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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

September 27, 2018

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## **Andover Public Schools Meets Targets in 2018 MCAS Results**

*West Elementary School Honored as School of Recognition in Massachusetts*

*Andover, Mass.* – The Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) released 2018 MCAS results today, and school and district accountability and assistance levels. The release is the second year of next-generation MCAS results for grades 3-8 and the debut of the state’s new accountability system.

As a district, Andover Public Schools is classified as meeting targets, the highest classification a district can receive. Individual schools within the district were all classified as “not requiring assistance or intervention”; many of our schools performed very well in terms of student achievement and/ or exceeded targets across many indicators. **West Elementary School** was named by DESE as a **School of Recognition**, the highest designation a school can receive for high growth and exceeding targets and one of 52 schools in the state to receive this title. High Plain Elementary placed in the top 5% of all elementary schools.

“We’ve reviewed 2018 MCAS results, and our results are quite positive,” notes Superintendent Sheldon Berman, Ed D. “In particular, we saw significant improvement in elementary reading (ELA) at all elementary schools and for all elementary sub-groups. Given the investments we’ve made in literacy, it appears our efforts are making a difference. We also made improvement in science, particularly at the elementary level. At AHS, the new schedule and H block may have contributed to a 15% gain in students’ scoring advanced on the high school Introduction to Physics MCAS. Math results remained relatively stable.”

**About APS:** The mission of the Andover Public Schools, in partnership with the entire Andover community, is to educate by engaging and inspiring students to develop as self-reliant, responsible citizens who are thinkers, problem solvers, and contributors prepared to participate in an evolving global society.

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DESE has acknowledged the need for continued study and revision of the accountability system, and while “Next Generation” MCAS assessment results can be compared from year to year, the accountability system is not yet finalized by DESE. The new accountability system set by DESE considers: student achievement, student growth, high school completion, English proficiency, chronic absenteeism, and advanced coursework.

Work has already begun to address areas where APS is partially meeting targets. Chronic absenteeism is a new indicator in the 2018 accountability system, and one where the district often failed to improve or meet targets. Chronic absenteeism is defined by the state as “students who are absent more than 10% of days of membership”, or more than 18 days in a full school year. Challenging weather conditions in the 2017-18 school year may have been a factor in one year declines, however because attendance has shown to be important for optimal learning, it will be a primary focus district-wide.

Parents of students in grades 3-8 should also receive their child’s scores from the district in the coming weeks. When reviewing students’ scores, students, parents and educators should keep in mind that:

- In general, the standards for Meeting Expectations are more rigorous than the standards for reaching the Proficient level on the legacy MCAS.
- Next-generation MCAS scores should not be compared to legacy MCAS scores.

Andover’s 2018 Accountability Report can be found on the [DESE website](#). We recommend reviewing the “Detailed Data for Each Indicator” (middle tab) for a comprehensive and accurate overview of the results.

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