



the Skills of the American Workforce.

March 2006

NOTE: DOE Commissioner David Driscoll, DSS Commissioner Harry Spence and former Boston School Superintendent Thomas Payzant served as members of this national commission

- **Assume that we will do the job right the first time.** (page 9 of Executive Summary)
 - Students to be ready for college at age 16
 - Create a set of Board Examinations – to find out whether the student has learned from the course what he or she was supposed to learn – first Board Exam at end of grade 10
- **Make much more efficient use of the available resources.** (page 12 of Executive Summary)
 - Savings of \$60 billion nationally is projected (based on the projected number of students moving to college after grade 10).
 - Deploy savings in three equal amounts: (1) recruiting, training, and deploying of a teaching force for the nation's schools; (2) building a high-quality full-service early childhood education system for all 3 and 4 year olds; (3) giving the nation's disadvantaged students the resources they need to succeed against internationally benchmarked education standards.
- **Recruit from the top third of the high school graduates going on to college for the next generation of school teachers.** (page 12 of Executive Summary)
 - We are now recruiting more of our teachers from the bottom third of the high school students going to college
 - Change the shape of teacher compensation which is currently back-loaded
 - Make teacher retirement benefits comparable to those of the better firms in the private sector and use the money that is saved from this measure to increase teachers' cash compensation.
 - Pay beginning teachers about \$45,000 per year, ... pay about \$95,000 per year to the typical teachers working at the top of new career ladders for a regular teaching year and as much as \$110,000 per year to teachers willing to work the same hours per year as other professionals typically do.
 - Teachers would be employed by the state, not the local districts, on a statewide salary schedule

- There would be salary increments for especially effective teachers – those willing to teach in remote or tough urban areas – teachers in shortage fields such as mathematics and special education
- Teachers can establish partnerships with other teachers and form organizations to operate schools themselves
- Scrap current teacher education policies – states would create a Teacher Development Agency charged with recruiting, training, and certifying teachers
- Teachers would have to have a minimum of a bachelor's degree in the subject they propose to teach and would have to pass a rigorous teaching performance assessment
- **Develop standards, assessments, and curriculum that reflect today's needs and tomorrow's requirements.** *(page 14 of Executive Summary)*
 - Undertake a major overhaul of the American testing system. When we have the right assessments, and they are connected to the right syllabi, then the task will be to create instructional materials fashioned in the same spirit and train our teachers to use the standards, assessments, syllabi, and materials as well as possible.
- **Create high performance schools and districts everywhere – how the system should be governed, financed, organized and managed.** *(page 15 of Executive Summary)*
 - Adopt high-performance management models
 - Schools would not be owned by local school districts – schools would be operated by independent contractors, many of them limited-liability corporations owned and run by teachers
 - Schools would be funded directly by the state, according to a pupil-weighting formula.
 - Parents and students could choose among all the available contract schools, taking advantage of the performance data these schools would be obligated to produce
- **Provide high-quality, universal early childhood education.** *(page 17 of Executive Summary)*
- **Give strong support to the students who need it the most.** *(page 17 of Executive Summary)*
 - The proposal to abandon local funding of schools in favor of state funding using a uniform pupil-weighting funding formula, combined with the addition of \$19 billion to the system as a whole, will make it possible ... to have an equitable means of funding our schools, while at the same time leveling the funding of the system as a whole.
 - Additional funds for schools serving high concentrations of disadvantaged students will make it possible for those schools to stay open from early in the morning until late at night, offering a wide range of supportive services to students and families.
- **Enable every member of the adult workforce to get the new literacy skills.** *(page 18 of Executive Summary)*
 - The federal government will pass legislation entitling every adult and young adult worker – at no charge – to the education required to meet the

standard set by the new Board Exam standards that most young people will meet by age 16

- High schools will find they have a new clientele.
- **Create personal competitiveness accounts – a GI Bill for our times.** (*page 18 of Executive Summary*)
 - U.S. Government will create Personal Competitiveness Accounts enabling everyone to get the continuing education and training they will need throughout their work lives.
 - Government will make an initial deposit of \$500 and continue to contribute at a lower level until that young person is 16 (and later if the account holder was earning very little)
- **Create regional competitiveness authorities to make America competitive.** (*page 19 of Executive Summary*)
 - Federal government will develop legislation to encourage the states to create regional economic development authorities – for coordinating the work of the region's education and training institutions to make sure that each region's workers develop the skills and knowledge needed to be successful in that labor market.

The Executive Summary of Tough Choices or Tough Times can be found at
www.skillscommission.org/pdf/exec_sum

MASSACHUSETTS ADMINISTRATORS FOR SPECIAL EDUCATION

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