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C19-109

--In School Committee--
05/07/2019

Ordered:

That the following substitute motion be adopted:

Whereas, as flexible and adaptable learning organizations, Cambridge Public Schools and the Cambridge School Committee uphold the district strategic objectives of Equity and Access and Continuous Improvement; and

Whereas improvement requires the regular monitoring of progress in multiple ways however, the current format and frequency of the Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System (MCAS) does not fully align with CPS district objectives or CPS vision of rigorous, joyful, culturally responsive learning; and

Whereas the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) recently acknowledged that a racially insensitive question appeared on the 2019 10th grade English Language Arts MCAS exam that called for students to take on the perspective of a racist character after reading passage in Colson Whitehead's *The Underground Railroad*; and

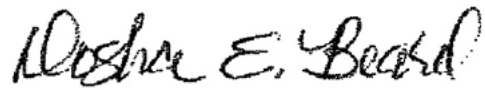
Whereas this highlights the need for inquiry into MCAS test question creation, review, and approval process as well as the developmental and cultural appropriateness of the MCAS as an effective and unbiased assessment measure; now therefore be it

Resolved that the School Committee go on record in support of the role that CPSD and the Superintendent can play in advocating to the Massachusetts Commissioner of Education and Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) for flexibility from federal assessment regulations in the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA); and be it further

Resolved that the School Committee request a letter be sent to the Commissioner of Education and Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) encouraging the state to explore an application to the Innovative Assessment Pilot (ESSA Section 1204) for Massachusetts be one of the US States allowed to 'pilot innovative systems of assessments' with a goal of providing continued accountability, and improving authentic and meaningful assessments that more equitably serve our students; and be it further

Resolved that the Superintendent create a working relationship with the Massachusetts Consortium for Innovative Education Assessment (MCIEA) around the idea of creating innovative performance assessments.

A true copy:

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Dosha E. Beard". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Dosha E. Beard
Executive Secretary to the School Committee

C:
Member Fantini, Mayor McGovern (Substitute Motion)
Vice Chair Kelly

Motion # 19-91