

A message from the  
Massachusetts Department of  
Elementary and Secondary Education

March 30, 2017

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## 1.The Buzz: Revised English Language Arts and Math Standards Approved

On March 28, 2017, the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education unanimously approved [revised learning standards for English language arts and math](#) after more than a year of work by Massachusetts educators and ESE staff. Education Secretary James Peyser praised the process as "inclusive, transparent, and thorough," while Board Chair Paul Sagan described the work as "calm, steady, detailed."

Commissioner Chester said in a press release, "While many people have expressed concerns about the role that the Common Core State Standards played in developing our 2010 standards, I want to make it clear that the 2017 standards are the Commonwealth's own. These revised standards were developed by Massachusetts educators and represent the input of hundreds of the Commonwealth's preK-12 and higher education faculty. I am confident that the standards adopted today will help prepare students for success after high school."

The Department will help districts implement the new standards starting with the 2017-18 school year, and the next-generation MCAS will be aligned to the standards starting in spring 2018. Thank you to everyone who contributed by giving feedback or by serving as a panel member or advisor!

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## 2. In the News: Massachusetts ESSA Plan

The federal Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) requires states to submit a plan outlining the state's accountability system, and ESE plans to submit [Massachusetts' plan](#) on April 3. The plan continues Massachusetts' emphasis on measuring progress and achievement in literacy and math, but, in response to feedback from the public, Commissioner Chester has also committed to making a wider array of information about schools available, such as the whether a school offers a broad curriculum.

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## 3. Did You Know?: March is Women's History Month

March is Women's History Month, and resources are available online from a variety of organizations, including the [National Women's History Museum](#) (which includes a link specific to [Women's History Month](#), [lesson plans](#), and printable [posters](#) of women in a wide range of fields), [Smithsonian Education](#), and the [Center for Civic Education](#).



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