



# An Act empowering students and schools to thrive

## MTA Legislative Agenda, 2023-2024

**Lead Sponsors:** Rep. James Hawkins (D-Attleboro) | Rep. Sam Montañó (D-Boston) |

Sen. Jo Comerford (D-Northampton) | Sen. Adam Gomez (D-Springfield) | Sen. Liz Miranda (D-Boston)

### Eliminating the high-stakes components of the Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System (MCAS), including the graduation exam requirement and receiverships

High-stakes testing and the associated accountability measures have undermined our public education system for far too long. Massachusetts is only one of eight states in the country that ties its standardized test to graduation and there is no correlation between having a standardized graduation exam requirement and academic achievement. The punitive aspects of the MCAS regime are especially detrimental to students with Individualized Education Plans, students learning English as a second language, students of color and students from groups that have been historically marginalized from an equitable and supportive education. Recent studies have also demonstrated that state receiverships, which are inherently undemocratic, do not work.

#### **This bill would address these issues by:**

- Replacing the MCAS graduation requirement with one that allows students' districts to certify that they have satisfactorily completed coursework showing mastery of the skills, competencies and knowledge required by the state standards.
- Eliminating state receiverships and reinstating democratic control to communities and school committees.
- Establishing a commission to create a new, whole-child system of assessing our schools, building on important experiments in our state and nation, which can be implemented in coming years.

#### **Passing *An Act empowering students and schools to thrive* means:**

- The school and district evaluation and accountability requirements will focus on supporting locally led school improvement plans while still aligning with federal law.
- Student learning and assessment will be re-oriented in a developmentally appropriate way that educates and supports the whole child.
- The 30-year experiment with test, punish and privatize will end and students, communities and true learning will be placed front and center.

**For more information please contact MTA Government Relations**

**Molly Labonte | *Legislative Specialist* | [mlabonte@massteacher.org](mailto:mlabonte@massteacher.org) | 617.878.8119**