discriminate in admissions. Districts would be obligated to make sure that there were sufficient places for all the students who needed places. The competitive, data-based market, combined with the performance contracts themselves, would create schools that were constantly seeking to improve their performance year in and year out. The fact that schools serving

students from low-income families and other categories of disadvantaged students would get substantially more money than schools with more advantaged student bodies would ensure that these students would be served by high-quality school operators. It would be very hard for low-quality school operators to survive in this environment.

STEP 6:

Provide high-quality, universal early childhood education

For decades, researchers have almost universally concluded that high-quality early childhood education is one of the best investments a nation can make in its young people. But this country has never committed the funds necessary to provide high-quality early childhood education to its 3- and 4-year-olds. The funds freed up by the Commission's proposals for altering the student progression through the system will, for the first time, make it possible for the whole nation to do what should have been done many years ago.

STEP 7:

Give strong support to the students who need it the most

The Commission's proposals, taken together, should transform the prospects of disadvantaged children. The proposal to abandon local funding of schools in favor of state funding using a uniform pupil-weighting funding formula, combined with the addition of \$19 billion to the system as a whole, will make it possible, for the first time in the history of the United States, to have an equitable means of funding our schools, while at the same time leveling up the funding of the system as a whole, so that relatively well-

High-quality early childhood education is one of the best investments a nation can make in its young people.



The Commission's proposals, taken together, should transform the prospects of disadvantaged children.

to-do districts will not have the incentive to defeat the system that they would have if the existing funds were simply redistributed.

The additional funds for schools serving high concentrations of disadvantaged students will make it possible for those schools to stay open from early in the morning until late at night, offering a wide range of supportive services to the students and their families. They will have the funds needed to screen and diagnose their students, and to make sure that they get the eyeglasses they need or the hearing aids or the therapy for dyslexia or any of the many other things that have prevented these children from learning as well as their wealthier peers. These schools will be able to afford the tutors they need, the counselors and mentors that are the birthright of richer children elsewhere. And they will have the staff needed to reach out to the community and to find the community leaders in the private sector who will develop campaigns to raise the aspirations of these young people, so they come to believe that they too can reach the top if they work hard enough.

In this scheme, schools serving poor students will no longer be routinely outbid for the services of our best teachers by wealthier communities. Nor will our experienced teachers be able to avoid teaching the students who need them the most by virtue of their seniority in the system. In fact, our teachers will be offered additional financial incentives to teach in remote areas and our toughest urban neighborhoods. And the state Teacher Development Agencies will be charged with making a special effort to recruit first-rate teachers for our minority children who look like them and can connect with these children. In

all these ways and more, this plan will give the students who need our help the most a much better chance than they have now.

STEP 8:
Enable every member of the adult workforce to get the new literacy skills

As we pointed out above, most of the people we will have in our workforce in 20 years are in the workforce now. The Commission proposes that the federal government pass legislation entitling every adult and young adult worker — at no charge — to the education required to meet the standard set by the new Board Exam standards that most young people will meet by age 16. This is the standard that the state determines will entitle the holder to enter college without remediation.

Not all young adults and older members of the workforce will choose to take advantage of this opportunity, but many will. And, as some do, others will be encouraged to try. In this way, millions of people whose prospects can only be described as grim will get a new lease on life, and the economy as a whole will become much more productive. High schools all over the country and many other institutions as well will find that they have a new clientele of people who will be very grateful for a second chance at the opportunities that life affords those with an education.

STEP 9:
Create personal competitiveness accounts — a GI Bill for our times

The intention of Step 8 is to provide a foundation of high literacy among our entire workforce. But foundation literacy is not

enough. Our economic analysis suggests that the next few decades will be a time of increasing turbulence in the job market as outsourcing increases, product cycles get shorter, and technological change destroys not just firms but entire industries with increasing frequency. In this environment, it will be extremely important that workers everywhere be able to get the training they need to move quickly to other jobs, other professions, and other industries over and over again. As we noted above, the higher education finance system was set up to serve the needs of full-time students, not full-time workers with family obligations, the very people we are talking about here. So we propose that the government of the United States create Personal Competitiveness Accounts enabling everyone to get the continuing education and training they will need throughout their work lives. The government would create these accounts for every baby when born, with an initial deposit of \$500, and continue to contribute at a lower level until that young person is 16, and later if the account holder was earning very little. The account would earn tax-protected interest as long as there was principal in it. Employers could contribute to it tax free. So could the individual, through salary reductions, and even states might want to contribute as well. The account holder could use the money to pay for tuition at any accredited institution for any work-related program of study, as well as books and fees.

The cost of getting our adults to the new standards of literacy, combined with the cost of this new GI Bill, comes to about \$31 billion per year. This is a lot of money for a country deeply in debt. But it is probably the single most important investment we can make in

our economic future. No other step the nation could take would have a higher payoff in economic agility and competitiveness, for both the individual and the society as a whole.

STEP 10:
Create regional competitiveness authorities to make America competitive

Government-funded job training programs in the United States were mostly created to provide relatively unskilled people the skills needed to get a job — any job — as quickly as possible. So it is not surprising that government-funded job training has not, on the whole, been connected to the government's efforts to stimulate economic development. That being so, the jobs that people who go through this system get are all too often short term and dead end. It is now clear that the most effective strategies for economic development are technology based and regionally focused. It is also clear that the most effective way to provide a real future for people who need jobs is to provide training that is related to the economic future of the region those people live in, for jobs in growth industries.

So the Commission recommends that the federal government develop legislation to encourage the states to create regional economic development authorities involving the key leaders from many sectors in those regions in the development of economic development strategies that make sense to them. These authorities would not only be responsible for coming up with development goals and strategies for their regions, but also for coordinating the work of the region's education and training institutions to make

We propose that the government of the United States create Personal Competitiveness Accounts enabling everyone to get the continuing education and training they will need throughout their work lives.



Encourage the states to create regional economic development authorities not only responsible for coming up with development goals and strategies for their regions, but also for coordinating the work of the region's education and training institutions.



Millions of people whose prospects can only be described as grim will get a new lease on life and the economy as a whole will become much more productive.

sure that each region's workers develop the skills and knowledge needed to be successful in that labor market.

We settled on the word "authorities" to describe these new bodies because we wanted to convey the idea that they need to be more than debating societies. They need to be able to raise and spend the money needed to develop their regions over time. If these new bodies are as successful as we think they will be, the federal government should consider lifting many of the restrictions on the separate programs they will administer and permitting them to combine the funds from these programs in ways that are more likely to lead to both strong economic growth and strong job growth, especially for the most vulnerable people in the country.

The reader will note that most of our recommendations are made to the states, where most of the responsibility for these core functions in American life resides. We will not be disappointed if one state chooses to do it one way and another chooses a different path. We did not write legislative specifications. Our aim is to stimulate many variations of these ideas. But that does not mean that we encourage cherry-picking only those ideas that cost the least and offend the fewest. Without the pain inflicted by the proposals we make for saving money, there will be no gain from the ways we propose to spend it. If legislatures pocket the gains from the savings we propose and fail to make the investments we recommend, then that will simply lead to lower performance all around. We do not propose a collection of initiatives. We propose a system that has its own integrity, though it can be implemented in many ways.



WE ARE DEEPLY GRATEFUL TO THE FOUNDATIONS THAT SUPPORTED THIS WORK

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BILL AND MELINDA GATES FOUNDATION
WILLIAM AND FLORA HEWLETT FOUNDATION
LUMINA FOUNDATION FOR EDUCATION



THE STUDY

The support of these foundations made it possible to conduct a worldwide program of research and analysis to support the work of the Commission. The research lasted almost two years, and engaged a staff of 19 people as well as many consultants. The work included five major economic and labor market studies, eight international industry studies, a series of comparative education studies on four continents, another series of studies of state workforce development systems within the United States, papers commissioned from leading researchers in the United States and other countries, focus groups, public opinion research, and expert interviews in this country and abroad.

In addition to the United States, the countries in which field research was conducted included Australia, Belgium, Canada, China, Czech Republic, England, Finland, France, Germany, India, Ireland, Italy, and New Zealand.

This research program is more amply described and the reports we produced are listed in the full report of the Commission. Many of the reports are available on the Commission's Web site: www.skillscommission.org

THE *NEW* COMMISSION ON THE SKILLS OF THE AMERICAN WORKFORCE

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*Sara Martinez Tucker, on her nomination by President Bush to the position of Under Secretary of Education in the U.S. Department of Education, resigned from the Commission on September 6, 2006.

COMMENTS FROM THE COMMISSIONERS

“This proposal is radical? Yes. Hard to achieve? Of course. Essential? Absolutely. Our nation’s schools are failing to educate our children, and that has to stop—else we condemn our own kids to ever lower incomes. We must act—now!” —WILLIAM E. BROCK, FORMER SECRETARY OF LABOR, REAGAN ADMINISTRATION

“Being a member of this Commission was exciting and enlightening. I emerged convinced that there is an urgent need for precisely the kind of national discussion—probing and thoughtful—that we had and that this report is intended to provoke. It is essential that these recommendations get a full and fair hearing.” —BEVERLY O’NEILL, FORMER MAYOR, LONG BEACH, CALIFORNIA

“This provocative report challenges all of us to act now. Entire nations are working harder and studying longer in order to enjoy what many Americans have come to take for granted. The question is: Are there states or communities with the confidence and the courage to act before it is too late? In 1983, we were *A Nation at Risk*. Twenty-three years later, in 2006, the risk is even greater. It is getting late. For the sake of our children and our future, read this report and get to work.” —JOHN ENGLER, PRESIDENT, NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF MANUFACTURERS

“I commend the Commission for a report that presents bold and promising proposals to deal with the issues that our nation and its workforce will face in the 21st century.” —JOEL I. KLEIN, CHANCELLOR, NEW YORK CITY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

“The question this report raises is whether our country has the kind of education system that is needed to maintain America’s standard of living for our children, our grandchildren, and future generations. I very much hope that it will spark the kind of tough, honest debate on that topic that it so richly deserves.” —RICHARD W. RILEY, FORMER SECRETARY OF EDUCATION, CLINTON ADMINISTRATION

“Bold, inventive, analytic, and piercing, the report’s recommendations stand to make a huge difference in how America thinks about and enacts its educational enterprise for *all*—including its youngest—students.” —SHARON LYNN KAGAN, VIRGINIA & LEONARD MARX PROFESSOR OF EARLY CHILDHOOD AND FAMILY POLICY, TEACHERS COLLEGE, COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY, AND CODIRECTOR, THE NATIONAL CENTER FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES

“This report deals with the critical issue of training and educating the current workforce to meet the competitive challenges of the future and indicates the depth of the changes our nation needs to make to change our culture to one of life-long learning.” —MORTON BAHR, PRESIDENT EMERITUS, COMMUNICATIONS WORKERS OF AMERICA

“This report offers a radical new blueprint for making America’s K–12 educational experience more meaningful and effective. It’s a fascinating and thought-provoking read that is sure to get the American educational establishment talking.” —**CHARLES B. REED, CHANCELLOR, CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY SYSTEM**

“This report shows how states and professional educators can create efficient, high-performance school systems to educate all students to high standards.” —**RAY MARSHALL, FORMER SECRETARY OF LABOR, CARTER ADMINISTRATION**

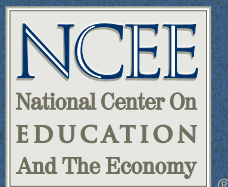
“A thorough, thoughtful, and timely study. Most important, it goes far beyond the normal conclusions. The recommendations are sweeping and controversial but must be considered seriously as they flow directly from the logic of the study. If not these, what then?” —**HENRY B. SCHACHT, MANAGING DIRECTOR, WARBURG PINCUS LLC**

“Piecemeal reform of public education in America is insufficient to deliver on the promise that every child will receive an education that leads to a good job, productive life, and responsible citizenship. The *New Commission Report* is a coherent, comprehensive, systemic plan for how to enable public education in America to be the best in the world.” —**THOMAS W. PAYZANT, FORMER SUPERINTENDENT, BOSTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS**

“It is my hope that the report will be heeded at the highest policy levels in every local community. What is at stake for our nation and every citizen is nothing less than the prospect of a plummeting standard of living for our children and American generations to come if we fail to act.” —**PAUL A. ELSNER, FORMER PRESIDENT, MARICOPA COMMUNITY COLLEGE SYSTEM**

“This may be a policy report, but it should be read by every practitioner. Brutally honest, it shows why money alone cannot get all our students ready for college and lays out bold and imaginative solutions to the problems that educators deal with every day, solutions that will take courage to implement, but that are at the same time realistic and practical.” —**JUDY B. CODDING, PRESIDENT, AMERICA’S CHOICE, INC.**

“I become more concerned each day that our students are falling further behind and the people of this nation do not seem to be alarmed. This report lays out the kind of drastic change to the system that is crucial if we are to remain a viable economic and political leader in the world.” —**DAVID P. DRISCOLL, COMMISSIONER OF EDUCATION, MASSACHUSETTS**



The National Center on Education and the Economy is a not-for-profit organization created to develop proposals for building the world class education and training system that the United States must have if it is to continue to be a world class economy. The National Center engages in policy analysis and development and works collaboratively with others at the local, state and national levels to advance its proposals in the policy arena.

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[< return to In the News page](#)

Testimony on Education Governance Proposals

Paul Reville, Chairman, Massachusetts Board of Education
January 29, 2008

Good morning. My name is Paul Reville. I am chairman of the Massachusetts Board of Education, president of the Rennie Center for Education Research and Policy and director of the Education Policy and Management Program at the Harvard University Graduate School of Education where I am a lecturer on the policy and politics of education.

As chairman of the state Board, no one is prouder of its rich tradition than I am. No one is more protective of its prerogatives than I have been and continue to be. It is with this sense of pride and protectiveness that I am here today to tell you that I fully support Governor Deval Patrick's Article 87 proposal for governance changes. I do so because I believe these changes will be ultimately beneficial for students and educators while not interfering with the independence and authority of the Board of Education.

Various governors, in the past two decades have proposed reorganizations. Often these proposals have called for the creation of an education "czar," an all powerful, politically appointed cabinet secretary whose authority would supercede that of the various education boards. I have consistently opposed such proposals as encroachments on the independence of the Board of Education. Similarly, I opposed proposals to create an extraordinarily powerful chairman of the Board of Education when the then Republican governor and the Democratic leadership of the Legislature made significant governance changes to strengthen the role of the then new Board chairman in 1996. I felt these changes served to politicize the Board, make it less representative, yet more responsive to the chair and Governor while at the same time, packing its membership with ideologically similar people. Some years later, when the Governor's education advisor was made chair of the Board, I thought that was a bad idea also, as was the fact that the decision on appointing the last Commissioner and the then incoming Board chair was essentially a deal worked out behind closed doors in the then Governor's office.

Suffice it to say, we've had many twists and turns on governance in recent years. Now, we have a new Governor coming forward to propose his own set of changes. He, too, initially favored a strong education secretariat, an education czar. Nonetheless, he appointed me, a known opponent of such a

concept, as the co-chair of his Governance Task Force. Over time, the Governor has shaped a much more modest, but still important proposal to create a secretariat which will truly be dedicated to comprehensive, cross sector planning, coordinating and budgeting. That a Secretary would have authority in these areas is only natural if greater coordination is, as I believe it is, a worthwhile goal.

We need to break down the silos in the world of education to encourage greater efficiency and better transitions for our students. We need to accelerate progress to creating a seamless pre Kindergarten through college education system that truly educates every child to proficiency. At the moment, our education sector is too fragmented to realize this dream, but a competent Secretary of Education, operating with the Governor's authority can make interagency collaboration a daily reality.

For example, the Secretary would have the power to regularly convene an education cabinet composed of board chairs and commissioners in each of the sectors as well as the heads of other youth related agencies in the area of employment and training and health and human services. Such a cabinet could be a very important instrument for making interagency collaboration a reality so that children, especially poor children, receive comprehensive, coordinated services, the kind of support that will be essential if we are truly to realize our dream of having all children achieve proficiency.

At the same time, the Governor proposes to restore a couple of seats to the Board. When I first served on the state Board of Education, we had 17 members and did a good job of representing various constituencies across the Commonwealth. When the Board was radically down-sized to 9 members in 1996, a move which I testified in opposition to, it became far less representative and there ensued at least a decade of profound alienation between the Board and the field in education. This alienation had deleterious effects on policy and practice. The increase in size to 11 members will not only enable the Board to be more representative, it will give us sufficient size to create subcommittees which will enable us to become more efficient and effective in our work.

And though I will sorely miss both the Chancellor of Higher Education and the Commissioner of Early Childhood Education should they depart the Board, I know that our new Commissioner will be working closely with them and their time, and the time of Commissioner-elect Chester, will be better spent in engaging collaboratively through the new mechanisms that the Secretary of Education will create.

As to the re-staggering of terms, this is a change that simply restores balance to the Board. The staggering of terms had disappeared due to a combination of historical accident and political manipulation. Re-instituting staggering will enable the Board to be, as it should be, only modestly and gradually responsive to changes in leadership made by the electorate. In this way, the Board is partially buffered from sudden political changes, providing the children in the education system some measure of protection from sudden lurches of change.

The Board's existing powers would be substantially the same were the proposed governance changes to pass. In reality, the Board has never been fully independent. For example, we lack budgetary

power. Our budget is always submitted as part of the Administration's budget proposal much as is the budget of other departments. We do not make policy in a vacuum either. We shape our policies and regulations in accordance with the legislative intent.

On the other hand, we do have autonomy in making our policy decisions and that autonomy would in no way be compromised or diminished with this set of changes. We would retain the same range of powers we have today with one exception. We would have to share decision making powers on appointing a new Commissioner with the Secretary. The Board would be the sole nominator of a single candidate for the Commissioner's post and the Secretary could approve or veto that candidate. However, once a Commissioner was appointed, he would serve strictly and exclusively at the pleasure of the Board. This is the crucial autonomy to protect.

Incidentally, Governors, in recent decades, seeking to influence Board decisions, have been deeply involved in the appointment of Commissioners. When I was on the Board in the early 1990's, Governor Weld actually sat with the Board to interview finalists and then made his preference known to Board members. Later as already mentioned, Governor Cellucci brokered the appointment of Commissioner Driscoll when the Board of Education deadlocked and failed to make an appointment. Ironically, Governor Patrick has probably been least involved of any recent Governor in the appointment of a Commissioner out of his deference to an autonomous Board on which he's appointed only two members. Governor Patrick interviewed all three finalists privately then revealed his preference only to me, and I did not share that information with the Board. I appreciated the Governor's willingness to honor the Board's independence and take this action as a sign of how he and the Secretary will operate in the future.

In conclusion, let me say that education is, and should be, a public enterprise subject to political processes. Politics is the clash of values and the resolution of those clashes through the legitimate functioning of our democratic and political system. No enterprise more deeply reflects our values than education, so, naturally, education policy is and should be subject to our political processes.

I find it preciously naïve, or downright disingenuous, in some people to pretend that education can or should be insulated from politics. Not so coincidentally, such concerns generally arise only when the plaintiff's ideology is out of power. But that's another story.

In the end, the success of this set of governance changes will depend on people and leadership. Governance changes are generally overestimated in their capacity to have a real impact on student learning. I believe this set of changes, the kind of coordination and cohesiveness promised by these modest reforms, can lead to genuine improvement of our education system and hence real benefits to students. However, this result will depend on picking the right leader, someone not seeking to build an empire, but someone seeking to fulfill the clear intent of this proposal that is to create a seamless, cohesive education and youth development system that will provide sufficient advantages to all our students so that achievement gaps will be closed and all students will attain full proficiency and

success.

These proposals aren't a silver bullet, but they could be a big help, and I urge you to give them your full approval. Thank you.

[return to top of page ^](#)

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Mass TeLLS

Teaching, Learning and Leading Survey

Navigation

- [Home](#)
- [FAQ](#)

Results

- [View 2008 Survey Results](#)

Reports

- [Mass TeLLS Final Report \(.pdf\)](#)
- [Presentation of Mass TeLLS Final Report \(.pdf\)](#)

Links

2008 Massachusetts Teaching, Learning and Leading Survey

"As the Commonwealth embarks on the next chapter in education improvement, we must have the voice of educators in the conversation. This survey is a unique and important opportunity to help shape education policy and practice with the perspective of the very teachers and administrators most involved in making classrooms succeed."

- Governor Deval Patrick

Results

Over 40,000 Massachusetts educators - teachers and administrators - responded to the Massachusetts Teaching, Learning and Leading Survey in March 2008. Educators provided their views about teaching and learning conditions, including leadership, empowerment, facilities and resources, professional development, and time, in their schools. The insights from educators across the Commonwealth provide critical information for making local and state-level decisions to improve Massachusetts schools. The survey data are released only at the school and district levels if a minimum of 40 percent and at least 5 of the school faculty responded to the survey. [Click](#)

- [Data Use Memo \(.pdf\)](#)
- [Training Information \(.pdf\)](#)
- [Training Session \(.pdf\)](#)
- [Training Presentation \(.pdf\)](#)
- [Preview the Survey \(.pdf\)](#)
- [Preview Principal Survey \(.pdf\)](#)

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- [Massachusetts Secondary School Administrators' Association](#)
- [Massachusetts Elementary School Principals Association](#)
- [Massachusetts Business Alliance for](#)

[here to access school level data reports.](#)

The Massachusetts Teaching, Learning and Leading Survey: [Creating Conditions Where Teachers Stay and Teachers Thrive](#) was released on February 24, 2009 to the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education. The final report of the Mass TeLLS initiative analyzes teaching conditions in the Commonwealth, documents connections to student achievement and future employment plans, and examines how educators view conditions differently. Read the [press release](#) and review a [powerpoint presentation of findings](#).

Using the Data

The success of Mass TeLLS depends on the extent to which school communities can use the resulting data to inform real school improvement processes. Toward that end, [The New Teacher Center created a resources page](#) to help schools and communities engage in ongoing and meaningful conversations about potential strategies to improve teaching and learning conditions. All members of the Mass TeLLS Coalition are committed to the appropriate use of the Mass TeLLS data to improve student achievement and to support positive working conditions in Massachusetts public schools. Coalition members have described their beliefs about the purpose of the survey and its appropriate use in a [Memo of Understanding](#).

[Click here to learn about support opportunities for enhancing teaching conditions.](#)

Partners

A collection of stakeholder groups representing teachers, superintendents, community and business groups (listed on left side of this page) are collectively working with [The New Teacher Center at the University of California at Santa Cruz \(NTC\)](#) to conduct the survey. NTC is a nonpartisan organization with a mission to support the development of an effective, dedicated and inspired teaching force. NTC also has extensive experience conducting similar surveys across the country.

Education

- Rennie Center for Education Research and Policy
- The Boston Foundation
- Nellie Mae Education Foundation

Conducted By

New Teacher Center with
LEARN North Carolina



Governor Deval Patrick, the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, the Massachusetts Teachers Association, the American Federation of Teachers - Massachusetts, the National Education Association, the Massachusetts Association of School Committees, the Massachusetts Association of School Superintendents, the Massachusetts Secondary School Administrators' Association, the Massachusetts Elementary School Principals Association, the Massachusetts Business Alliance for Education, the Rennie Center for Education Research and Policy, The Boston Foundation, and the Nellie Mae Education Foundation are some of the groups supporting MassTeLLS.

In partnership with the [New Teacher Center](#). ContactUs@MassTeLLS.org



- › [BESE Home](#)
- › [Board Meeting Schedule](#)
- › [Board in Brief](#)
- › [Board Meeting Minutes](#)
- › [BESE Members](#)
- › [Board Documents](#)
- › [BESE Advisory Councils](#)
- › [Chairman's Statements](#)

[District/School Administration](#) › [Administration](#) ›

The Massachusetts Board of Elementary and Secondary Education

Update on Six Commonwealth Priority Schools

To: Members of the Board of Education

From: Jeffrey Nellhaus, Acting Commissioner of Education

Date: February 19, 2008

The purpose of this memorandum is to update the Board of Education on the status of six Commonwealth Priority Schools. My initial recommendation was to designate the schools as Chronically Underperforming Schools (Priority 1 Schools). The schools have been in Commonwealth Priority School status for 5-8 years and while they have strived to make improvements in curriculum, instruction, and leadership, they have not realized significant improvements in student performance. The Board has deferred action on these schools and is engaging in a broader discussion about the state's school and district accountability system.

Background

At the Board meetings in November and December, we reviewed and discussed my recommendations on the status of fourteen Commonwealth Priority Schools (CPS) identified as such during the review periods of 2000 through 2004. As a result of those discussions, the Board removed four schools from CPS status and determined that another four should remain in CPS status. The Board has not yet made a determination on the status of the remaining six schools (four in Springfield and one each in Holyoke and Lawrence). At the January Board meeting, a special afternoon session provided the opportunity for Board members to hear a presentation and overview on our school and district accountability system and discuss specific questions.

Current Accountability System

Our accountability system is grounded in state statute and regulation, providing guidance for the designation of Commonwealth Priority Schools (603 CMR 2.03). The regulations also articulate some of the supports to be provided by the Department to the school and district in the event of such a determination.

Supports for schools designated as Commonwealth Priority Schools include:

- **Guidance and tools** to support fact-finding and the development of a District Plan for School Intervention. The Department has developed surveys, inventory documents and written guidance to help a district gather pertinent information about the priority needs of its schools.
- **The opportunity to interact with educational experts:** The State Review Panel (SRP) provides district and school leaders with the benefit of their professional judgment regarding the viability of planned improvement efforts. The SRP may direct district and school leaders to conduct further planning work or direct Department support for further fact-finding before making a recommendation to the Commissioner and the Board on plan approval.
- **Leadership development:** The Department gives priority to principals in CPS to engage in National Institute for School Leadership (NISL) training.
- **Implementation support:** In Springfield and Lawrence, support is provided to both the district and its CPS to assist them in focusing inquiry, promoting the effective implementation of improvement strategies, and determining whether or not the chosen strategies are having the intended impact in schools and classrooms. Collaborative Implementation Support teams comprised of staff from across the Department promote focused and aligned approaches for support. The support includes:
 - Providing guidance focused on instructional leadership, classroom practices, teacher collaboration, and staffing;
 - Convening and modeling structured site visits and analyses in schools with district and school leaders;
 - Conducting data driven problem solving sessions with district leaders to identify and design the adaptive and technical solutions needed for systematic improvement; and
 - Collaborating to identify resources and strategies to address identified problems.

In Holyoke, the district's underperforming status has resulted in a partnership with America's Choice as the district's Turnaround Partner. That initiative includes a process that is similar to the Implementation Support described above and is an integral part of the America's Choice design in all Holyoke schools.

Supports designated for chronically underperforming schools:

When a CPS fails to demonstrate significant improvement in student performance within 24 months after the Board has approved the school's remedial plan, the statute and regulations require the Board to consider a determination of chronic underperformance. At this juncture, M.G.L. c. 69, § 1J sets out the following, more intensive supports:

- Removal of the school's principal, unless the Board finds that the principal did not play a significant role in the underperformance of the school;
- Authority of the principal to dismiss teachers with professional teacher status (i.e., tenure) for good cause, following specified procedures that may differ from those provided under the collective bargaining agreement;
- Authority for the superintendent, during the period of remediation, to increase the salary of any principal or teacher assigned to the school (by not more than 1% for every 10% of enrolled low income students at the school), provided that funds are appropriated and made available by the

Commissioner;

- Funding from the district that is at least equal to the average per pupil funding received for students of the same classification and grade levels; and
- Other actions determined by the Board to be reasonably calculated to increase the number of students at the school who will meet state standards.

It has been the Department's practice to secure a Turnaround Partner for a school designated as chronically underperforming. In these schools, where more intensive assistance is needed, the Department has invested in America's Choice as the designated Turnaround Partner. Currently, with 3 schools so designated, the Department has contributed approximately \$150,000 annually per school. The schools have implemented a comprehensive school reform model that has changed curriculum and instructional practices, provided teachers with professional development, designed services and supports for students, and helped school leaders develop their skills.

- The Department has also supported hiring and awarding performance bonuses for principals in two of the schools at an annual cost of approximately \$20,000 per principal to ensure stability for strong instructional leadership at the schools.
- Principals in the chronically underperforming school have participated in NISL training.

Two of the schools currently designated as chronically underperforming or Priority 1 Schools (Henry Lord Middle School and Matthew Kuss Middle School in Fall River) have made significant progress in 2007, making AYP for students in the aggregate in both English language arts and mathematics. A second consecutive year of comparable improvement will remove the schools from Priority 1 status. In the case of the third school (William Peck Middle School in Holyoke), improvement is noted in both subject areas; the school made AYP in ELA but not in mathematics. At the October 2007 meeting, the Board received more detailed memo on the progress of these three schools.

Next Steps

We are continuing to work with school and district leaders and other stakeholders to examine our current state accountability policies and procedures in an effort to determine whether the system is producing desired results and is aligned with the emerging research and best practices. We expect that the new Commissioner will have this issue high on his agenda.

In the meantime, Department staff will continue to work with superintendents, principals, teachers and others in Springfield, Lawrence and Holyoke to support their school improvement efforts. As Commonwealth Priority Schools, the six schools will continue to receive the services described above. To the extent possible, we will make other resources available to these districts and schools and will collaborate with them in determining the specific supports needed.

last updated: February 22, 2008



EVENTS CALENDAR

June 2009						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
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	1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11



Conference Directions

Dorchester - Lilla G. Frederick Pilot Middle School

**270 Columbia Road
 Dorchester, MA 02121**

From the North:

Take I-93 South to Exit 15 (Columbia Road - JFK Library).
 At the bottom of the ramp, bear right.
 At the 3rd traffic light, turn left onto Columbia Road.
 When you pass under the RR bridge, you'll continue straight through 1 set of lights.
 The school will be up ahead on the right side of the road at 270 Columbia Road.

From the Mass Pike:

Take I-90 East to Exit 24 A-B-C.
 Take I-93 South to Exit 15 (Columbia Road - JFK Library).
 At the bottom of the ramp, bear right.
 At the 3rd traffic light, turn left onto Columbia Road.
 When you pass under the RR bridge, you'll continue straight through 1 set of lights.
 The school will be up ahead on the right side of the road at 270 Columbia Road.

Parking:

There is on-street parking on Columbia Road. There is also some parking available along the access road off of Columbia Road just as you reach the school.



- › [BESE Home](#)
- › [Board Meeting Schedule](#)
- › [Board in Brief](#)
- › [Board Meeting Minutes](#)
- › [BESE Members](#)
- › [Board Documents](#)
- › [BESE Advisory Councils](#)
- › [Chairman's Statements](#)

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The Massachusetts Board of Elementary and Secondary Education

Briefing for the February 26, 2008 Regular Meeting of the Board of Education

To: Members of the Board of Education

From: Jeffrey Nellhaus, Acting Commissioner of Education

Date: February 19, 2008

The next regular meeting of the Board of Education will be on Tuesday, February 26, 2008, at the Lilla G. Frederick Pilot Middle School in Boston, starting at 9:00 a.m. Coffee will be available at 8:30 a.m. The regular business meeting will adjourn by 1:00 p.m. If you need overnight accommodations or any additional information about the schedule, please call Belinda Wilson at (781) 338-3118.

Overview

We will be welcomed to the Lilla G. Frederick Pilot Middle School by Boston Schools Superintendent Carol Johnson and Principal Debra Socia. We are holding our meeting at this school for two reasons. First, it gives the Board the opportunity to hear from Superintendent Johnson about her initiatives for the Boston Public Schools. The superintendent's January 30, 2008 report to the School Committee, "Proficiency, Opportunity and Efficiency: Superintendent's Acceleration Agenda for the Boston Public Schools" is posted at: <http://boston.k12.ma.us/bps/news/Plan.pdf> and a copy is enclosed in your materials under Tab 12. Second, we will learn about the Frederick Pilot Middle School's unique wireless laptop initiative, which enables every student in the school to have access to a laptop computer for use during the school day.

On our business agenda, the first item is a vote on the salary for our new commissioner, Mitchell Chester. We will then discuss the report and recommendations on next steps in the Randolph Public Schools. I am presenting technical amendments to the Regulations on Under-Performing Schools, for initial discussion by the Board this month. We will have a presentation and discussion on some statewide initiatives relating to educator preparation and licensure. Action items on the agenda include the updated technology literacy standards and several charter school items, including a vote on new charters, renewal of the charter for New Leadership Charter School, and two charter amendments.

Regular Meeting

Comments from the Chairman

The Chairman will present an update on current issues. The Legislature has endorsed Governor Patrick's education reorganization bill under Article 87 to the Massachusetts Constitution. (Chairman Reville's testimony on the bill is enclosed for your information under Tab 11.) As a result of the reorganization, this will be the last meeting at which Chancellor of Higher Education Pat Plummer and Commissioner of Early Education and Care Anne Reale will participate as members. We extend our deep appreciation to them for their service on the Board of Education.

Comments from the Commissioner

- **College and Career Web Portal.** I am pleased to announce that the Massachusetts Education Financing Authority (MEFA), at the request of Governor Patrick, has agreed to set aside \$1 million for the development of the Massachusetts College and Career Web Portal this year. This web portal, modeled after successful sites in other states, will allow students across the Commonwealth to plan for, research and apply to college and financial aid online, all in the same place. Staff from the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education and the Board of Higher Education have worked together with key stakeholders for the past two years to develop a plan for building and launching this site. In addition to their financial commitment, MEFA has agreed to house the portal in their office, hire the appropriate staff, run it off their server, and provide us with in-kind contributions of marketing, technology and IT expertise. They already work closely with guidance counselors around the state on college financing issues, and will be able to integrate the portal into their existing system. This is an exciting step forward, and we look forward to working closely with MEFA on the web portal initiative.
- **Update on Six Commonwealth Priority Schools.** Enclosed under Tab 14 is a memo updating the Board on the six Commonwealth Priority Schools that we have discussed at our recent meetings. The Department is continuing to work with these schools as well as working on the larger issue of how best to support improvement in schools with persistently low performance.
- **Budget Hearing.** I testified before the Senate and House Committees on Ways and Means on February 19th in support of the Board's FY09 education budget proposal. Committee members were interested in discussing ways to address the achievement gap and other pressing issues. I will brief you further at our February 26th meeting.

Items for Discussion and Action

1. **Commissioner's Salary - Discussion and Vote**

The Board voted unanimously on January 17th to appoint Mitchell Chester as Commissioner of Education. By statute, the Board sets the Commissioner's salary. Chairman Reville will present the motion for the Board's approval.

2. **Randolph Public Schools: Report and Recommendation on Next Steps - Discussion and Vote**

In November 2007, the Board voted to designate the Randolph Public School District as an underperforming

district. The Board directed the Department to conduct a leadership review to determine the district's capacity to address identified problems and improve the quality of educational services to Randolph students. The District Leadership Evaluation Report written by our three-member team is provided for your review and discussion at this month's Board meeting. I am recommending that the Board vote on specific actions and benchmarks based on the findings in the report.

3. Proposed Technical Amendments to Regulations on Underperforming Schools and Districts (603 CMR 2.00) - Initial Discussion and Vote to Solicit Public Comment

I recommend that the Board amend the Regulations on Under-Performing Schools and School Districts, 603 CMR 2.00, to incorporate the term "Priority 1 School" as equivalent to the term "chronically underperforming school" in the statute. In practice, the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education has been using the term "Priority 1 Schools." This proposed amendment to the regulations would formalize it. This technical change does not alter the substantive standards in the regulations. With the Board's authorization, we will disseminate the proposed amendments for public comment, in accordance with the Administrative Procedure Act, and then bring them back later in the spring for a final vote.

4. Educator Effectiveness: Overview of Statewide Initiatives in Preparation and Licensure - Discussion

At the February meeting, as part of our continuing discussion of educator quality, Associate Commissioner Bob Bickerton and I will provide an overview of our current educator licensure system and highlight four statewide initiatives that are aimed at strengthening educator effectiveness in the Commonwealth. We have invited two speakers during the public comment portion of our meeting to present to the Board on two of the initiatives mentioned in the memo - the Teachers21 bill (Susan Freedman) and the Teaching, Learning and Leading Survey (Kathy Skinner).

5. Updated Massachusetts Technology Literacy Standards - Discussion and Possible Vote

Working with the Massachusetts Technology Leadership Council and the Board's Educational Technology Advisory Council, we have updated the *Massachusetts Technology Literacy Standards*. The Board originally adopted the standards in 2001. I recommend that the Board approve the updated standards. Since the document has been well vetted and the revisions are relatively minor, the Board could vote to approve the updated standards at this month's meeting. We have invited two partners who have worked with the Department on the standards, Isa Zimmerman and Joyce Plotkin, to present to the Board during the public comment portion of our meeting.

6. Charter Schools:

1. Recommendations to Grant New Charters - Discussion and Vote

The charter school statute directs the Board to review applications for new charters and grant the charters in February. At last month's meeting the Board received summaries of the five final applications for new charters that were submitted for consideration this year. I am recommending that the Board grant four new charters, one for a Horace Mann charter school (Silver Hill Horace Mann Charter School in Haverhill, to open in 2008) and three for Commonwealth charter schools (Dorchester Collegiate Academy Charter School in Boston, to open in 2009; and two regional charter

schools: Hampden Charter School of Science, to be located in the Chicopee/Ludlow/Springfield/West Springfield region and to open in 2009, and the International Charter School of Southeastern Massachusetts, to be located in Brockton and to open in 2008). Your materials include information about each charter proposal. Associate Commissioner Jeff Wulfson and Mary Street, Director of Charter Schools, will be at the Board meeting to answer any questions you may have about the charter school applications and our process for reviewing and recommending new charters.

2. Charter Renewal for New Leadership Charter School - Discussion and Possible Vote

I recommend that the Board renew, with conditions, the charter for the New Leadership Charter School, which is a Horace Mann charter school located in Springfield. The memo under Tab 6(b) outlines the Department's findings based on our evaluation of the school, and presents the conditions that we believe should be attached to the charter renewal. A detailed Summary of Review is also enclosed. The Board may choose to waive its bylaw that calls for discussion at one meeting and a vote at a subsequent meeting, in order to vote on the charter renewal this month. If the Board would prefer to wait until the March meeting to vote, you should vote to waive the provision in the charter school regulations that sets a March 1 deadline for renewals. We have included a motion to waive the regulation for the Board's use if necessary, as well as the motion for charter renewal.

3. Charter Amendments for Innovation Academy Charter School and Boston Prep Charter School - Discussion and Vote

Pursuant to the Charter School Regulations, the Board must approve major changes in the material terms of a school's charter. Innovation Academy Charter School requests approval to become a regional charter school and to move the location of its facility from Chelmsford to Tyngsborough. Boston Preparatory Charter Public School requests approval to fully expand its grade span to include grade 12 as proposed in its original charter application. I recommend that the Board approve these requests. Details are provided in your materials.

7. Approval of Grants - Vote

Presented for your approval this month are grants under the federal program for Technology for Data Driven Decisions (\$270,000). I recommend that the Board approve the grants as presented.

Other Items for Information

8. Education-Related News Clippings

Enclosed are several recent articles about education. Chairman Reville is quoted in the Associated Press story, "Longer school days a hot idea facing big obstacles in Mass." and in the op-ed piece from the *New York Times*, "The Early Bird Gets the Bad Grade."

9. Initial Report on Expanded Learning Time

The Board heard a presentation on the Expanded Learning Time initiative in November 2007. Enclosed for your information is the executive summary of the initial report on Expanded Learning Time published recently by Abt Associates.

10. *Tough Choices, Tough Times*: Executive Summary

Chairman Reville suggested that Board members review the executive summary of the *Tough Choices, Tough Times* report, in anticipation of further discussion at a future meeting.

11. **Chairman Reville's Testimony on Education Governance Reorganization Bill**

Chairman Reville testified in support of Governor Patrick's state education governance reorganization bill, which passed the Legislature and takes effect on March 10th. A copy of his testimony is enclosed.

12. ***Proficiency, Opportunity and Efficiency: Superintendent's Acceleration Agenda for the Boston Public Schools***

Superintendent Carol Johnson will welcome the Board to the pilot middle school and speak about her agenda for the Boston Public Schools. Her recent report to the Boston School Committee is enclosed under Tab 12 for your information.

13. **Massachusetts Teaching, Learning and Leading Survey (MassTeLLS)**

Kathy Skinner of the Massachusetts Teachers Association will speak to the Board during the public comment portion of the meeting about the Massachusetts Teaching, Learning and Leading Survey. Background material is enclosed under Tab 13 for your information.

14. **Update on Six Commonwealth Priority Schools**

This memo updates the Board on the status of six Commonwealth Priority Schools: four in Springfield and one each in Holyoke and Lawrence.

15. **Directions to the Meeting**

If you have questions about any agenda items, please call me. I look forward to seeing you in Boston on February 26th.

last updated: February 22, 2008

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