



Massachusetts Department of Higher Education

One Ashburton Place, Room 1401
Boston, MA 02108-1696

TEL (617) 994-6950
FAX (617) 727-0955
WEB www.mass.edu

Richard M. Freeland, *Commissioner*
Charles F. Desmond, *Chairman*
Massachusetts Board of Higher Education

800 Lawrence High School Juniors Invited to “Go Public!” at UMass, State Universities, Community Colleges

*Teens Hear From Public College Students Studying Math & Science,
Get College Planning Advice*

Contact: Katy Abel
MA Department of Higher Education
[\(617\) 994-6932](tel:6179946932)
kabel@bhe.mass.edu



LAWRENCE – April 17, 2014 – Massachusetts Higher Education Commissioner Richard M. Freeland joined campus admissions representatives, student ambassadors and faculty from Massachusetts community colleges, state universities and UMass campuses to promote math and science programs and opportunities for students in the state’s public higher education system. He urged 800 Lawrence High juniors to “finish strong” in their senior year in order to lay the groundwork for college success.

The new effort to promote science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) majors and career training is part of the statewide *Go Public!* campaign to highlight the range of opportunities awaiting students at the state’s 29 public campuses. Commissioner Freeland appeared at Lawrence High with student speakers from the University of Massachusetts Lowell, Salem State University, Massachusetts College of Art and Design, Northern Essex Community College and Middlesex Community College. Students spoke about their decisions to major in a STEM field or use math or science in a non-STEM course of study. The Commissioner also joined Lawrence High students at a public campus admissions fair featuring STEM-related activities to give students the chance to learn more about careers in nursing, robotics, digital design, chemistry, mechanical engineering and other fields. Several Massachusetts companies,

including Natick Labs and Strem Chemical, sent employees who are alumni of the state's public colleges and universities to offer career advice to students.

A data analysis prepared by the Massachusetts Department of Higher Education shows that 72% of all jobs in Massachusetts will require a college degree or technical training by 2020, and that many of the Commonwealth's best jobs will be in the STEM fields.

"Our public campuses are thriving with brand new science facilities, innovative approaches to math instruction, and a variety of internships and opportunities to do undergraduate research," said Secretary of Education Matthew Malone. "Who better than a current college student to help our high school students understand how exciting college can be?"

"Through the *Go Public!* events our college and university students are able to deliver a critically important message to high school students about the importance of taking math and science in their senior year," said Massachusetts Commissioner of Higher Education Richard M. Freeland. "We know from research that too many students who don't take a fourth year of math wind up in remedial courses when they get to campus. A majority of those students never go on to earn a college degree or certificate. So I'm very grateful to our college and university students who are volunteering their time between jobs and classes to deliver this important message to teens here in Lawrence and in other communities across the state."

The Lawrence event is co-sponsored by the Massachusetts Department of Higher Education and GEAR UP Massachusetts, a federally funded program serving more than 7,000 students throughout the Commonwealth in seven high poverty districts, including Lawrence, Springfield, Lowell, Boston, New Bedford, Worcester, and Holyoke. GEAR UP's mission is to improve high school graduation rates and increase enrollment and success in college.

"GEAR UP Massachusetts is thrilled to be co-hosting *Go Public!* in Lawrence," said GEAR UP Massachusetts' Director Robert Dais. "It's fantastic that Lawrence High students have had this opportunity to gain exposure to STEM careers and 'college knowledge,' especially those students who come from families where no one has ever attended college. This gives our kids a chance to envision a brighter future for themselves after high school."

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