

Resolution Calling for a Moratorium on High-Stakes Standardized Tests

WHEREAS, our future well-being relies on a high-quality public education system that prepares all students for college, careers, citizenship and lifelong learning; and

WHEREAS, our school systems in Massachusetts and across the country have been spending increasing amounts of time, money and energy on high-stakes testing in which student performance on standardized tests is used to make major decisions affecting individual students, educators, schools and districts; and

WHEREAS, the overreliance on high-stakes and standardized testing in state and federal accountability systems is undermining educational quality and equity in U.S. public schools by hampering educators' efforts to focus on the broad range of learning experiences that promote the innovation, creativity, problem-solving, collaboration, communication, critical thinking and deep subject matter knowledge that will allow students to thrive in a democracy and an increasingly global society; and

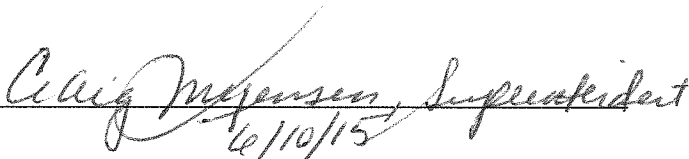
WHEREAS, it is widely recognized that standardized testing is an inadequate and often unreliable measure of both student learning and educator effectiveness; and

WHEREAS, the overemphasis on standardized testing has caused considerable collateral damage in too many schools, including narrowing the curriculum, teaching to the test, reducing a love of learning, pushing students out of school, driving excellent teachers out of the profession, and undermining school climate; and

WHEREAS, high-stakes standardized testing has negative effects on students from all backgrounds, and especially for low-income students, English language learners, children of color, and those with disabilities;

THEREFORE, let it be resolved that the Hampshire Regional School Committee supports locally developed, authentic assessments and more time for educators to teach and students to learn;

THEREFORE, let it be resolved that Hampshire Regional School Committee calls on state and federal education policymakers to adopt a moratorium on the high-stakes use of standardized tests so that educators, parents and other members of our communities can work together to develop assessment systems that support positive teaching practices and better prepare students for lifelong learning.


Craig Jensen, Superintendent (for the School Committee)
6/10/15