

# Governor Patrick Prepares to Unveil Long-Term Plan for Education Innovation

Governor's Education Action Agenda seeks to elevate the teaching profession and align substance with needs of the global economy

BOSTON - Tuesday, June 24, 2008 - Continuing his focus on preparing students and the Commonwealth to compete in the global economy, Governor Deval Patrick announced additional features today of the Education Action Agenda - the state's blueprint to move Massachusetts through its next phase in education reform by 2020.

"Great schools don't happen without great teachers," Governor Patrick said surrounded by business leaders at EMC Corporation in Hopkinton, a global leader of information infrastructure technology and solutions. "Unlocking their creativity and building their capacity is the key to developing a highly-skilled, global workforce for Massachusetts companies and a highly engaged citizenry for our society."

"These initiatives go to the heart of one of our greatest challenges in teaching: attracting, developing and sustaining top talent," said Paul Reville, Secretary Designate of Education. "These strategies will help the Commonwealth to build a genuine appealing, teaching profession."

"The recommendations in the Governor's Education Action Agenda will empower Massachusetts to grow beyond a national leader and into a global leader of innovation, education and competitiveness, giving our students the tools and training to compete and succeed in the 21st century world economy, " said Joe Tucci, EMC Chairman, President and CEO. "The time to drive fundamental, systemic change is now, when Massachusetts leads the country, not when we are falling behind."

The announcement comes after nearly a year of work undertaken by the Readiness Project - a statewide initiative involving more than 200 educators, business leaders, and community leaders to develop a strategic blueprint for the next phase of education reform in the Commonwealth. The full action agenda will be released on Wednesday, June 25th at the first-ever joint meeting of the state's education boards: the Board of Early Education and Care, the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education, the Board of Higher Education and the University of Massachusetts Board of Trustees. **Boosting School Capacity** To equip students with the skills they need to succeed in the global economy, the state must help schools across the Commonwealth raise their capacity for teaching and learning. The Governor's Education Action Agenda encourages teachers and educators to take ownership over their schools, and rewarding schools that advance overall student achievement.

The state must attract the best teachers to the districts most in need, and ensure make resources are spent on learning - not bureaucracy. The Governor's Education Action Agenda creates incentives to teach

subjects like math and science that are required for 21st Century success, and establishes a fellowship program to increase the numbers of teachers qualified in these important subjects.

Recommendations include:

Establish the **Readiness Science and Math Teaching Fellowship Program** to increase the Commonwealth's supply of qualified math and science teachers. Reward outstanding school performance by providing financial rewards for "whole school improvement" - continuous advances in overall student achievement.

Establish differentiated pay for qualifying teachers in high-needs districts and schools, high-demand disciplines and for those who possess highly needed, extraordinary skills and knowledge or who volunteer for particularly challenging responsibilities.

Establish regional Readiness Centers dedicated to the continuous improvement of education at all levels of our public education system. These centers could be located at state colleges or universities but would be directed by boards comprised of regional pre-K through 12, higher education, business and community organization leaders.

The Department of Elementary and Secondary Education will accelerate efforts to make available to teachers an online, formative assessment system that will provide "real-time" data on student performance as measured against state standards. This data-driven instruction system will help teachers to analyze current student performance and continuously modify teaching practice to meet evolving student learning needs.

Maintain the current MCAS graduation requirement and strengthen the system by adding complementary measures of student growth and 21st century skills. This could include a culminating, multidisciplinary senior project on a student-selected topic of interest.

Launch a new high-autonomy, in-district school model - the Readiness School - to facilitate teacher ownership, innovation, choice, and responsiveness to student and family needs.

Increase the size while reducing the number of the Commonwealth's current school districts to streamline administration and management structures while expanding opportunities to ensure strong oversight and leadership and to improve teaching and learning. **Initiatives Empowering and Supporting Teachers**

Launch a competitive grant program with funding for qualifying districts as determined by the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education to pilot intensive, systemic induction and mentoring in the first three years of teacher service.

Establish and support a statewide career ladder for educators, creating a path of professional advancements with commensurate salary increases for educators who assume instructional mentoring and leadership positions within our schools and school districts.

Foster an intensive approach to teacher development, especially in schools with significant achievement gaps, through a pilot program that places an emphasis on dramatically improving early literacy achievement (K- 3.)

Simplify the state teacher certification and licensure processes as well as other teacher development policies to eliminate bureaucratic barriers and facilitate state capacity to attract, prepare, develop and retain a high quality, culturally diverse and inspiring teaching force for the students of the Commonwealth.

Partner with the state's teacher colleges to develop a statewide teacher residency program similar to medical residency programs that would combine rigorous coursework, practical training in diverse settings and certification and licensure.

Update Massachusetts' Teacher Preparation Programs for 21st century teaching by providing: 1) subject matter knowledge which is aligned with state standards; 2) pedagogical knowledge and skill tailored to the student body teachers will be serving; and 3) field experiences that engage pre-service teachers in observation, analysis and practice in varied school and district settings.

Establish regional Readiness Centers dedicated to the continuous improvement of education at all levels of our public education system. These Centers will be hubs for local partnerships and collaborations to support continuous improvement of teaching, the development of academic curriculum and content professional development opportunities and resources, teacher externships and student teaching internships.

Launch a Statewide Master Teacher Contract Initiative that would start a critical conversation about transforming the educator compensation and benefit structure to attract top talent into teaching by, for example, offering flexibility for teachers to receive different pay and benefit packages at different stages of their careers. In this kind of scenario, new teachers might have the option of choosing higher compensation in lieu of longer-term benefits. Such a contract might also provide for more equitable distribution of teachers throughout the state while creating the possibility of various cost savings. For example, the Master Teacher Contract would provide a vehicle for addressing escalating health care costs, disparities in pay across regions of the state, pension portability and other issues. Such a contract would achieve the efficiency of eliminating contract negotiations in more than 300 separate school districts.