

September 23, 2004

Letters to the editor
The Republican
P. O. Box 2350
Springfield, MA 01102-2350

Dear Editor:

Shame on Commissioner David P. Driscoll and the members of the State Board of Education for becoming unwitting allies in Governor Romney's push to privatize public education in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

Their tunnel vision is only focused on MCAS scores and the conclusion they reach is that the cause of these low MCAS scores is the low expectation of the principals, teachers and paraprofessionals who work in our schools.

Nothing could be further from the truth. Over the last eight years, Springfield Public Schools have implemented a curriculum with learning outcome targets that are some of, if not, the highest in the commonwealth.

These adults in positions of authority governing our children's education, have ignored the report issued jointly by the Massachusetts Association of School Committees, the Massachusetts Association of School Superintendents, the Massachusetts Elementary School Principals Association, the Massachusetts Secondary School Administration Association, the Massachusetts Parent Teacher Association, the Massachusetts Federation of Teachers, and the Massachusetts Teachers Association. This report is relative to MCAS and how it is being used to implement the ESEA (a.k.a., No Child Left Behind). The title of this report is "A Call to Action: Don't Shortchange Children."

These adults have ignored Superior Court Justice Botsford's findings that will go before the State Supreme Court. This report clearly shows that the State has not met its constitutional responsibility to educate the children of Springfield.

These adults also ignored the fact that Governor Romney has cut more per pupil spending than any other state in the nation and his funding formula for additional assistance to Springfield has shortchanged our city one quarter of a billion dollars over the last 12 years.

Schools are always a reflection of the community where they reside. As long as our elected officials and adults in position of authority view our children as nothing more than a number on an MCAS spreadsheet, our children will continue to be shortchanged. It's time for the citizens of Springfield to "step up" and speak out to end this unjust treatment of our children.

Sincerely,

Timothy T. Collins
President