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What our students need and our economy demands.

AN UPDATE FOR OUR FUNDERS | AUGUST 2016

**MBAE ACHIEVES
CRITICAL VICTORY
ON COMMON CORE:
CLEARS PATH FOR
CAMPAIGN TO LIFT CAP
ON CHARTER SCHOOLS**

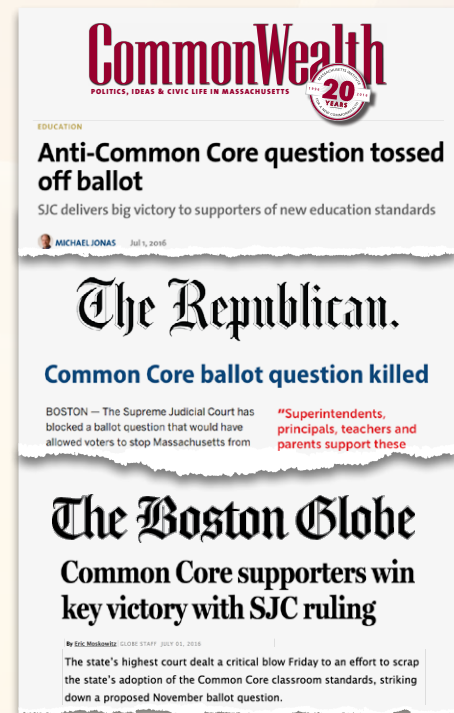
On July 1, the Massachusetts Supreme Judicial Court dealt a major victory to students and teachers when it issued a ruling that the initiative petition to repeal the Common Core State Standards did not meet legal requirements to go on the November ballot.

The decision was the culmination of an effort led by the **Massachusetts Business Alliance for Education**, with financial support from donors including members of **Boston Leaders for Education**, to protect high academic standards that focus on college and career readiness. The ballot measure would have set students back, created significant costs for the state as well as cash-strapped cities and towns, and politicized the process by which we decide what kids learn.

The SJC victory also benefits the campaign to lift the cap on charter school enrollment in Massachusetts. Two education-related ballot questions – one urging a Yes vote and the other a No vote – would compete for limited resources and risk confusing voters. Removing the common core question from the ballot clears a path for the charter school campaign.

MBAE Board of Directors Chairman Bill Walczak was one of ten plaintiffs who appealed the Attorney General's certification of the common core ballot measure, along with **Springfield Business Leaders for Education** member Jack Dill, teachers, principals, superintendents, parents, and former members of the Board of Education. MBAE is grateful to all of the plaintiffs, and particularly appreciates the active advocacy of Stephanie Gray, the President of the **Massachusetts Parent Teacher Association**, and Bob Antonucci, the former Commissioner of Education and president of Fitchburg State University.

Prior to the SJC appeal, MBAE and the **Massachusetts Association of School Superintendents** submitted a memorandum to the Attorney General opposing certification on the grounds that it failed to meet the technical and constitutional requirements for placement on the ballot. That effort was made possible with pro bono legal support from **Foley Hoag LLP**, which also represented the plaintiffs in the appeal.



MEASURING WHAT STUDENTS REALLY NEED TO KNOW: MBAE ADVANCES HIGH QUALITY ASSESSMENTS

Representing employers' view that too much time is being spent on standardized tests that set too low a bar, MBAE led the call over the past year and a half to replace MCAS with new high quality assessments that measure students' ability to think critically and problem solve rather than simply memorize.

MBAE's report comparing MCAS and PARCC, the assessment that was piloted in Massachusetts, showed the state's 18-year-old MCAS doesn't indicate a student's preparedness for post-high school success. Its lack of alignment with college and career expectations has led to nearly 36% of Massachusetts public high school graduates who enroll in state colleges and universities being placed into one or more noncredit-bearing, remedial courses. The report was instrumental in shifting the debate from *if* Massachusetts should adopt a new test to *what* the new test should look like.

MBAE led a coalition with key partners **Stand for Children** and **Teach Plus Massachusetts** that beat back efforts to stay with the old MCAS. Our thoughtful, evidence-based positions helped earn positive editorials from *The Boston Globe* and other leading Massachusetts newspapers. Our position that Massachusetts needs assessments that give teachers, students and families information about whether students are on track and how to help get or keep them there was consistently represented in news stories including in one on the front page of *The New York Times*.

The Board of Elementary and Secondary Education voted in the fall to develop MCAS 2.0, a next generation assessment that is based on PARCC and that sets a higher bar for teaching and learning.



O T H E R R E C E N T M B A E A C C O M P L I S H M E N T S

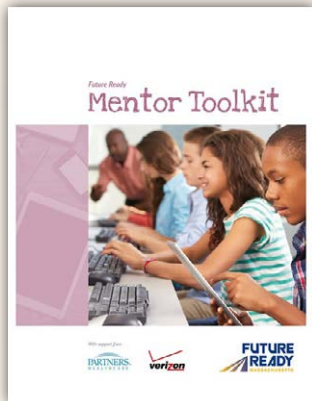
Represented employers as a voting member on the **Foundation Budget Review Commission**, a high profile legislative commission examining school funding. MBAE advanced the goal of transparency in school funding and fought proposals for spending without assurance that aid would be spent on effective instruction for students it is intended to benefit.

MBAE is entering its 6th year of partnership with **Springfield Business Leaders for Education (SBLE)**, senior business leaders representing the city's major employers and economic development organizations. Organized and led by **MassMutual** and the **Irene E. and George A. Davis Foundation**, SBLE's 45 members advocate for high quality early education, school options, vocation technical education and improved teacher preparation programs among other initiatives.

Over the past two years, **MBAE secured substantial multi-year support** from the Barr Foundation, Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, Irene E. and George A. Davis Foundation, and The Nellie Mae Education Foundation, validating both MBAE's significant past accomplishments as well as future plans and goals, and enabling MBAE to grow its impact for years to come.

FUTURE READY MASSACHUSETTS: MBAE-LED INITIATIVE PREPARING STUDENTS FOR SUCCESS

Future Ready Massachusetts, an initiative that provides tools and resources to get more students ready for college and career, increased its impact significantly over the past year.



At the urging of mentoring and other youth-serving organizations and with financial support from **Partners HealthCare** and **Verizon**, we created and launched the **Future Ready Mentor Toolkit**, a handbook that includes information and resources to help mentors and influential adults guide students to high school completion and preparation for college and the workplace. The Toolkit is being

distributed through our partners and is available online at **FutureReadyMA.org/Toolkit**.

Developed in partnership with the **Department of Higher Education, Department of Elementary and Secondary Education** and **Massachusetts Educational Financing Authority**, FutureReadyMA.org includes a searchable database of college and career readiness programs, resources and tools as well as access to the **Your Plan for the Future** web portal.

Future Ready launched a Summer Campaign in partnership with the MetroWest College Planning Center to get the Future Ready Mentor Toolkit into the hands of more than 600 students, families and mentors in at least six communities across the state. Five students from Framingham State University were trained and serve as Future Ready ambassadors in their community, training college access programs and organizations and individuals on how to use the Future Ready Mentor Toolkit.

Future Ready Mentor Toolkit: *By the Numbers*

15 organizations, including **9** statewide groups, use and distribute

7,000 mentors, students, families and other influential adults reached

An additional **600** students and families and **20** youth serving organizations will be reached this summer

Future Ready Mentor Toolkit partners include:



M B A E N E W S B R I E F S

Governor Baker appointed MBAE Board of Directors Chairman William Walczak **Chair of the Board of Trustees of Bunker Hill Community College.**

MBAE Executive Director Linda Noonan is serving on Massachusetts House Speaker Robert DeLeo's **Early Education and Care Business Advisory Group** and Secretary of Housing and Economic Development Jay Ash's **Economic Prosperity Advisory Council.**

Jackney Prioly Joseph, Director of Future Ready Massachusetts, represents MBAE on the **Alliance for Vocational Technical Education.**

MBAE launched a new website in 2015 highlighting the connection between education and the workforce and summarizing our policy agenda. Visit **mbae.org**.

**MBAE'S
OPPORTUNITIES
AND OBJECTIVES
IN THE YEAR AHEAD**

Mounting evidence that a shortage of skilled workers threatens Massachusetts corporate and economic growth adds urgency to MBAE's work as we advocate

for improvements and innovation in education that will ensure EVERY student graduates high school prepared for college and career.

Using our **New Opportunity to Lead** report as our guide, MBAE will continue to focus on key levers for transforming schools including:

- ➔ More effective and equitable use of school funds
- ➔ Deployment of innovative tools and techniques in the classroom
- ➔ Digital/Computer literacy among all students
- ➔ Highly effective teachers in every classroom
- ➔ Actionable tools for adults to prepare students for the future
- ➔ Greater choice for parents and students
- ➔ An accountability system strengthened by ESSA



THANK YOU TO THE FOLLOWING COMPANIES AND ORGANIZATIONS FOR THEIR GENEROUS SUPPORT

