

### **High School Assessments**

(Adopted 1997; amended 1999, 2000, 2002, 2004, 2007, 2008, 2009, 2011)

WHEREAS, local boards of education believe in and strive for improved academic achievement for all students; and

WHEREAS, local boards of education, the State Board, and Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) have historically pursued increasingly high standards for the Maryland high school diploma; and

WHEREAS, the Maryland Association of Boards of Education (MABE) and local school systems have raised many concerns about the implementation of the program, including the impact on current local school system accountability structures, alternative assessments for students who fail the state test, the most appropriate test design, accommodations for special education and limited English proficient students, and the potential increase in the dropout rate; and

WHEREAS, the federal No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) requires Maryland to adopt and implement numerous new student performance assessments which require the investment of significant state and local government resources; and

WHEREAS, NCLB requires three assessments in reading, mathematics, and science during the four years of high school, but does not require states to adopt new high school graduation requirements; and

WHEREAS, in 2002 the State Board and MSDE developed and administered HSAs in four subject areas, English, Algebra/Data Analysis, Biology, and Government and in 2003 adopted proficiency standards for each HSA including minimum score requirements; and

WHEREAS, in 2003 the State Board abolished the graduation requirement to achieve a passing score on the Maryland Functional Tests; and

WHEREAS, in 2003 the State Board adopted the State Superintendent of Schools' recommendation to develop draft regulations to make high school graduation with a Maryland State Diploma contingent on the passage of the four HSAs beginning with the graduating class of 2009; and

WHEREAS, in 2008, the State Board modified the HSA graduation requirements by repealing the separate minimum score requirements and maintaining the composite score option; and

WHEREAS, in 2008, the State Board adopted a new assessment program, the "Bridge Plan for Academic Validation," to allow students failing an HSA at least twice to complete a project demonstrating knowledge and skills commensurate with the graduation requirements contained in the HSAs; and

WHEREAS, the Governor's budget for FY 2012 eliminated funding for the Government HSA, which is the only HSA not mandated by NCLB, and therefore beginning in the 2011-2012 school year the Government HSA will no longer be administered or included as a graduation requirement and the composite score option will need to be revised;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that MABE urges the State Board and MSDE to commit to working collaboratively with local boards of education to determine the most appropriate role of the HSA program with respect to student performance and graduation requirements; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that MABE will continue to advocate for increased state, local, and federal funding in order to successfully implement the HSA program.