

DATE:

RESOLUTION: MCAS AND HIGH STAKES TESTING

WHEREAS, the COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated educational inequities and opportunity gaps that exist in our state's public education system, negatively and disproportionately affecting students with learning disabilities, students of lower socioeconomic status, ELL students, and students of color; and

WHEREAS, the social and emotional trauma both individually and collectively has yet to be truly realized in the students who have experienced the shutdown of their local school buildings and separation from their peers and supportive adults; and

WHEREAS, the students of the Commonwealth and Arlington have already missed valuable face-to-face instructional opportunities with their teachers and would benefit from focusing on those important instructional opportunities and social emotional supports; and

WHEREAS, given those disruptions to education, any data collected from the MCAS during or in the aftermath of this pandemic will lack validity or comparability with previous data, and will make it more difficult to assess student learning needs moving forward; and

WHEREAS, it is critical that all educational resources be used to prioritize students' health, safety, social-emotional well-being, and learning needs;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED: that the Arlington School Committee rejects the calls for the students of the class of 2022 who missed their tenth grade MCAS testing to be required to make it up during the 2020-2021 school year or ever. We demand those students be held harmless for not taking the MCAS and that their graduation requirements shall be determined by locally-controlled voices of the School Committee and School Administration within the remaining graduation requirements of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. Additionally, we call for a moratorium on all high stakes testing for the 2020-2021 school year so all students can benefit from their time being focused on direct instruction.