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For Immediate Release
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Concord and Concord-Concord Carlisle School Committees Urge Focus on Student Well-Being and Learning as well as a Moratorium on MCAS

The Concord and Concord-Carlisle Regional School Committees voted to endorse a resolution offered by the Massachusetts Association of School Committees (MASC) urging state education leaders to forgo MCAS testing during the pandemic to help local school districts increase focus on student's social-emotional well-being and direct student instruction. By supporting the resolution, School Committee members are expressing their desire to maximize instructional time as opposed to time for standardized testing.

School Committee Chairs for the Districts, Court Booth (CPS) and Sara Wilson (CCRSD) stated, "While we are extremely proud of how the teachers, students and staff at the Concord and Concord-Carlisle School Districts are rising to meet the challenges presented by the pandemic, these challenges require our unwavering focus on supporting our teachers and the mental health and educational needs of our students. Therefore, we do not think it is responsible to conduct MCAS testing during this school year. We question how the state can implement standardized testing when there is no standardized learning environment."

The vote follows intensive efforts to address the challenges of teaching and learning experienced by all public school districts due to COVID-19. Locally, the COVID-19 Taskforce comprised of teachers, counselors, students, parents, public health and school committee representatives and district leaders, led the planning and school re-opening efforts. The planning efforts placed equal emphasis on hybrid and entirely remote learning models with the understanding that the hybrid model includes elements of remote learning and that some families will chose to have their children learn exclusively from home. Public health, the well-being of students and educational consistency and depth were the centerpiece of the planning efforts. The plans reflect input from the multiple community forums with students, parents and teachers and are consistent with or exceed the State's guidance for instruction as well as health and safety.

School Superintendent Dr. Laurie Hunter added, "I share the sentiments expressed in the resolution adopted by the School Committees. We are proud of our students, faculty and staff and we take pride knowing the academic and social-emotional status of every student. During this very disruptive time, we should hyper concentrate our work and interactions with students as opposed to looking to standardized testing such as MCAS to evaluate members of our learning community."

The resolution reflect concerns for students throughout the Commonwealth as educational leaders believe that remote learning models can negatively and disproportionately affected students with learning disabilities, students of lower socioeconomic status, ELL students and students who identify as minorities. For more information regarding the resolution and other school committee matters, interested individuals can visit the Districts' web site, www.concordps.org/school-committee, and subscribe for School Committee news at https://www.concordps.org/school_committee_subscriber_list/.