



November 10, 2005

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Joe Ganley
617-290-3868 (Mobile)

Extended Time Schools: Lessons Learned

New report highlights lessons and impact of longer school day

Worcester—Massachusetts 2020 today released a new report on the impact and lessons learned from schools operating on a longer school schedule. The report, *Time for a Change: The Promise of Extended Time-Schools for Promoting School Achievement*, contains case studies of eight public schools that operate on a significantly longer schedule than the traditional 180, six-hour days.

The study was released at a day-long conference sponsored by the Massachusetts Department of Education, and Massachusetts 2020 in Worcester, where representatives of fifteen school districts from across Massachusetts were gathered to explore expanding their school schedules. The fifteen districts have been awarded planning grants from the state to plan to extend their school schedule beginning in school year 2006 – 2007.

“We continue to believe that the expansion of the school calendar is a necessary component of the larger education reform agenda”, said Chris Gabrieli, Chairman of Massachusetts 2020. “This study only strengthens that view. It shows that it is possible to design a school schedule that gives kids the time they need to learn what we expect them to learn.”

“This study represents the first of its kind analysis of specific schools that have deliberately broken from the school schedule,” said Dr. David Farbman Ph.D., co-author of the report, which was funded by the L.G. Balfour Foundation. “As interest turns to reforming the school calendar, this study will provide some valuable information on how such change can be implemented.”

“Working with the legislature, school districts, unions and parents, we are going to use the findings from this report to help lead the effort to extend learning time and close the achievement gap in Massachusetts,” said Jennifer Davis, President of Massachusetts 2020. “We expect that our work here in Massachusetts will be an example for other states to follow.”

The study included in-depth site visits at each of the schools, including interviews with students, parents, teachers and administrators. The study reached four main conclusions. First, that extra time allows not only more time in classrooms, it also enables schools to offer an array of enrichment activities to broaden skills and engage students more deeply in learning. Second, the additional time benefits teachers by facilitating the inclusion of common planning time, professional development opportunities and periods for each teacher to plan for their own classes. Third, these schools do generally cost more to operate, but the costs do not increase at the same rate as time is increased. Finally, teachers, parents and even students almost universally appreciate the benefits of a longer day.

The complete study can be downloaded at: www.mass2020.org.

###