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--In School Committee--
08/04/2020

Ordered:

That the following be placed on the Calendar:

That the following be removed from the Calendar and adopted as Amended:

Whereas the 2020-21 school year will be unlike any other in the history of schooling; and

Whereas the School Committee recognizes that the demands on all members of our school community will be unprecedented, especially so for educators who work directly with scholars; and

Whereas in a typical school year, preparation for and administration of Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System (MCAS) accounts for a significant amount of time in classroom communities and educator workloads; and

Whereas standardized tests have been shown to have biases that disproportionately negatively impact scholars of color and scholars with low-incomes, which may be further amplified in the pandemic context; and

Whereas the School Committee is committed to holding all scholars to high academic standards regardless of how scholar proficiency is assessed; and

Whereas teachers have a wide variety of formative and summative assessment tools they can use and there is growing interest in adopting competency-based assessments to assess scholar growth; now therefore be it

Resolved that, by September 30, 2020, the School Committee and Superintendent will send the Commissioner of Elementary and Secondary Education a copy of this resolution urging that the Department suspend MCAS for school year 2020-21; and be it further

Resolved that, if DESE does not suspend MCAS this year, the Cambridge School Committee and Superintendent will discuss how to enable educators to have the capacity to focus on developing pedagogy adapted to this new context and to focus on teaching, assessing student progress and other scholar support.

A true copy:

Doshia E. Beard

Dosha E. Beard
Executive Secretary to the School Committee

C:
Member Weinstein
Member Rojas, Member Rachel

Motion # 20-204