

2026 AWARD RECIPIENTS

MASC Lifetime Achievement and All-State School Committee Winners Announced

The following members have been nominated by their colleagues and the MASC Board of Directors in recognition of their contributions to the Association and to their students and school communities. The awards will be presented at the Friday, November 6 Life Member/Leadership Awards dinner during the upcoming conference in Danvers.

LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT

Shirley Bourque, Old Colony Reg. Voc.
Adam Emerson, Hoosac Valley
Mitchell Groski, Athol-Royalston, Reg.
John Howcroft, Acushnet
Christine Monaco, Burlington

ALL-STATE SCHOOL COMMITTEE

Division I: Kathy Clancy, Gloucester
Division II: Adam Klein, Acton-Boxborough
Division III: Jessica Chartoff, Middleborough and Jackie Weisman, Easton
Division IV: Lisa Martin, North Middlesex and Lauren Salmon-Garrett, Wachusett Reg.
Division V: Heidi Gutekenst, Belchertown and Stacy Sexton, Greenfield
Division VI: Martha Thurber, Mohawk Trail Reg.
Division VII: Kathy Bent, Barnstable
Division VIII: Brian Mushnick, Tri-County Reg. Voc.
Division IX: Joyce Asack, Brockton
Division X: Barbara Gresham, Springfield

COMING SOON TO YOUR MAILBOX

MASC 2026 Delegate Manual/Annual Report



Delegate Assembly

Friday, November 6, 2026
DoubleTree by Hilton
Boston North Shore, Danvers
(New location this year)

Have you registered your delegate yet?

Delegate registration form is available online:
www.masc.org/conference

MASC Bulletin

www.masc.org

September 2026 v.60 n.6

Massachusetts Association of School Committees

MA releases new guidance for schools on immigration enforcement

On August 5, 2026, the Governor signed the PROTECT Act into law. The legislation generally prohibits civil arrests on school grounds and child care premises without a judicial warrant or judicial order.

On August 21, DESE released specific model policies and procedures for school districts, charter schools, and educational collaboratives. The resources establish steps for designating school and district points of contact, involving legal counsel,

reviewing judicial warrants and orders, documenting interactions with civil law enforcement and notifying parents or guardians if an agent requests access to a student or student records. Additionally, the department provided procedures for alerting school communities when civil law enforcement agents are confirmed on school grounds while protecting individual privacy, updating student emergency contact lists, and sharing policy details with families.

As part of the legislation and the

guidance issued by DESE, districts are required to adopt a policy and develop companion procedures to align with the new law by September 1st or the first day of school, whichever is earliest. MASC has taken the suggested policy provided by DESE, and created a model policy for our committees to consider.

The model MASC policy: **ACL: Interacting with Law Enforcement Officers Engaged in Civil Law Enforcement (PROTECT Act)** is posted on the MASC website and can be accessed at www.masc.org/services/policy-services/updated-new-policies

MASC 2026 Division Elections

The following MASC Divisions are looking for members to serve as Division Chair, Vice Chair, and Secretary-Treasurer: II, IV, VI, VIII, and X. These divisions are also looking for individuals to serve on the Nominating Committee. Members of this committee are responsible for interviewing interested candidates for MASC Division Officers.



If you are interested in either serving on your local Nominating Committee or becoming a Division Officer, please email a letter of intent to the appropriate Division Representative from the list below. To find your division, go to: www.masc.org/divisions/.

Devin Sheehan-Division II, Devinsheehan413@gmail.com
Stacey Rizzo-Division IV; mascstacey@gmail.com
Mildred Lefebvre-Division VI; lefebvre4@gmail.com
Jason Fraser-Division VIII; jfraser@slrsd.org
Deb Davis-Division X; eadavis1@comcast.net

All requests to be considered must be sent to the appropriate individual by **September 30**. More information about the Division Officer responsibilities are on the MASC website: www.masc.org/masc-2026-division-elections/

Teen dating violence policy mandate

Report provided Patrick Francomano, MASC General Counsel

The MA Association of School Superintendents (MASS) recently made available a policy template for Teen Dating Violence in an effort to comply with MGL, c.71, s.2C. The statute provides in part that each “school district in the commonwealth, subject to appropriation, shall implement a specific policy and discipline code to address teen dating violence in public schools.” The compliance issue apparently became a concern when one district was cited by DESE’s Problem Resolution System Office (PRSO) for not having such a policy in place. PRSO is an

continued on page 3

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Nate Steele
School Committee Member
1831 State Rd
Richmond, MA 01254-5100

Massachusetts Association of School Committees
One McKinley Square
Boston, MA 02109
masc

NATIONAL NEWS

META TO PAY \$18B OVER SOCIAL MEDIA ADDICTION

Teenagers users of Instagram and Facebook will face stringent new limits on when and how they can engage with the popular social media sites, part of a landmark settlement struck with MA and dozens of other states last week.

Technology giant Meta also agreed to pay up to \$18 billion to 52 states, territories, and Washington DC.

The deal came after multiple states sued, accusing Meta of designing its platforms to deliberately addict young users so they spend more time online. The agreement comes after some of these states went to trial in federal court.

The new conditions include a limit of two hours a day for teens up to age 18 on both platforms, which cannot be lifted without a parent's approval. The company also agreed to block access from midnight to 6am, and silence notifications between the school hours of 8am and 3pm. (Direct messaging is exempt from these limits so as to allow teens to stay connected with family and friends.)

Meta has also said that parents will be able to get new controls over teen accounts, such as updates on usage and alerts if their child interacts with "potentially suspicious accounts." These rules apply to 13-18-year-olds. Those under 13 are not allowed to use Instagram or Facebook.

The changes will be implemented over the next four-to-six months according to the office of MA Attorney General Andrea Campbell. Over the next year, Meta must also implement an enhanced age assurance framework designed to identify users under 13 and users 13-18 with a high level of accuracy.

MA will receive up to \$516 million, Campbell's office reported. Approximately \$366 million is guaranteed to be paid over the next 10 years, which included money resolving privacy claims dealing with Facebook data.

The money will go toward efforts to remediate "the harms caused by social media to MA young people," including mental health services, after-school programs, and phone-free school initiatives Campbell's office said. An independent auditor will monitor compliance and whether the measures are having their intended effect.

Meta said states will receive about 70% of the payments—to be released in annual installments—with the other 30% coming only if YouTube and TikTok—owned by different companies—agree to payments and to implement similar age restrictions. If the other two platforms agree to these terms, Meta has agreed to further tighten some of the new restrictions, including a one hour daily limit per app, and nighttime notification blocks from 10pm to 7am.

A number of other lawsuits against Meta are still pending. (Information for this report was obtained from *The Boston Globe*, State House News Service, and *The New York Times*.)

MA NEWS

POLICY NOTES ON LEGISLATIVE ACTION

- While both the Senate and the House passed bills regarding cell phone use in schools, the language in the bills was very different. Though the discussion was sent to a conference committee, the Legislature took no action before the end of the formal session. No legislation is expected this term; policy regarding cell phones remains a matter of local policy.
 - The Freedom to Read law was signed into law by Governor Healey on August 10. This law requires updates to policies on the selection and challenge of library materials. MASC is working with the MA Library System, charged in the law with creating model policy, on redrafting model policy.
- We will share this in an upcoming newsletter.

Joint Conference App Whova

Ready to attend the MASC/MASS 2026 Joint Conference at its new location in Danvers? Following the successful introduction of the conference app in 2025, we will once again be using the Whova mobile app for our event.

- Visit your App Store on your phone to download the app. With the app you can:**
- View the event agenda and plan your personal schedule
 - Access to documents and slides shared by organizers or speakers
 - Find out who else is attending the event and reach out to people ahead of time
 - Plan some social activities such as coffee breaks or meet-ups with your fellow attendees
 - Receive updates such as last-minute session changes from the organizers

After downloading the Whova mobile app or accessing the event via the web portal, use the email address linked to your registration to sign up for a Whova account. Already used the Whova app in the past? Double-check that it is installed on your phone, and log in using your existing account email and password.

If you need more guidance on how to use Whova to access the event, please visit: <https://whova.com/pages/whova-app-user-guide/> or contact us at reg@masc.org

See you at the conference!

Remember: Conference sessions start at 10:30am on Wednesday, 11/4.

Registration opens at 9:00am.



MassDEP's Water-Smart Program: Ensuring Safe Drinking Water for Schools and Childcare Facilities

The Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (MassDEP) Drinking Water Program (DWP) Water-Smart Program is a voluntary lead testing program for schools and childcare facilities. To date, the Water-Smart Program has sampled over 1,300 schools and licensed childcare facilities helping to protect children from exposure to lead through drinking water.

Why Lead in Drinking Water Matters

Lead Exposure can have lasting effects on health, particularly for young children, who are more vulnerable to its effects. Even low levels of lead exposure can affect learning, attention, and development.

- Lead can enter drinking water when water comes into contact with lead service lines, pipes, solder, brass fixtures, or other plumbing components.
- Older buildings may contain legacy plumbing materials that can contribute to lead in drinking water.

For additional information on lead please visit: [Lead in Drinking Water for Schools and Childcare Facilities](#)

Water-Smart Program

All public and private schools and licensed childcare facilities are eligible to receive one round of free lead testing. If your facility is accepted, our team will contact you and guide you through each step.

The free Water Smart-Program makes it easy for your facility to take action against lead in drinking water. We invite you to apply and take the necessary steps toward reducing lead in drinking water, addressing this issue and promoting public health.

More Information

For more information about the Water-Smart Program visit water-smart@mass.gov

For all questions related to this information, contact: program.director-dwp@mass.gov or call (413) 545-0840

Wednesday, September 16 | 6:00pm-7:00pm | **Webinar: What to Expect at the MASC/MASS Conference**

Saturday, September 19 | 8:00am-4:00pm | **Charting the Course**, Somerville High School

Saturday, September 26 | 9:00-11:00am | **Division VIII meeting**
Keefe Vocational Tech., Framingham

Friday, October 2 | Noon-1:00pm | **MASC Learning Lunch**
Shawsheen Tech., Billerica

Saturday, October 17 | 9:00-11:00am | **Division VIII meeting**
Shawsheen Tech., Billerica

Saturday, October 17 | 8:00am-4:00pm | **Charting the Course**
West Springfield High School, West Springfield

Monday, October 19 | 6:30-8:00pm | **Zoom: Division VII meeting**
Topic: Beyond Charting the Course

November 4-6 | **Annual Joint Conference**
DoubleTree by Hilton Boston North Shore

Saturday, December 12 | 8:00am-4:00pm | **Charting the Course**
Doherty Memorial School, Worcester

UPCOMING EVENTS

Teen dating continued from page 1

independent, non-judicial entity that attempts to resolve disputes in a non-adversarial manner.

MGL c.71, s.2C was added by St.2010, c.256, s.62 and became effective on November 4, 2010. MASC does not currently have such a model policy, but Policy AC-R does reference "dating violence" and teen dating violence certainly overlaps with the bullying policy and multiple other policies. The requirements under statute C.71, s.2C are admittedly more comprehensive. Additionally, the statute has not been included in prior editions of our annual MGL publication, most likely based on the statute's "subject to appropriation" language which could be interpreted to mean that the district's obligation to implement the policy is contingent on the appropriation of funds.

MASC has concerns that by creating and recommending a model policy to specifically conform to the statutes based solely on a decision from the PRSO, we are potentially enabling an agency with power that it does not have and subjecting districts to statutory obligations that may not exist. However, MASC believes that it is best practice for district policy and handbooks to clearly reflect that dating violence is prohibited and will not be tolerated.

Districts should include Teen Dating Violence among prohibited behaviors in their handbooks, if the same is not already included. Additionally, MASC will look at incorporating some minimal additional language into existing policy, if possible, which identifies teen dating violence as a prohibited behavior that is to be addressed through already existing procedure.

Adopting the MASS policy template is certainly an option if districts feel the need to act immediately. Districts are encouraged to review all policy adoptions with their own counsel in order to ensure that your specific district needs are addressed. As always, please feel free to reach to me with questions, concerns, or suggestions.

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