

REPORT OF THE RESOLUTIONS COMMITTEE

RESOLUTION 1: GREATER TRANSPARENCY AND ACCOUNTABILITY FOR OUT OF DISTRICT PLACEMENT COSTS

(Submitted by the Framingham School Committee)

WHEREAS the State provides approximately \$35,000 on average per student placed in an out-of-district educational setting, and

WHEREAS the State recommendations for job titles and descriptions for administration, as well as staff, for approved out-of-district educational settings and only require out of district providers to publically post an organizational chart, and

WHEREAS in-district public schools are required to post salaries and district budgets, and

WHEREAS many out-of-district placement settings are folding in non-educational costs into tuition.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Massachusetts Association of School Committees file for and support legislation that will require institutions providing out-of-district placements for education to file End-of-Year Reports that reflect in detail and inclusiveness that of corporate annual reports and stock offering schedules, and post salaries with the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education.

RATIONALE: With out-of-district educational placements taxpayers have no reasonable amount of control and no knowledge of salaries or services being paid for by their tax dollars. Reporting for out-of-district schools should be in line with the requirements of any in-district public school.

RESOLUTION 2 - UNIVERSAL QUALITY PRE-KINDERGARTEN ACCESS IN MASSACHUSETTS

(Sponsored by the Framingham School Committee)

WHEREAS in Massachusetts only 60% of three and four-year-olds attend a formal, early education and care program, and

WHEREAS in Massachusetts has a waiting list of approximately 25,000 low income children who are in need of financial assistance for early education and care, and

WHEREAS low-income students who participate in quality early education and care programs are 40% less likely to be held back a grade or need Special Education, are 30% more likely to graduate high school twice as likely to attend college, and

WHEREAS better language, social and behavioral skills are obtained by attending a quality pre-school, and

WHEREAS children that attend pre-schools are shown to produce tangible lifelong results for future, success.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that MASC file or support legislation that will provide the appropriation for universal pre-K in Massachusetts and will take the steps necessary to provide access to good, quality universal pre-k for all children in Massachusetts.

RATIONALE: This resolution would help ensure that our underserved population of 3 and 4-year-olds will be provided with the supports and services necessary for school readiness and lasting success in the classroom and for future success. Knowing that these strategies are documented in increasing student success, our resolution will level the playing field by helping to ensure equity and beginning the process of closing the achievement gap for this vulnerable cohort of children.

RESOLUTION 3: CHARTER SCHOOL REFORM

(Submitted by the MASC Board of Directors)

WHEREAS charter schools continue to be a source of controversy throughout the Commonwealth, and

WHEREAS most of the controversy centers on discriminatory recruitment, retention, suspension and expulsion of charter students, and

WHEREAS the current charter school funding and finance system imposes a significant burden cities and towns whose students enroll in charter schools.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that MASC call upon the legislature to enact charter school reform legislation that will include provisions that:

- Require BESE to consider social and economic impact upon the districts from which new or expanding charter schools would recruit students.

- Require a strong provision to prevent skimming and suspensions from charter schools that return students whom they no longer wish to enroll to the sending districts.
- Finance reform so that charter school expropriations from local Chapter 70 funding does not severely damage the sending districts.
- Require timely reporting on accountability with meaningful data on student attendance, expulsions and suspensions, student at economic risk (low income) in comparison with sending districts.
- Establishment of benchmarks to measure success
- Establishment of a formula for evaluating school districts that uses a “growth” component that is not less than 50% of the formula.
- Require on an annual basis the reporting of best practices and innovation to the “sending” school districts.

RESOLUTION 4: FINGERPRINTING

(Submitted by the MASC Resolutions Committee)

WHEREAS the commonwealth has imposed a mandate that employees of public schools be fingerprinted in the interests of promoting safety, and

WHEREAS the law placed responsibility for the cost of fingerprinting and administration of the requirement upon the local school district and employees, and

WHEREAS these requirements represent an unfunded mandate and an administrative burden in the hiring process.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that MASC calls upon the legislature to establish such legislation and require that the administering agencies:

- Conduct a periodic system review to consider means of streamlining and reducing costs of operation.
- Ensure that teachers be fingerprinted upon their initial licensure under the supervision of DESE.
- Establish the requirement that teachers be fingerprinted upon their re-certification if they are not already fingerprinted.

- Establish DESE as the clearinghouse for all background checks for all educators.

RESOLUTION 5: REINSTITUTION OF EARMARKING

(Submitted by the MASC Board of Directors)

WHEREAS school districts and municipalities benefitted greatly from designated federal funds,

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that MASC supports the reinstatement of federal earmarks for school district, regional school districts and municipalities through the federal appropriations process.

RESOLUTION 6: UNFUNDED MANDATES AND NEW TESTING

(Submitted by the Arlington, Chelmsford, Lincoln-Sudbury, Mendon-Upton, Northbridge, Holbrook, Woburn, Worcester School Committees)

WHEREAS it is the duty of the school committee to set policies for the education of the children in our community, and

WHEREAS the number of documents that require action by local school districts in response to externally imposed mandates and regulations, has increased dramatically without a clear positive impact on student learning, and whereas many of the required actions constitute an unfunded mandate, and

WHEREAS educators in our community and state, including the M.A.S.S. (Massachusetts Association of School Superintendents), have expressed concern about the difficulty carrying out their responsibilities due to this rising tide of state mandates, requiring educators to respond first to bureaucratic requirements rather than classroom instruction.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that MASC calls on the state Board of Elementary and Secondary Education and the legislature to refrain from adding new mandates including new tests and other initiatives and to revisit the mandates already imposed on districts with a view to reducing interference with classroom instruction, thus allowing educators to do their work.

RATIONALE: The costs of implementing a new PARCC system and revision the curriculum to meet common core standards will be expensive and represent an unfunded mandate. Further, many believe the state imposed regulations, advisories, standards and directives represent the imposition of unfunded mandates upon cities, towns and regional school districts.

RESOLUTION 7: ASSESSMENT SYSTEM IN MASSACHUSETTS

(Submitted by the MASC Board of Directors)

WHEREAS many districts have expressed immense concern of our state's evaluation instruments, and

WHEREAS assessing student achievement is important to all school districts.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education conduct further examination of options for a state evaluation and accountability system and to substantially involve educators and school committee members in the process of choosing an assessment instrument, and to refrain from committing to any instrument before this process is complete.

PROPOSALS TO AMEND THE MASC BY-LAWS

The Board of Directors of the Association has recommended to members that the by-laws of the Association be amended as follows:

I. The following by-law change to Article VIII by adding the following paragraph:

"During the interim period between meetings of the Board of Directors, the Executive Committee may take such actions on behalf of the Board as it deems prudent on matters that require immediate action and shall report such action immediately to the full membership of the Board of Directors."

2. The following by-law change to Article VII to delete the following sentence:

"Division officers shall take office on July 1 following election."

And to substitute the following:

"Division officers shall take office on January 1 following election. The meeting shall be held at or in advance of the Annual Meeting of the Association, or, if a quorum cannot be reached, then as soon as is practical."