

A Resolution Concerning the Growing and Alarming Pace of State Acquiescence to Federal Intrusion into State Educational Priorities and Operations, and State Intrusion into Local Control of Education, Specifically but Not Limited to the Use of Common Core Standards and PARCC Assessments

BY

The Elizabeth School District C-1 Board of Education

WHEREAS, in 2008 the Colorado Legislature passed S.B. 08-212 (The Colorado Achievement Plan for Kids – “CAP4K”) requiring revision of standards and alignment of the P-12 educational system; and

WHEREAS, in 2009 the Colorado State Board of Education adopted standards in 10 content areas and for English language proficiency, referred to as the Colorado Academic Standards; and

WHEREAS, in 2009 the Federal Government made billions of dollars available to states through competitive grants called Race to the Top, and incentivized states to adopt the Common Core Standards; and

WHEREAS, in 2010 the Colorado State Board of Education adopted the Common Core State Standards for mathematics and reading, writing, and communicating, incorporating the Common Core standards into the Colorado Academic Standards; and

WHEREAS, in 2010 Colorado applied for Race-to-the-Top Federal grant funds, but the Phase 1 and Phase 2 grant applications were not successful; and

WHEREAS, in 2010 the Colorado Department of Education (CDE) conducted a state-wide tour to solicit feedback from the field about a new assessment system. While the stated purpose of the tour was to ensure Colorado values and needs were reflected in a new system, we do not believe the [attributes of the assessment system](#) which were identified through this process accurately reflect local and state values; and

WHEREAS, in 2012 the Colorado Legislature passed S.B. 12-1240 authorizing the Colorado State Board of Education to join a multi-state consortium for math and language arts assessments; and

WHEREAS, in 2012 the Colorado State Board of Education became a governing member of the multi-state consortium Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers or PARCC; and

WHEREAS, the State Board of Education (SBE) decided that the Colorado Commission on Higher Education (CCHHE) and State Board of Education would come to agreement on scoring criteria that would determine when a student had attained postsecondary and workforce readiness. We believe that the PARCC Governing Members will ultimately set the scoring criteria, as opposed to the SBE and CCHHE, and that this undermines state and local control of graduation requirements, accountability systems, postsecondary and workforce readiness; and

WHEREAS, state and federal requirements for standardized tests and related accountability systems significantly influence what is taught in public schools. Furthermore, the PARCC assessments appear to be heavily influenced by commercial

interests; and

WHEREAS, the State of Colorado has concurrently enacted multiple unfunded education reform measures which redirect resources from other local educational priorities. The state simultaneously reduced overall state funding via the implementation of a negative funding factor; and

WHEREAS, the legislated reforms and high frequency, high stakes standardized tests, though well meaning, are ill conceived and create an environment of regulation rather than achievement. These individual reforms take a “one size fits all” approach and fail to consider the entire system and circumstances of Elizabeth School District and our students; and

WHEREAS, the Elizabeth Board of Education is empowered to set educational standards and priorities to meet the needs of the students of our district as described in Article IX, section 15 of the Colorado Constitution; and

WHEREAS, local control is a fundamental tenet of education in Colorado and is a critical factor in establishing and operating quality educational programs in our community; and

WHEREAS, the Elizabeth Board of Education, district superintendent, administrative and teaching staff are accountable to our community; then

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that we must act to limit unwarranted intrusion by state and federal agencies which encroaches upon the community’s constitutional authority to set educational standards and priorities for our students and which creates unintended consequences that degrade our ability to serve our students; and

THEREFORE, BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that we will individually and collectively, and in cooperation with other like-minded boards of education, professional associations and citizen organizations, take action to narrow pathways for state and federal intrusion into our local educational priorities. In addition, we will support legislation that will seek to delay and reexamine the implementation of PARCC assessments. Furthermore, we support adoption of the highest possible academic standards for our state.