

MEMORANDUM

To: Members of the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education
Cc: Jeffrey C. Riley, Commissioner
From: Martin R. West
Date: August 8, 2022
Subject: Proposed Amendment to Final Competency Determination Regulations, 603 CMR 30.03, Concerning Standards for the Classes of 2030 and Beyond

At the August 15 special meeting, the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education will be considering the Commissioner's recommendation to amend the competency determination (CD) regulations, 603 CMR 30.03. The Commissioner's proposal, among other things, will set a standard for the Classes of 2026-2029 and make changes to the educational proficiency plan (EPP) requirements. Pursuant to the Board's Bylaws, I intend to propose an additional amendment to the regulations that would extend the Commissioner's proposal to set a standard for the Class of 2030 and beyond.

To confirm, I agree with the Commissioner's proposal as far as it goes, including (1) the enhancements to the EPP process; (2) setting the minimum score for earning a CD in combination with an EPP at 470 in English Language Arts and Mathematics; (3) setting the minimum score for earning a CD without an EPP at 486 in English Language Arts and Mathematics for the Classes of 2026 – 2029; and (4) setting the minimum score for earning a CD without an EPP at 470 in Science and Technology/Engineering for the Classes of 2026 – 2029.

However, I believe that now is the time to set standards beyond 2029. Absent board action now, the standard for English Language Arts, Mathematics, and Science and Technology/Engineering will expire, leaving no standard for future classes without further board action. In addition, the standard for earning a CD without an EPP should be set at the *Meeting Expectations* level (500) in English Language Arts and Mathematics, beginning with the Class of 2031. The goal should be for all students to meet expectations on these 10th grade assessments. Setting that expectation now gives ample time for students and schools to achieve it. Because the minimum score for a CD will remain at the Commissioner's proposed 470, this amendment will have the effect of potentially increasing the number of students who receive the benefit of targeted supplementary instruction through a proficiency plan. It should have little or no effect on graduation rates.

The amendment will therefore do the following:

- Set the standard for the Class of 2030 to earn a CD without an EPP at the Commissioner's proposed 486 level (the mid-point of *Partially Meeting Expectations*), one more year than the current proposal, which will afford the Department and Board the opportunity to assess the full impact of the new standard and the revised EPP process on the high school graduation and immediate college-enrollment patterns of the Class of 2026 before a higher standard takes effect.

- For the Class of 2031 and after, set the standard to earn a CD without an EPP at the *Meeting Expectations* level (500) on the 10th grade English Language Arts and Mathematics assessment.
- Remove the “sunset” date for the Science and Technology/Engineering CD standard, setting it at the Commissioner’s proposed 470 beginning in the Class of 2026 and beyond.

The rest of the Commissioner’s proposal would remain the same. I look forward to discussing this amendment further at the August 15 board meeting.

Enclosures: 603 CMR 30.03 – strikethrough version of relevant portion of regulations showing amendment
Motion

**Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System and
Standards for Competency Determination,
603 CMR 30.03**

Proposed Amendment Relating to Standards for Competency Determination

This document shows the proposed changes to the current version of 603 CMR 30.03 by ~~strike through~~ (language deleted) and underline (new language). The **highlighted** portions show the changes made by this amendment to the Commissioner's proposal. Unhighlighted changes are in the Commissioner's proposal and are unaffected by this amendment. The proposed amendment would set the competency determination standard for English Language Arts and Mathematics at the midpoint of the *Partially Meeting Expectations Level* (486) for the Class of 2030 and the *Meeting Expectations* (500) level beginning with the Class of 2031. It would also keep the standard for Science at the Commissioner's proposed 470 level past the Class of 2029 (rather than have the standard expire in 2029 as currently proposed).

The full regulations can be found at: [603 CMR 30.00: Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System and Standards for Competency Determination](#). The proposed amendments are to 603 CMR 30.03.

...

30.03: Standards for Competency Determination

(1) Students in the graduating classes of 2003 through 2009 shall meet or exceed the Needs Improvement threshold scaled score of 220 on both the English Language Arts and the Mathematics MCAS grade 10 tests in order to satisfy the requirements of the Competency Determination.

(2) Students starting with the graduating class of 2010 must satisfy one of the following two conditions in both English language arts and mathematics to earn a competency determination.

(a) meet or exceed the Proficient threshold scaled score of 240 on the English Language Arts and Mathematics grade 10 MCAS tests, or

(b) meet or exceed the Needs Improvement threshold scaled score of 220 on the English Language Arts and Mathematics grade 10 MCAS tests and fulfill the requirements of an Educational Proficiency Plan.

(3) Students in the graduating classes of 2021 through 2025 must satisfy one of the following two conditions in both English language arts and mathematics to earn a competency determination.

(a) meet or exceed the threshold scaled score ~~threshold~~ on the English Language Arts and Mathematics grade 10 MCAS tests administered in 2019 or later that has been determined by the Commissioner to be comparable to the threshold scaled score ~~threshold~~ of 240 on the grade 10 MCAS tests administered before 2019, or

(b) meet or exceed the threshold scaled score ~~threshold~~ on the English Language Arts and

Mathematics grade 10 MCAS tests administered in 2019 or later that has been determined by the Commissioner to be comparable to the threshold scaled score ~~threshold~~ of 220 on the grade 10 MCAS tests administered before 2019 and fulfill the requirements of an Educational Proficiency Plan.

(4) Beginning with the graduating class of 2026, students must satisfy one of the following two conditions in both English language arts and mathematics to earn a competency determination:

(a) for students in the graduating classes of 2026 through 2030, meet or exceed the threshold scaled score of 486 on the English Language Arts and Mathematics grade 10 MCAS tests; beginning with the graduating class of 2031, students must meet or exceed the threshold scaled score of 500 on the English Language Arts and Mathematics grade 10 MCAS tests, or

(b) meet or exceed the threshold scaled score of 470 on the English Language Arts and Mathematics grade 10 MCAS tests and fulfill the requirements of an Educational Proficiency Plan.

(54) Students starting with the graduating class of 2010 shall, in addition to meeting the requirements found in 603 CMR 30.03(2), ~~or (3) or (4)~~, take a discipline-specific high school Science and Technology/Engineering MCAS test approved by the Board, by grade 10. To earn a competency determination:

(a) Students in the graduating classes of 2010 through 2024 shall meet or exceed the Needs Improvement threshold scaled score of 220 on a discipline-specific high school Science and Technology/Engineering MCAS test.

(b) Students in the graduating class of 2025 shall meet or exceed the scaled score threshold on a discipline-specific high school Science and Technology/Engineering MCAS test administered in 2022~~0~~ or later that has been determined by the Commissioner to be comparable to the scaled score threshold of 220 on the high school Science and Technology/Engineering MCAS tests administered before 2022~~0~~.

(c) Beginning with the graduating class of 2026, students shall meet or exceed the threshold scaled score of 470 on a discipline-specific high school Science and Technology/Engineering test.

(d) The Commissioner may waive the requirement to take the test by grade 10 for an individual student for good cause. Good cause for such a waiver may include a student's illness or a student's transfer into the Massachusetts public schools after grade 10.

(65) Starting in the third consecutive year that the History and Social Science high school assessment is administered, in addition to meeting the requirements contained in 603 CMR 30.02(2) through (54), students shall meet or exceed the passing standard on the History and Social Science high school assessment.

(76) Educational Proficiency Plans for each required content area shall be updated at least annually while students are enrolled and shall include, at a minimum:

(a) A review of a student's strengths and weaknesses in the content area.

(b) The full-year courses the student will be required to take and successfully complete in both grades 11 and 12 that will move the student toward meeting grade level expectations proficiency on the grade 10 curriculum framework standards as well as on grade 11 and 12 standards in English language arts or Algebra II or Model Mathematics III standards grade 11 and 12 grade span standards or Algebra II standards in mathematics, and a description of the tutoring or other individualized academic supports the student will receive.

(c) A description of the assessments the school will administer on at least an annual basis to inform changes to a student's Educational Proficiency Plan, identify opportunities for additional tutoring or other individualized academic supports, and determine whether the student is making progress toward proficiency-meeting expectations, or has met expectations become proficient on the grade 10 standards. These assessments must include applicable MCAS tests or other diagnostic or summative tests identified approved by the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education as aligned to the curriculum frameworks and appropriate for this purpose. For students yet to achieve a scaled score of 470 on any MCAS test required for high school graduation, assessments must include multiple opportunities to retake applicable MCAS tests until a scaled score of at least 470 has been achieved.

(d) The Educational Proficiency Plan for a student who is actively enrolled and successfully progressing in the Mass Core curriculum, an approved Chapter 74 vocational-technical program, or a designated Early College or Innovation Pathway program does not need to separately include the requirements of 603 CMR 30.03(7)(b) and (c).

(e) The Educational Proficiency Plans for adult learners, students who have exited high school without a Competency Determination, seniors who have already completed all their required courses in the relevant subject matter, students who are not continuously enrolled or are enrolled in an alternative program, and students who enroll in senior year, do not need to include the full-year courses described in 603 CMR 30.03(7)(b) or the assessments described in 603 CMR 30.03(7) (c).

(87) A student in the graduating classes of 2010 through 2025 achieving a scaled score of or comparable to 240 or higher on an MCAS test or a score determined by the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education on another approved test will be deemed to have achieved proficiency in the subject area and to have fulfilled the Educational Proficiency Plan in that subject. A student in the graduating classes of 2026 through 2030 achieving a scaled score of 486 or higher on an MCAS test will be deemed to have met expectations in the subject area and to have fulfilled the Educational Proficiency Plan in that subject. Beginning with the graduating class of 2031, a student achieving a scaled score of 500 or higher on an MCAS test will be deemed to have met expectations in the subject area and to have fulfilled the Educational Proficiency Plan in that subject. For students who have not achieved this score threshold, the principal or head of school (or his or her designee) will determine whether the student has fulfilled the Educational Proficiency Plan.

Proposed Motion to Amend

Board of Elementary and Secondary Education Meeting: August 15, 2022
Agenda Item: Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System and Standards for
Competency Determination, 603 CMR 30.03

MOVED: that the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education amend the Commissioner's proposed final amendments to the Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System and Standards for Competency Determination regulations, 603 CMR 30.00, by substituting the section on Standards for Competency Determination, 603 CMR 30.03 with the enclosed version. The proposed amendment would (1) set the English Language Arts and Mathematics standard for the Class of 2030 at the 486 level (the mid-point of Partially Meeting Expectations); (2) for the Class of 2031 and after, set the English Language Arts and Mathematics standard at the Meeting Expectations level (500); and (3) remove the "sunset" date for the Science and Technology/Engineering standard, setting it at 470 beginning in the Class of 2026 and beyond. All other aspects of the Commissioner's proposed final regulations are unaffected by this amendment.