

Resolution 2021R-018

By Director Baez

1. WHEREAS, Through Administrative Policy 7.36, Balanced Assessment System, the district has developed a system designed to match assessment types, purposes, and users in order to improve data-driven decision making throughout the district; and
2. WHEREAS, The testing system in MPS was designed to support instructional planning, school-improvement efforts, curriculum and program evaluation, resource planning, and accountability; and
3. WHEREAS, The testing system was also designed to support graduation- and promotion-related decisions for individual students and factors in accommodations for students with Individualized Education Plans as well as English language learners; and
4. WHEREAS, The district's testing system includes a balance of summative, benchmarks, and formative assessments; and
5. WHEREAS, The testing system also includes examinations commonly referred to as "standardized tests" that are required by either the state or federal governments and which have become the subject of debate on a national level; and
6. WHEREAS, The Board also recognizes, however, that there are growing concerns over the extent to which standardized testing undermines student confidence, pressures teachers to "teach to the test," fails to align to what is being taught in the classroom, and fails to provide a full picture of a student's strengths and weaknesses; and
7. WHEREAS, The Board is also concerned about other possible consequences of standardized testing, including: the loss of learning opportunities; the stress placed on our students; the triggering of behaviors that may interfere with learning; the interruption of schedules of our special education's students and students in our bilingual and ESL programs; the time spent on professional development for testing that could be put to other purposes; and, the potential for implicit bias in the testing process that would disproportionately affect all students of color; and
8. WHEREAS, The board is further concerned about how standardized and other testing is aligned with the multiple efforts by this district regarding equity, anti-racist and culturally and linguistically inclusive and sensitive curriculum and related staff professional development; and
9. WHEREAS, The time has come for a rigorous discussion on standardized testing and MPS' policies on all testing; now, therefore, be it
10. RESOLVED, That the Administration present a report to the Board on the subject of standardized testing; and, be it
11. FURTHER RESOLVED, That the report include the following information relative to standardized tests required by both the federal and state government:
 - a. A list of the companies or vendors with whom MPS contracts or partners with to provide standardized tests; the name, type of test, or testing service; the grade levels or other purposes served by these vendors; and the costs of the services provided;
 - b. Disaggregated by federal and state, the estimated annual costs to MPS of purchasing required standardized exams and related guides and materials currently in force for students in all MPS schools;

- c. Information about the annual costs of implementing, monitoring and conducting professional development to others on all standardized testing at Central Office by Central Office administrators;
 - d. An estimate, disaggregated by the above categories, of the costs of staff time/hours and any additional school-based expenditures incurred in every school in order to implement standardized testing;
 - e. An estimate of the annual costs of contracts to vendors for analyzing scores and categorizing such tests, as well as the annual costs of any related analysis and professional development they may provide;
 - f. Assuming their analysis and services are for purposes of informing, based on student performance on these tests, the categorization or performance of schools, and the curriculum and instructional practices at MPS, please provide related annual estimated costs to Central Office and to individual schools;
 - g. The estimated annual costs associated with printing, duplication and dissemination of all testing and related activities, including materials for professional development related to testing;
 - h. Estimates of the amount of instructional time that is spent on student test preparation, test administration, and make-up testing for students who are absent for all types of testing including regularly computer based “formative” assessments;
 - i. Information on the impact of testing on the closure of school libraries/media centers or limitations on their hours because of testing taking place in such sites; and, be it
12. FURTHER RESOLVED, That the same information listed above should be provided relative to any other standardized or academic performance tests currently required by MPS; and, be it
 13. FURTHER RESOLVED, That this report should be brought to the Board through the appropriate committee in the ~~February~~ March 2021 Board cycle.

Introduced December 17, 2020