



DLS
DIVISION OF LOCAL SERVICES
MA DEPARTMENT OF REVENUE



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DLS at MMA Annual Meeting & Trade Show

Below is information on the many ways the Division of Local Services will be providing updates and information to local officials at the [Massachusetts Municipal Association's Annual Meeting & Trade Show](#) at the Hynes Convention Center. We look forward to seeing you!

Friday, January 22nd, 2016

[11am - 5pm](#)

Stop by the DLS booth (Booth 920-22) on the trade show floor to say hello and get the latest updates on the many ways DLS is improving operations and communications tools to better serve local officials.

[1pm - 1:50pm](#)

Live Demonstration of DLS Municipal Databank and Gateway Innovations Exhibitor Seminar

Exhibit Hall Auditorium - Theater B

This presentation will provide step-by-step guidance for recently enhanced municipal databank reports and reporting tools. DLS staff will host an interactive presentation designed to help users navigate the improved DLS website in order to better access, export, and print municipal finance data.

[2pm - 3:30pm](#)

Developments and Initiatives in Municipal Finance Workshop
Room 210 (2nd floor)

This workshop will cover important issues in municipal finance. Administration and Finance Secretary Kristen Lepore will discuss the state budget and economic outlook as they affect cities and towns. Senior Deputy Commissioner of Local Services Sean Cronin will serve as moderator, and Division of Local Services staff will make presentations on a range of topics, including enhanced analytical tools, DLS Gateway improvements, and a legislative update. A question-and-answer component will follow each panelist.

Saturday, January 23rd, 2016

[10am - 2pm](#)

If you missed us on Friday, staff will again be available at the DLS booth (Booth 920).

Municipal Databank Introduces New Reporting Tools

Municipal Databank/Local Aid Unit

This fall [the Municipal Databank](#) began releasing [a series of reports](#) using software that provides the user with visual analytics. Municipalities and state agencies are under pressure to meet rapidly evolving mission requirements on sometimes very tight budgets. As these requirements are increasingly integrated with technology, the demands become more complex and costly. All state and local government stakeholders have pressing needs for agile business intelligence tools that they can easily adapt to meet mission critical requirements while maintaining complete transparency.

Visualization technology helps people to see things that may not have been obvious to them before. Even when the amount of data is large, patterns can be spotted very quickly and surprisingly easily. Visualization transfers information in a general manner and makes it simple to share ideas with others. It lets people ask others, "Do you see what I see?" And it can even answer questions like "What would happen if we made an adjustment to that area?" Interactive charts, graphs and reports make it easier for decision makers across all organizations to:

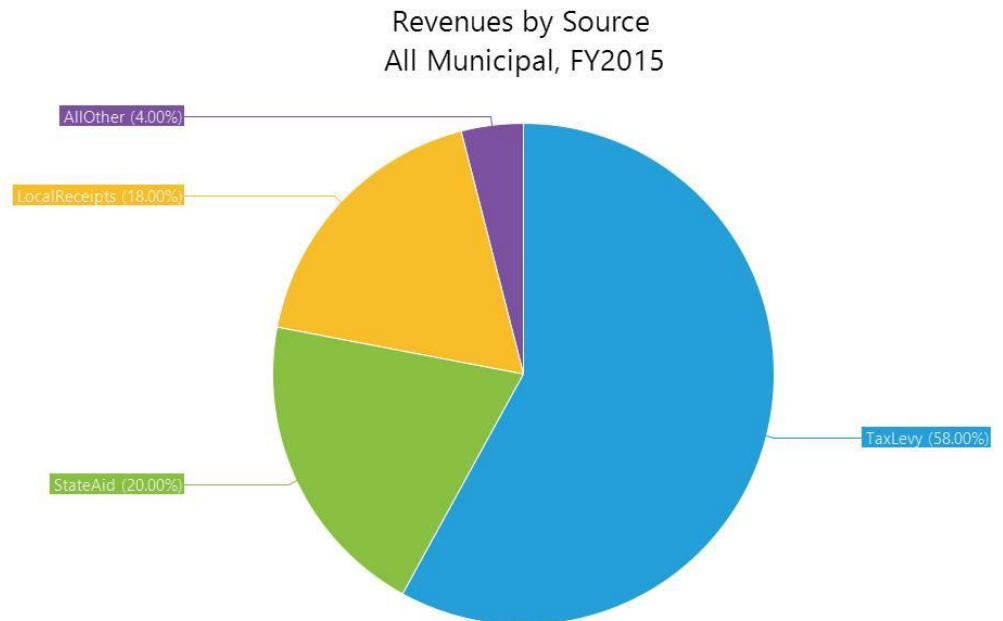
- Identify areas that need attention or improvement
- Discover how to increase revenues or reduce expenses
- Understand the factors that influence your constituents? behavior

Tools that effectively and intuitively analyze all types of data are in demand. Government agencies and individual users everywhere are

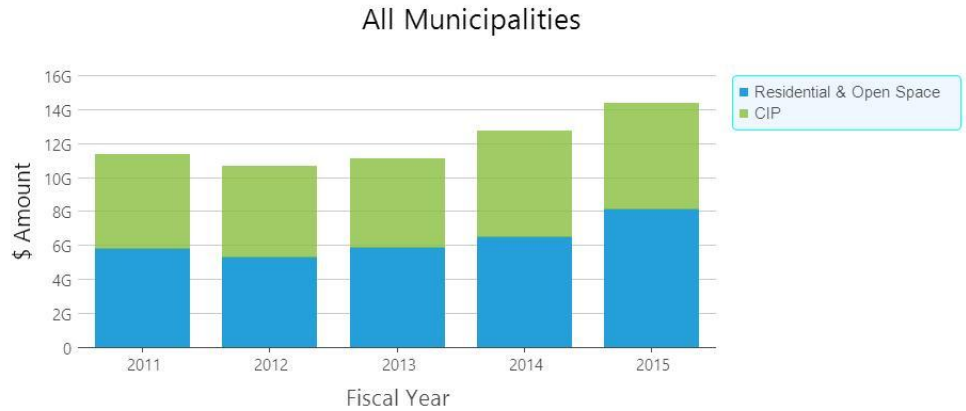
being drawn towards visual analytics tools as one of the most effective ways for the everyday user to manipulate data and maximize its insights.

The Databank is now using Logi Analytics software that can provide users with enhanced visual analytics. Visual analytics pairs graphical illustrations with specialized interactions to reveal underlying patterns in data. Essentially, it turns dense, confusing data big or small into accessible, dynamic and predictive information. Rather than providing a "rear-view mirror" perspective, visual analytics allow the user to interact with data in real time. It provides insight into circumstances and opportunities as they develop, furthering informed decision making and agency improvement.

Using this software, these visual analytics will not be something that's only available to IT professionals. This tool, and the reports we're currently developing here at the Municipal Databank, are designed with the everyday user in mind, giving them access to information traditionally presented in bland non-visual MS Excel spreadsheets. No longer will visual presentations and other analytics be created by only the more sophisticated users of commercial spreadsheets and database applications. Here is a sample of the reports the Databank has released:



Click [here](#) for Revenues by Source report.



Click [here](#) for Trends in New Growth report.

Not only are these new reports visually appealing, they put much more control in the user's hands either online or exported to an Excel file. It is our vision to give the power to the users, whether a member of the finance committee wants to simply print out a breakdown of a town's revenues by source or a budget team wants to review trends in municipal spending by fund to forecast future expenditures for the municipality. Our new reports will give both the ability to complete their tasks.

The Municipal Databank is always interested in feedback on the usability of [our databank reports](#). Comments and suggestions can be sent to our Municipal Databank email at databank@dor.state.ma.us.

Time to Apply! Expanded Federal Funding Options for School & Library Wifi

Department of Education [Office of Digital Learning](#)

Changes to the federal program known as E-rate have expanded the availability of funding to support 21st century teaching and learning for schools and libraries across Massachusetts. While the E-rate of old focused on legacy technologies like telephone service and voicemail, today's "E-rate 2.0" makes widespread affordable access to high-speed internet its top priority.

Positive changes include:

- Increased funding, from \$2.4 billion to \$3.9 billion
- Wifi budget of \$150 per student over a five-year period

- Commitment to fund all schools that apply, not just the highest poverty schools

E-rate 2.0 provides a boon for teachers and students across the state. It also aligns with a goal set by the state's Department of Elementary & Secondary Education (DESE) to help Massachusetts's public schools be "future-ready" by 2019. Making the most of E-rate funding opportunities over the coming two fiscal years will be key to helping school districts meet that goal.

While discounts for "category two" wifi funding range from 20% to 85% based upon poverty level and whether the district is rural or urban, almost all Massachusetts public schools receive at least a 40% discount.

To help school districts leverage the E-rate opportunity, DESE's Office of Digital Learning has created new resources and tools that users are finding especially helpful. Check out this very [short video](#) for a high-level overview of today's E-rate program.

For answers to frequently asked questions, an updated Funding Estimator, and a Bandwidth Calculator, among other resources, visit the DESE's E-rate page at <http://www.doe.mass.edu/odl/grants/e-rate.html>. If you have questions, please contact Andrea Kupps, the state's E-rate coordinator, at Andrea.J.Kupps@state.ma.us or 781-338-3256.

School and municipal officials have until March 31st to submit applications for the 2016-2017 academic year, so there is still time!

OSD: Buyer Events for New Statewide Contracts

Operational Services Division

The Operational Services Division (OSD) is planning several events to provide information on newly launched statewide contracts (SWCs). These buyer-centric meetings present an excellent opportunity to learn about contract products, services, and benefits, as well as to meet directly with awarded contractors and OSD's statewide contract strategic sourcing managers. We hope to see you at one or more of our events!

Select the desired "Register" link for related meeting details and to reserve a spot:

Two-way Radio Equipment and Supplies - ITT57

Thursday, January 28th

[Register](#)

Audio, Video, Multimedia Presentation Equipment and Services - OFF40

Friday, February 5th

[Register](#)

Light Duty Vehicles: Passenger Cars, SUVs, Trucks, Vans, SSVs and PPVs - VEH98

Friday, February 19th

[Register](#)

Other contracts of interest to buyers:

- [Apple Inc. products and services added to SWC ITC47](#)
- [Naloxone \(Narcan^{\(R\)}\) available on MED38](#) with additional cost savings for first responder agencies. (For additional details about first responder agency discounts, contact Peter Etzel, Strategic Sourcing Manager, at Peter.Etzel@state.ma.us.)
- File for FCC [E-Rate Program](#) discounts using SWCs;
- Additional contracts of interest: [equipment rental](#), [athletic supplies](#), [snow removal](#), and [police body cameras](#).

Find all statewide contract user guides [here](#). Search available SWC products and services in the [Statewide Contract Index](#). Learn which contracts and vendors offer PunchOut catalog purchasing and [find PunchOut catalog resources](#).

Send questions to OSD at OSDOutreach@state.ma.us.

January Municipal Calendar

January 1	Assessors	Property Assessment Date This is the effective date (not for exemption purposes) for statewide valuation and assessment of all property for the following fiscal year.
January 31	DESE	Notify Communities/Districts of Estimated Net School

		<p>Spending Requirements for the Next Year</p> <p>As soon as the Governor releases the ensuing year's budget, DESE notifies communities/districts of the estimated NSS requirements. These figures are subject to change based on the final approved state budget.</p>
<p>Final Day of Each Month</p>	<p>State Treasurer</p>	<p>Notification of monthly local aid distribution.</p> <p>Click www.mass.gov/treasury/cash-management to view distribution breakdown.</p>

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