

REPORT ON RESOLUTIONS 2015

The following is a report on actions taken on the resolutions and proposed amendments to the Association by-laws that were considered by the Delegate Assembly at the annual meeting in Hyannis on Wednesday, November 4. There were 132 districts represented at the assembly.

RESOLUTION 1—REGARDING HIGH SCHOOL STARTING TIMES

(Submitted by the Newton School Committee)

BE IT RESOLVED that MASC be authorized to petition the legislature and to support legislation, including S.254, which calls for the establishment of a special commission to study the appropriate starting time for students in middle and high school.

The resolution was approved on a voice vote.

RESOLUTION 2—POVERTY AND CHILDREN

(Submitted by the Framingham School Committee)

BE IT RESOLVED that the Massachusetts Association of School Committee will prioritize, as a matter of its public policy agenda, and file for and support legislation that will support the eradication of poverty among children in Massachusetts and advocate for social and economic justice for students and their families that will include:

- Support for a revenue stream that supports social and economic priori-

ties for children and families.

- Support for state programs and services that serve children at greatest social and emotional risk which are easily accessible to students and families.
- Advocacy for nutrition programs that eradicate hunger among children.
- Advocacy for healthcare including vision, hearing, dental and mental health through accessible service providers.
- Support for pre-kindergarten programs for all children.
- Advocacy for increasing education-

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MASC offers guidance on student travel

by Mike Gilbert, MASC Field Director

MASC has recently received a number of inquiries about overseas student travel and School Committee decisions about such travel.

We offer the following advice based upon experiences and discussions with administrators and school attorneys. However, these are local decisions to make and different communities may reach different decisions.

Our policy advice is that School Committees review and approve any school sponsored or sanctioned trip where overnight or out of state travel is occurring.

These field trips generally take on one of two sets of characteristics - they are either school-based or vendor-based.

School-based trips are those that are sponsored by the district, and all arrangements are handled by members of the district staff. The district has complete control over transportation providers, hotels, itineraries, and guide/tour staff. These trips require adherence to district policies and school rules as well as School Committee approval. The Administration should ensure that the district's liability insurance provides protection to the district.

Vendor-based trips are those where a third party packages tours of an educational nature where the district's choices of providers and itineraries are restricted and district staff are essentially recruiters for the third party.

We would advise School Committees to avoid any action regarding



vendor based trips, leaving the decision to participate with the students and their parents.

We would also advise that districts caution staff regarding the use of school time and resources for the recruitment of students. It would be allowable to post marketing materials on bulletin boards and use facilities for after school meetings if they are permitted within the policies of the district.

While most of these trips occur primarily during vacation periods there are often a few days that may require release from school and the school may wish to provide hand-

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Conference 2015 in Pictures



Incoming President Jake Oliveira (second from right) along with Secretary-Treasurer Beverly Hugo (left) and Immediate Past President Ann Marie Cugno (right) presents MASC 2015 President Patrick Francomano with the ceremonial butter bowl (what happened to real gift is a whole other story) following Francomano's reflections on the past year. "As school leaders we have achieved an extraordinary capacity to focus on student achievement, financial responsibility and advocacy. Where else would parents have a real voice if you did not insure it? Who else would be putting forward your local concerns and demonstrating the importance of local control if you did not do it? School committee members are now not only at the table for the major issues facing public education—we are helping to set the table. Our voice is being heard, but we must work to insure that remains the case."



The MASC 2015 Thomas P. ("Tip") O'Neill Jr. award was presented jointly to Medford Mayor Michael McGlynn and Medford Superintendent Roy Belson. McGlynn, the state's longest serving mayor (28 years), chaired the school committee for all that time and has been a powerful advocate for advancing the social and economic well-being of children and families. With a 40-year career in education, Roy Belson's courageous leadership on issues including special education and services for children at risk; school funding; and charter school reform have been instrumental in improving lives and opportunities for students and families in the district. Celebrating with them are Medford School Committee members and family (left to right): Michael Cugno, Ann Marie Cugno, Robert Skerry, Erin DeBenedetto, Shelia McGlynn, Belson, Maxine Wish, Paulette Van der Kloot, Beverly Nelson.



Representative Steve Ultrino (Malden), MASC Legislative Counsel Stephen Finnegan, Senator Patricia Jehlen (Somerville) and Education Committee Co-Chair Representative Alice Peisch (Wellesley) answered concerns raised by the standing-room-only crowd on issues including the charter school cap and reimbursement funding; the Foundation Budget Commission report; early education; and the impact of poverty and homelessness on school districts. At the conclusion of the 75-minute session (which could easily have run for double that time) all three legislators (who coincidentally all began their careers as MA school committee members) reminded the audience of the critical need for school leaders to lobby their legislators "you really need to continue to do that and the most effective way is to deal directly with your own legislators." "Get as many people as possible to get in touch with their legislators on these issues, because unfortunately, at the end of the day, we don't hear from that many people, and when we don't hear from you, items tend to fall off the list."



Framingham school committee member (and Chair of Division II) Jim Stockless introduces a resolution proposed by Framingham that opposes tying test scores to Chapter 70 funding. The resolution led to considerable debate and discussion among the delegates and was eventually approved on a voice vote. (For a full report on actions taken on resolutions, see page 1.)



MASS President Andre Ravanella, Superintendent, Fitchburg, led off the Wednesday Keynote Dinner with remarks on the overriding need to ensure educational excellence and equity for all students. He was joined by his MASS colleagues Julie Hackett, Superintendent, Taunton; William Lupini, newly appointed Essex Vocational Superintendent; and MASC President Patrick Francomano, a member of the King Philip Regional School Committee.

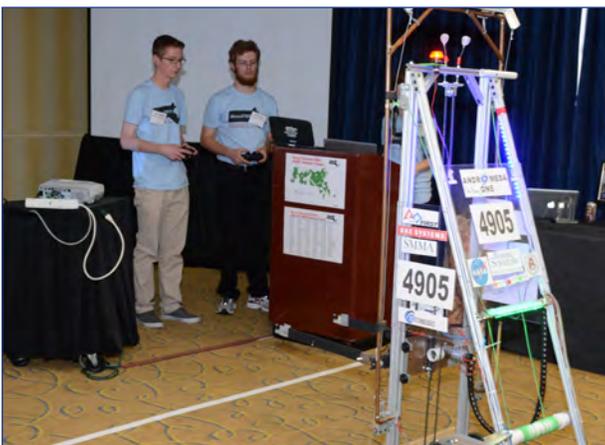
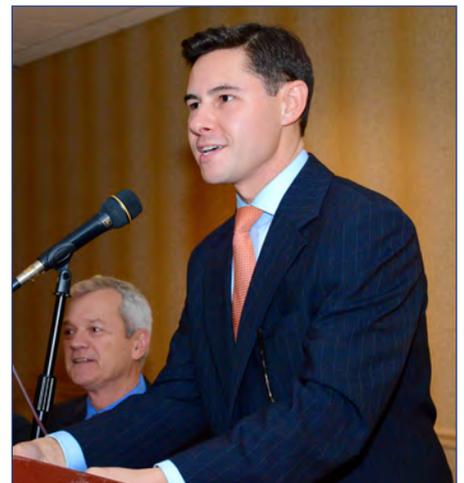


Testing: PARCC, MCAS and the just-proposed MCAS 2 were the subject of much discussion in the hallways and at various panel sessions during the conference. Here, Alain Jehlen, Executive Director of Citizens for Public Schools which has been leading the charge for a moratorium on testing, raises some key points with Pathfinder school committee member David Drove, while Leicester School Committee members Tyler Keenan and Grover Adams listen in.



Friday Keynote Speaker Dr. Yong Zhao, a professor of global education at the University of Oregon, talked at length about the American and Chinese systems of education. "A lot of testing numbers don't tell the whole truth about education systems. Do they ever tell you about the side effects of policy and curriculum changes—that student reading scores may go up, but the drill involved in doing so may turn kids off reading for pleasure forever? Education is about the future, but we keep trying to perpetuate what worked in the past. We turn for guidance to employers and design our programs to meet their needs only to find a year or two later that the company has been sold to the Chinese and they are outsourcing the product somewhere else. We need to ask if we are preparing our children with skills and knowledge that cannot be outsourced? Are we allowing enough variety for children to find their own passions and skills and the time to practice them? The goal should not be that children fit into existing paradigms, but that they create new ones."

Incoming President Jake Oliveira (Ludlow) underscored the importance of a well-educated citizenry as both imperative for the economy and vital to the future of our democracy. "I am distrustful of those who claim to help students, when, in fact, they stand to profit off the backs of our children and our tax dollars. I worry that school districts are overwhelmed trying to meet untenable goals to avoid unjust and excessive sanctions. Above all, however, my greatest concern is the number of children growing up poor in Massachusetts. This is not only an economic and educational issue—it is a moral issue that goes to the heart of who we are as a nation."



Jacob Miska (left) and Will Doyle (right), students from the Ayer-Shirley Regional High School Robotics Team, demonstrated their award-winning self-built robot at a featured program on Friday afternoon. Their presentation was a formidable example of the benefits of hands-on engineering opportunities and the measure of student excitement, learning and engagement that the program has inspired.

For more information on the 2015 conference go to www.masc.org

Resolutions

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al opportunities for children to grow both inside and outside of school.

The resolution was approved on a voice vote.

RESOLUTION 3—TYING TEST SCORES TO CHAPTER 70 FUNDING

(Submitted by the Framingham School Committee)

BE IT RESOLVED that MASC support legislation to ensure that individual student MCAS and/or PARCC assessment data in a given academic year is ascribed to the school and district that claims Massachusetts Chapter 70 funding based on that student's October 1 enrollment, provided that the student is enrolled in a Massachusetts school when the tests are administered.

In addition, MASC requests the State Auditor to examine academic outcomes for students who move out of charter schools after October 1.

The resolution was approved on a voice vote.

RESOLUTION 4—SUPPORT FOR AN EQUITABLE AND SUSTAINABLE PLACEMENT PROGRAM FOR STUDENTS COVERED UNDER THE MCKINNEY-VENTO HOMELESS EDUCATION ASSISTANCE ACT

(Submitted by the Framingham School Committee)

BE IT RESOLVED that the Massachusetts Association of School Committees file for and support legislation that will design, implement, and fund a program that will provide a more sustainable and equitable placement program for the state's homeless and McKinney-Vento students. A placement program needs to include consideration of the social-emotional and behavioral circumstances of the student, timing of the placement in relation to bud-

getary considerations, proximity to the student's previously established support system, and the availability of resources the receiving district has to accommodate the student's needs.

The resolution was approved on a voice vote.

RESOLUTION 5—TAX REFORM BALLOT QUESTION

(Submitted by the MASC Board of Directors)

BE IT RESOLVED that the MASC explore ways to promote social and economic equity through a ballot initiative whose purpose may include a state constitutional amendment, tax reform, protection of the state's neediest residents of all ages, and seeks additional revenue only from tax reform affecting the state's wealthiest residents. Further, that the goal of such a ballot referendum would be to secure a stronger financial base to underwrite needed improvements in the infrastructure of the Commonwealth as well as the educational, social and economic well-being of its residents.

The resolution did not pass on a vote of 62 (opposed) to 50 (in favor).

RESOLUTION 6—MEMBERSHIP OF A SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEMBER ON THE BOARD OF ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION

(Submitted by the MASC Board of Directors)

BE IT RESOLVED that MASC submit to the General Court proposed legislation that MGL Chapter 15, Section 1E be revised (see italics) as follows:

Section 1E. There shall be in the department a board of elementary and secondary education, in this chapter called the board, which shall consist of the chairman of the student advisory council established under this section, the secretary of education, in this chapter called the secretary, or her designee, and 9 members appointed by the governor. The 9

members appointed by the governor shall consist of 1 representative of a labor organization selected by the governor from a list of 3 nominees provided by the Massachusetts State Labor Council, AFL-CIO; 1 representative of business or industry selected by the governor with a demonstrated commitment to education; 1 representative of parents of school children selected by the governor from a list of 3 nominees provided by the Massachusetts Parent Teachers Association; 1 representative from a school committee from a list of three nominees provided by the Massachusetts Association of School Committees and 5 additional members.

An amendment was offered by the delegate from Arlington to further urge the legislature that the prohibition of school committee members and licensed educators from serving on the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education be stricken from the MA General Laws ("No appointive member of said board shall be appointed by or receive regular compensation from the department of education, or from any school system, public or independent, in the commonwealth, or serve as a member of any school committee." MGL Chapter 15, Section 1E).

The amendment was accepted on a voice vote. The resolution was approved on a voice vote.

RESOLUTION 7—RELATIVE TO THE TEACHING STRATEGIES GOLD ASSESSMENTS FOR KINDERGARTEN STUDENTS

(Submitted by the Arlington School Committee)

BE IT RESOLVED that MASC urge the Department of Early Education and Care and the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education to end the mandate that districts implement TS GOLD or any other externally developed kindergarten assessment.

The resolution was approved as presented.

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PROPOSED AMENDMENTS to the MASC BY-LAWS

(Referred by the Board of Directors)

I. AMENDMENT TO ARTICLE VIII, Section 1

Addition of the following paragraph to Section 1:

Any member of the MASC Board of Directors serving on the Board of Directors for the National School Board Association (NSBA) shall continue to serve as a voting member of the MASC Board until such time as his/her term on the MASC Board expires in accordance with these by-laws. Any member of MASC serving on the NSBA Board of Directors shall serve as an ex-officio, non-voting member of the MASC Board of Directors for the duration of his/her term on the NSBA Board.

The amendment passed unanimously as proposed.

II. AMENDMENT TO ARTICLE VIII, Section 1 and Section 4

The first sentence of Article VIII, Section 1 shall be amended by revising the first sentence as follows:

The Officers, the Immediate Past President, the Division Chairmen and the Chair of the Minority Caucus, shall constitute the Board of Directors except that no employee of the Association may serve on the Board of Directors.

Further, Article VIII, Section IV shall be amended by deleting the word "fourteen" and substituting the word "fifteen".

The amendment passed unanimously as proposed.

Student Travel

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book advice for both student and faculty release for those days.

Additionally, for any overseas travel, administrators should periodically check the advice of the US state department regarding alerts and warnings about any particular destinations. Legal counsel can also provide advice for dealing with such issues as required background checks and potential conflict of interest law travel issues.

SAVE THE DATE

Saturday, January 23

NSBA Equity Symposium

Washington DC

Sunday, Jan 24-Tuesday, Jan 26

NSBA Advocacy Institute

Washington DC

Saturday, January 30

Charting the Course

Essex North Shore Voc., Danvers

IN MEMORIAM

ANTONETTE PEPE

A nine-year member of the Springfield School Committee (2004-2013), Antonette Pepe leaves a legacy in her community that will not soon be forgotten. A life-long resident of Springfield and passionate advocate for its children and families, Mrs. Pepe worked tirelessly through her involvement in numerous organizations to improve opportunities for all the city's residents. She is remembered for always "doing the right thing" as a citizen and community leader, through her efforts on the school committee in collective bargaining, contract development, and raising awareness of classroom inequities and student needs. It was these latter driving concerns that led her to introduce school uniforms throughout the district as a way of raising student morale, school pride and easing the transition for new students in the district. She was relentless in calling for increased services and support for children and families at-risk in the community and took advantage of every opportunity to remind state and local leaders of the challenges and hardships that confronted many of the city's diverse student population. She will be missed by her many family, friends and colleagues.



CATHERINE DANIEL

A long-time elementary school teacher and reading specialist in Bridgewater, Catherine Daniel was also the first African-American and the first woman to be elected to the Bridgewater School Committee in 1964. Mrs. Daniel, who was born and grew up in the segregated South, was described as fierce in her commitment to improving opportunities for all students, a challenge she brought with her from her early years to her more than 50-year residency in Bridgewater. Together with her husband Robert Daniel—a professor at what is now Bridgewater State University—she brought a passion to her service as a school leader and her subsequent leadership in the classroom that would allow no child to be left behind on her watch.



Conference 2015 in Pictures

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At the Friday Leadership Luncheon Representative Theodore Speliotis of Danvers was honored as MASC's 2015 Legislator of the Year (along with Senator Anne Gobi of Spencer who will receive her award at Day on the Hill on April 26). A member of the legislature since 1979, Speliotis has consistently been an ardent supporter of education, including funding for Chapter 70 the SPED circuit breaker, and charter school amelioration funding. In addition, he was the initiator of the effort to fund districts with homeless students for those extraordinary costs.



At the Thursday morning Featured Panel on Meeting the Needs of Students Living in Poverty, Suffolk University President Margaret McKenna, Fitchburg Superintendent Andre Ravanelle, Fall River Superintendent Meg Mayo Brown, Chelsea Superintendent Mary Bourque (pictured) and Worcester Superintendent Melinda Boone spoke eloquently of the unique challenges their students confront daily including homelessness (or frequent relocations), fractured families, and the social, physical and emotional consequences of low/unstable incomes and living in violent or substance-abuses surroundings. Bourque noted that 51% of students in Chelsea are not found on any state database; many are from families who double or triple up in three-deckers; 80% of her students' first language is not English; and there is a 22% mobility rate. "We have become a huge wraparound zone, and are working from every angle with community groups to reach kids and families and try to ensure healthy environments in the unstable lives many of children find themselves in."



NSBA UPDATE: ESSA Implementation/Waiver Dates

The U.S. Department of Education just released its first notice regarding implementation of the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA). This notice addresses a number of areas including state assessments, annual measurable objectives (AMOs), conditions under ESEA flexibility, and educator evaluation and support systems. The notice includes key dates including January 29, 2016--the date in which states granted ESEA flexibility should respond to the Department about its options for school improvement efforts.

Additionally, the Department has published a Request for Information (RFI) seeking recommendations for the Title I program, as reauthorized by ESSA. The RFI is available at www.ed.gov/essa. NSBA continues its advocacy and engagement efforts regarding ESSA implementation and will provide further details as this process moves forward.

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