

# DUDLEY-CHARLTON REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

**Gregg J. Desto**  
*Superintendent of Schools*

**Richard J. Mathieu**  
*Director of Finance and Operations*



68 Dudley-Oxford Road  
Dudley, Massachusetts 01571  
508-943-6888  
Fax: 508-943-1077  
[www.dcrsd.org](http://www.dcrsd.org)

**Jody A. O'Brien**  
*Administrator of Special Needs*

**Lorinda C. Allen**  
*Director of Curriculum and Student Assessment*  
**Karen A. Ares**  
*STEAM Director*

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Dear Students of the Dudley-Charlton Regional School District:

Many times, when I speak to crowds of people, I begin or end with the following statement: ***"You just can't convince me that there are better kids anywhere in the world than right here in Dudley and Charlton."*** Ok, so I have been in this district for close to two decades, and maybe I am a bit biased, but I truly believe that statement. You, like me and everyone else in this world, may be imperfect, but your families, your teachers, your counselors, your coaches, your principals, all other adults who work with you, including me, are extremely proud of you. We happen to believe that you are a great kid, and we are grateful that we get to work with you.

Lately, I have been thinking a lot about MCAS and about how it seems to get bigger and more complex every year. This year, as you know, our 4<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> graders are taking the test on computers for the first time and, by 2019, the State Department of Elementary and Secondary Education plans to have all students taking the on-line MCAS. When I think about MCAS, what I think about most is that many of you worry about it a great deal. You try so hard in everything you do, and you want to do well on MCAS. But it is a challenging test, and you know that, too. And, often, you worry about what will happen if you don't do as well on this test as you do on most others.

Well, I thought it was time for me to let you know how I feel about that. To me, MCAS is no different from any other challenge that is presented to us in our lives. It may look different and take longer, but I view it as I view every test you take throughout the year; I view it as anytime you have to sing on a stage; play an instrument; step out on a playing field; battle your way through a difficult homework assignment; you get the point. And what do you do in those cases? Well, you do the only thing that you possibly can do – your best. And then, knowing you did your best, you accept the results with your head held high and move on to the next thing.

So, as you approach MCAS this year, I ask that you give some thought to what I'm telling you. In any challenging situation in life, all you can do is your best. If you do that, regardless of the results, we will still be very proud of you. There is no test in the history of the world that can accurately judge your worth as a person. Your score on MCAS is just a number. You, on the other hand, are a complex combination of great things that make you unique and awesome. As your superintendent, I want you to try the best you can on MCAS and on everything else you do. Then, I want you to go home, ride your bike, play ball or do whatever "kid things" you like to do (with your parents' permission, of course!). And once it's over, I don't want you to give MCAS another second of thought until next time.

All my best for a fun and successful springtime!

Your Proud Superintendent,

Mr. Desto