

National Assessment Governing Board

Resolution in Memory of the Honorable Mitchell D. Chester

August 4, 2017

Whereas, Mitchell D. Chester began his service on the National Assessment Governing Board in October 2014;

Whereas, Mitchell Chester's life as a trailblazing educator began early in a childhood home that greatly valued the importance of education and led to his first teaching job in a Connecticut elementary school and eventually to his roles as middle school assistant principal, district curriculum coordinator, director of curriculum and instructional programs for Connecticut, and senior leadership positions in Philadelphia and in the Ohio Department of Education;

Whereas, Mitchell Chester moved from Ohio to serve as Commissioner of the Massachusetts Department of Elementary & Secondary Education in May 2008, and he earned such respect and accolades for his work both in and beyond the Commonwealth of Massachusetts that he became the longest-serving chief state school officer in the country in June 2017;

Whereas, Commissioner Chester showed an unwavering commitment to narrow Massachusetts' achievement gaps between disadvantaged and advantaged students and worked to fulfill this promise, leading to a decade of increasing four-year high school graduation rates and top scores for Massachusetts on the National Assessment of Educational Progress, the Nation's Report Card;

Whereas, Commissioner Chester's success in Massachusetts garnered him well-deserved national acclaim, manifested in positions of leadership in the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO), the board of the Partnership for the Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC), and his term on the National Assessment Governing Board;

Whereas, Commissioner Chester engaged deeply and thoughtfully in his work for the National Assessment Governing Board, including his contributions to the Committee on Standards, Design and Methodology, where he stood out as an eloquent and influential leader in helping states use findings from the National Assessment of Educational Progress and advocating passionately for linking the Nation's Report Card to the valuable set of international assessments as a means to advance education in America;

Whereas, Commissioner Chester posed incisive questions to presenters and Board members in order to ensure that the Governing Board fulfilled its potential as a policy-setting body for the country's only nationally representative assessment of student learning and always infused discussions with engaging wit, lively curiosity, expert insight from decades of experience, an openness to diverse opinions, and a strong desire to hear perspectives from teachers and school administrators about assessments and issues in schools first and foremost;

Whereas, Commissioner Chester was highly esteemed as an insightful, inquisitive, thoughtful, measured, and trusted colleague among his fellow Board members, earning him their respect, admiration, and friendship;

Therefore, be it resolved that the National Assessment Governing Board expresses its grateful recognition of the important contributions to National Assessment of Educational Progress and our nation's children made by Commissioner Mitchell D. Chester, and that the Board conveys to his family the deep sorrow and sincere sympathy felt upon his untimely death; and

Be it further resolved that a copy of this resolution be entered permanently into the minutes of the National Assessment Governing Board.