

For Immediate Release
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**State Releases 2014 MCAS School and District Results;
Four Schools to Exit Underperforming Status**

MALDEN – The Patrick Administration and the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education today released the 2014 school and district MCAS results and commended 42 schools statewide for their high achievement, high progress, and/or narrowing proficiency gaps.

The state also announced that four schools designated as "underperforming" or Level 4 will exit that status after meeting their turnaround goals. Those four schools include Jeremiah E. Burke High School in Boston, the first Level 4 high school to exit that status. Of the 34 schools that were in the first cohort of Level 4 schools named in 2010, the majority have now exited underperforming status.

Also notable in today's results is the fact that Revere's schools are all Level 1 or 2 and that the Lawrence School District continues to improve – evidence that districts that serve students from diverse racial, ethnic, and economic backgrounds can meet high expectations.

"Teachers and students across the Commonwealth have much to be proud of with this year's MCAS results," said Governor Patrick. "This improvement is the direct result of collaborative work between our schools and our students, but as achievement gaps still persist, we must continue to invest in education so that each student has the chance to succeed."

"Closing the achievement gap is our priority, and the strides we have made are reflected in these MCAS results," said Secretary of Education Matthew Malone. "Our progress is due to the incredible work happening in classrooms across Massachusetts every day. I'm so proud of the Commonwealth's teachers and students for their accomplishments."

This year's MCAS scores follow years of improved results for students. Between 2007 and 2014, the percent of students scoring Proficient or higher on the MCAS grew in most grades in English language arts, mathematics and science and technology/engineering. Improvement has been particularly strong for African American/black students and Hispanic/Latino students, who have narrowed achievement gaps with their white peers.

However, achievement gaps remain, and there is wide variation in schools' ability to serve their students. The state's landmark Achievement Gap Act of 2010 created an accountability system that carefully identifies the state's most persistently low-performing

schools and helps accelerate student achievement in those schools. That system has already shown results, and it will be used to support six newly-identified Level 4 schools in Boston, Worcester and Springfield.

"I am pleased to see achievement gaps narrowing, and I am pleased to see that low-performing schools can and do improve when provided the right conditions," said Commissioner of Elementary and Secondary Education Mitchell Chester. "I know that some schools are still struggling, and I and my staff look forward to working with them to strengthen leadership and instruction and raise expectations. The fact that Revere's schools are all Level 1 or 2 and that the Lawrence School District continues to improve is evidence that teachers and schools do make a difference, and that students from diverse racial, ethnic, and economic backgrounds are not predestined to low academic performance."

The 42 Commendation schools announced today include three Massachusetts public schools that the U.S. Department of Education is considering for designation as 2014 National Blue Ribbon Schools. Blue Ribbon Schools are recognized in two categories: closing gaps and exemplary high performance. This year, Julia Bancroft School in Auburn and Barry School in Chicopee are under consideration for closing gaps, and East Elementary in Sharon is under consideration for high performance.

Accountability Designations:

Under the state accountability system, the state uses MCAS scores over time, student growth percentiles and other factors to classify schools into Levels 1-5 as follows:

- Level 1: Meeting gap narrowing goals
- Level 2: Not meeting gap narrowing goals (or MCAS participation of less than 95 percent)
- Level 3: Among lowest performing 20 percent of schools or subgroups (or MCAS participation of less than 90 percent or persistently low graduation rates)
- Level 4: Among lowest achieving and least improving schools
- Level 5: Chronically underperforming schools

A total of 424 schools statewide are classified as Level 1 for meeting their performance benchmarks, including gap narrowing goals.

Exiting Level 4 this fall: Burke High School in Boston, Chandler Elementary Community School in Worcester, and Brightwood and Brookings elementary schools in Springfield. The Department of Elementary and Secondary Education will immediately begin an exit assurances approval process with these four schools and their districts to ensure that the conditions necessary for sustained improvement remain in place.

Remaining in Level 4: From the first cohort of Level 4 schools named in 2010, Elihu Greenwood Elementary and English High School in Boston, Dean Vocational Technical High School in Holyoke, Community Day Arlington Elementary (formerly Arlington Elementary School) and Spark Academy (formerly South Lawrence East Middle School) in Lawrence, and White Street Elementary School and Commerce High School in Springfield. These schools have shown some but not sufficient improvement.

Schools remaining in Level 4 will require support from their district leadership teams to assess current needs and determine what specific changes and enhancements must be made to dramatically increase the impact of turnaround efforts. This may involve modifying and strengthening existing turnaround plans, creating ambitious new goals under existing plans or developing new plans with different strategies.

Newly designated Level 4: Henry Grew Elementary and Dorchester Academy schools in Boston, Elm Park Community School in Worcester, and three Springfield middle schools: Forest Park, Van Sickle and Duggan. The Department placed these six schools in Level 4 based on their MCAS performance from 2011-2014 and, in the case of the high school, its graduation and dropout rate data.

Under closer review: Dearborn Middle School in Boston and Kiley, Chestnut Street and Kennedy middle schools in Springfield. The Commissioner is concerned about the pace of improvement at these existing Level 4 schools and will be looking for concrete plans that address those concerns.

2014 District and School Level Summary:

Statewide Totals by Level	Districts		Schools	
	#	%	#	%
Level 5	1	0%	4	0%
Level 4	10	3%	36	2%
Level 3	66	17%	297	18%
Level 2	233	61%	854	53%
Level 1	73	19%	424	26%
Total	383	100%	1,615	100%
Insufficient Data **	24	-	245	-

**Schools and single-school districts with insufficient data to be eligible for a level are schools ending in grade PK, K, 1 or 2; very small schools; and schools without four full years of data.

2014 MCAS Results

Statewide MCAS results showed that 90 percent of 10th graders scored Proficient or higher in English language arts, 79 percent in mathematics, and 71 percent in science and technology/engineering (STE).

In grades 3-8, scores varied only slightly compared to 2013. Student performance in English language arts in grades 3 and 4 has been flat over the past six years.

Other statewide results include:

- Eighty-eight (88) percent of 10th graders last year (class of 2016) met the state's minimum testing requirements to earn a high school diploma on their first attempt

by scoring Needs Improvement or higher in English language arts, mathematics and science and technology/engineering. That compares to 88 percent of students who met that threshold after their first attempt last year (class of 2015), 86 percent in 2012 (class of 2014), and 68 percent 11 years ago when the graduation requirement first took effect with the class of 2003.

- Between 2007 and 2014, the achievement gap in English language arts in terms of the percentage of students scoring Proficient or higher for white students and African American/black students narrowed in all grades. The gap between white students and Hispanic or Latino students also narrowed in all grades. The greatest gap narrowing in English language arts for African American/black students and Hispanic or Latino students occurred in 10th grade, where it narrowed by 15 percentage points and 16 percentage points respectively. That represents a 50 percent and 47 percent narrowing of the gap respectively.
- In mathematics between 2007 and 2014, the achievement gap between white students and African American/black students and between white students and Hispanic or Latino students narrowed at all grades except grade 5, where the gap between whites and African Americans/blacks increased by a single point. Among both African American/black students and Hispanic or Latino students, the greatest narrowing occurred in grade 3, where it narrowed by 7 points for African American students and 9 points for Hispanic or Latino students.

For more information on MCAS or to view school or district results, visit http://profiles.doe.mass.edu/state_report/mcas.aspx or <http://www.doe.mass.edu/mcas/>. For more information about accountability and assistance level designations, visit <http://www.doe.mass.edu/apa/accountability/default.html>.

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