

MASC 75th Annual Delegate Assembly: Save the Date

The MASC Board of Directors has announced that the Association's Annual Meeting, which is usually held in Hyannis during the Joint Conference, will take place on Saturday, November 7 at 1:00pm.

The Assembly will be held online and delegates will receive advance guidance on voting procedures.

Delegates to the annual meeting will vote on the incoming Board of Directors as well as ten resolutions that have been presented on issues ranging from MCAS and High

Stakes Testing; Lowering the Voting Age for Municipal Voting; COVID-19 State Funding; and School Committee Anti-Racism resolution, among others. These resolutions are printed in the annual Delegate Manual which is currently in production and will be sent to all MASC members. Resolutions are also posted on the MASC website.

Keynote Session on Equity

Prior to the Delegate Assembly, MASC is also planning for a 10:00am

professional development program on equity, and the issues around it that the pandemic has exposed. There will be no charge to attend the morning session or the assembly, but you must register in advance in order to receive materials and the session link.

Committees will also need to designate their delegate to the assembly. The delegate form is included in the "Forms You Need" booklet on the MASC website. It is also included in this Bulletin.

Join MASC for Lunch: Professional Development for School Committees

Although MASC has had to cancel the 2020 annual conference because of the COVID pandemic, it has not cancelled its commitment to providing important professional development to members that they might otherwise have been able to access during the conference in Hyannis. Join your colleagues for our monthly lunch series of online programs focused on essential topics for new and veteran school committee members. The noontime sessions, led by MASC trainers, superintendents, school committee teams and other outside education specialists, will be held on Zoom beginning in October. With the exception of the October program which will be held on Wednesday, all sessions will be held, live, on Fridays, from 12:00-1:15pm and will allow plenty of opportunity for questions. The sessions will also be recorded and posted on the MASC website. Save the dates, and bring your lunch.

Registrations for each of these sessions will be posted on the MASC website 30 days in advance. There is no charge to participate in any of

the sessions, but we ask that you register so that we may send you the link and any advance materials. REGISTER NOW for October 7.

The schedule of events is as follows:

Wednesday, October 7

Topic: 70 (minutes) on (Chapter) 70

A deeper dive into the Chapter 70 school funding formula.

Friday, November 6

Topic: School Committee/Superintendent Relations

Discussion of research on the importance of the governance team, with a superintendent and chair sharing practices they have in place to foster a strong relationship, and the results it has yielded.

Friday, December 4

Topic: Parliamentary Procedures

The basics of parliamentary procedure and how to use it effectively to run a good meeting.

Friday, January 8

Topic: Budgeting: The Sequel

Panelists including a school committee/superintendent team will discuss budget development and presentation of best practices.

Friday, February 5

Topic: Role of the Chair

Best practices for chairs on facilitating relationships on the governance team and appropriately acting as "servant of the assembly."

Friday, March 5

Topic: Effective Meetings

Best practices for keeping meetings focused on student achievement and keeping them efficient.

Remote Learning Checklist

A set of “self-checks” provided by Education Resource Strategies (ERS) to help your district take a strategic approach to scheduling and staffing as part of remote learning.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES:

- Keep it simple. Make remote school doable for students, families, and educators.
- Prioritize equity. Ensure that students with the greatest needs have access to high-quality instruction, additional time and attention, and social-emotional support.
- Do what works. Implement research-backed practices that are proven to accelerate student learning and strengthen student and staff well-being.

ENSURE THAT:

1. Plans are predictable, consistent, and accessible for students, families, and educators.

- Student schedules have consistent start, end and break/lunch times each day.
- Students stay on a single sign-on with the same cohort of peers as much as possible; teachers rotate.
- Families have access to the materials and supports that students need to learn.

2. Schedules prioritize time in core subjects, including synchronous and asynchronous learning.

- Synchronous time (direct instruction with a teacher online) is allocated for introduction of new concepts, critical thinking, and large group discussion and collaboration.
- Asynchronous time is allocated for skills practice, independent work, and consumption of stand-alone content.

3. Students have regular opportunities for 1:1 and small group instructional support based on ongoing assessment of their learning needs.

- Core instructional blocks include opportunities for flexible grouping of students, including time directly supported by a teacher.
- Schedules include dedicated academic intervention blocks and/or teacher office hours where students can receive small group or 1:1 support.

4. Students benefit from dedicated support for their wellness, social-emotional learning, and relationship building.

- Social-emotional learning is embedded into core instruction and small groups.
- Educators are assigned specific students for “care team” check-ins. Students with higher needs are prioritized.
- Students have daily advisory time for personalized academic and social-emotional support with a consistent adult.
- Student-teacher groupings enable continuity of relationship. Teacher teaming can allow for more personalized learning and enable students to stay with at least one teacher they know when they transition to hybrid or in-person school.

5. All staff members are fully leveraged throughout the day to support students’ academic and social-emotional learning.

- Core teachers, aides, coaches, counselors, librarians and administrators with classroom experience all work in student-facing roles as much as possible.
- Teaching and non-teaching staff lead advisory and “care team” check-ins, reach out to families, and observe and provide feedback for teachers on remote instruction.
- Ensure that staff are coached and supported as they adapt to newly defined roles and responsibilities specific to remote learning.

6. Teachers benefit from a curriculum-connected professional learning approach that includes collaborative planning, cycles of observation and feedback and leadership from instructional experts.

- Teachers who teach the same content have 90 minutes of collaborative planning time each week, focused on curriculum and instructional practice.
- Teachers who share students have time to discuss student well-being and proactively identify and address risks.
- Instructional experts, such as teacher leaders or instructional coaches, observe and provide feedback to improve remote instructional strategies and share best practices.

SEEKING YOUR INPUT



U.S. Presidential Scholarship Nominations Sought

MA DESE Commissioner Riley is seeking nominations of high school seniors for the U.S. Presidential Scholars Program. All Massachusetts high school seniors graduating between January and August of 2021 who are U.S. citizens or legal permanent residents and attend a Massachusetts public or private high school are eligible. Each school may nominate up to two students (of different genders). Students may be nominated in the general category or the career and technical education student category. More information is available at the link above. Please submit all nominations via this survey (<http://sgiz.mobi/s3/Presidential-Scholars-Program-2020-2021>) by 5:00 p.m. on Thursday, October 15.

Competitive FY21 Safe and Supportive Schools Grant

The fiscal year 2020-2021 (FY21) Safe and Supportive Schools Competitive Grant Program (<http://www.doe.mass.edu/grants/2021/335/>), funded through MA state line item 7061-9612, is now accepting proposals. The grant's primary goals are to support districts' efforts to create safe and supportive school environments and to coordinate student support initiatives informed by districts' use of the Safe and Supportive Schools Framework and Self-Assessment Tool. There are two grant options: action planning (for schools to self-reflect and create action plans), and implementation and mentorship/support (for schools implementing action plans and mentoring others to do so, too). Applications are due Thursday, October 15. The MA DESE is offering webinars at 2:00 p.m. on Monday, September 21 and at 11:00 a.m. on Wednesday, October 7 to share information and address questions about this grant and its application process. Register at: <http://sgiz.mobi/s3/SaSS-FC-335-FY21-info-sessions>.

Chapter 70 Local Contribution Study

The Student Opportunity Act (SOA) requires MA DESE and the Division of Local Services at the Department of Revenue to study and report on the local contribution component of the Chapter 70 program. The study will cover a range of issues outlined in Section 21 of the law. The Department of Elementary and Secondary Education is seeking public comment to inform the study and is collecting public comment through an online survey. Given the current public health emergency, DESE will not be convening in-person public forums. All comments should be submitted by Friday, October 16. More information and a link to the survey is available online at: <https://www.surveymoz.com/s3/5834931/Public-Comment-for-Chapter-70-Local-Contribution-Study>.

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Friday, April 2

Topic: Legislative Advocacy

Timed for a (we hope) Day on the Hill, and for advocating on issues, the basics of advocacy and communicating with your legislators.

Friday, May 7

Topic: Goal Setting

The rationale for setting goals for student achievement, as well as the basics of goal setting and monitoring.

Friday, June 4

Topic: Basics of Policy

The importance of keeping policies current, the difference between policy and procedure, and MASC's policy service.

Juneteenth declared official MA holiday

In late July, MA officially recognized June 19 as an annual state holiday — Juneteenth Independence Day. Long fought for by activists to become officially observed, Juneteenth commemorates the end of slavery in the United States. The amendment to observe Juneteenth as an official holiday was included by Rep. Bud Williams of Springfield in a COVID-19 spending bill, which was subsequently signed by Governor Baker.

School districts preparing their 2020-2021 school calendar



and beyond will need to include Juneteenth on their list of state holidays. In 2021, June 19 falls on a Saturday, which by state law means it is celebrated on Saturday. When holidays fall on a Sunday, they are celebrated on the Monday immediately following.

Six MA schools recognized for national honor

Six schools in Massachusetts have been recognized as 2020 National Blue Ribbon Schools, a distinction that honors the work of educators, families and communities for creating safe schools that engage students.

The Massachusetts schools recognized include:

- J. F. Kennedy Memorial Elementary School in the Franklin Public School District
- James B. Congdon Elementary School in the New Bedford Public School District
- Luther Burbank Middle School in the Nashoba Regional School District
- Maria Hastings Elementary School in the Lexington Public School District
- Mary Lee Burbank Elementary School in the Belmont Public School District
- Paul P. Gates Elementary School in the Acton-Boxborough Regional School District

The recognition for the schools is based on overall academic performance or progress in closing achievement gaps among student subgroups.

House passes bipartisan spending deal to avert government shutdown

The House overwhelmingly approved a bipartisan bill last week to keep the government funded through December 11th.

The 359-to-57 vote sends the legislation to the Senate, which could take it up later this week and send it to President Trump. White House officials say they don't want a shutdown, and Trump is expected to sign the bill, though he's wavered at the last minute in such scenarios in the past.

The deal was negotiated by House Speaker Nancy Pelosi and Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin after a chaotic series of talks.

The sticking point was demands from the Trump administration and Republicans – along with a handful of largely farm-state House Democrats – for an infusion of money into a farm bailout program that has been used to repay farmers impacted by recent trade policies. In exchange for agreeing to the bailout money, Pelosi secured about \$8 billion for a variety of nutrition pro-

grams, including for schoolchildren affected by the coronavirus pandemic— a significantly larger sum than had originally been on the table.

Congress needs to pass a spending bill by Sept. 30, the last day in the 2020 fiscal year, or large portions of the government would begin to shut down. The bill also must be signed by Trump ahead of the shutdown deadline.

Unfortunately, talks on a larger coronavirus relief bill appear in limbo, despite pressure on Pelosi from moderate lawmakers to take new action on economic relief.

Mnuchin reiterated in congressional testimony that the administration supports a new stimulus package, including another round of \$1,200 checks to individuals. But there is little sign that will be happening anytime soon.

Private School CARES Act Funding Rule Determined to be in Violation of Law

Public schools will no longer be expected to follow a rule that could have required them to share a larger portion of their federal COVID-19 relief funds with private school students.

That change comes after a federal judge's decision earlier this month to strike down the rule after the judge determined it violated Congress's intent in drafting the CARES federal aid package act.

The rule, which the Department officially released in July, directed schools to set aside CARES Act money for what is known as "equitable services" for all local private school students if they wanted to use the remaining money for their local public school students. That departs from how federal law typically handles those services, which are normally provided to disadvantaged and at-risk students in private schools.

In proposing the rule, Education Secretary Betsy DeVos had argued that all students were affected by the pandemic, and that some relief dollars should follow private school students.

The Department did not indicate that it had withdrawn the rule, but announced in an update that the Court had ordered the rule vacated and that it was therefore no longer in effect.

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