

Educational Accountability and Assessment to Measure Student Learning

WHEREAS, the Corporation recognizes that for over a century the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) has sought to close the education achievement gap and improve education for all Americans, and to seek an end to school segregation and other methods of imposing educational inequality and injustice; and

WHEREAS, all children should receive a high-quality education that prepares them for success in college and in a global competitive economy; and

WHEREAS, at its July 2013 Annual Convention in Orlando, FL, the NAACP adopted the Common Core Resolution¹ which states in part that “the Common Core State Standards Initiative is a state-led effort that establishes a single set of clear educational standards for kindergarten through 12th grade in English language arts and mathematics that states voluntarily adopt to ensure that all students have access to high-quality educational content, supports, and opportunities that research demonstrates are essential to ensure post-secondary success”; and

WHEREAS, President Barack Obama’s Blueprint for Reform concludes that assessments better inform classroom instruction to respond to academic needs and measure how schools, principals, and teachers are educating students²; and

WHEREAS, parents should have a significant role to play in whether students are making academic gains; and

WHEREAS, assessments with results reported to teachers and parents in a timely manner during the academic year can be an objective tool to ensure equity and sustain a high quality education system for all students³; and

WHEREAS, the Corporation believes that regular assessments can substantially improve the accuracy of a school’s measurements of individual student growth; and

WHEREAS, assessment instruments should be designed, pre-tested and validated on student populations representing diverse multicultural, racial and multilingual groups; and

WHEREAS, without meaningful assessments of student learning, neither the parents nor the teachers will know whether individual students are receiving the education they need and deserve; and

WHEREAS, teachers should provide instruction in all of the subjects important for student success and should not sacrifice teaching of standards to the teaching of test-taking skills; and

¹ National Association for the Advancement of Colored People National Convention, Orlando, FL, “*Common Core Resolution*”, July 2013.

² <https://www.whitehouse.gov/issues/education/k-12/reforming-no-child-left-behind>; [see also https://www2.ed.gov/policy/elsec/leg/blueprint/blueprint.pdf](https://www2.ed.gov/policy/elsec/leg/blueprint/blueprint.pdf)

³ <http://www2.ed.gov/policy/elsec/leg/blueprint/teachers/index.html>

WHEREAS, accountability shines a light on what is working and what needs improvement in order for teachers and individual students to receive the necessary support to be successful; and

WHEREAS, academic tests provide crucial data that reveal areas where struggling students need help in order to receive the support to learn at grade level and where struggling schools need additional resources and support; and

WHEREAS, tests must measure learning, not test-taking ability; and

WHEREAS, quality teaching also includes social, moral and aesthetic information that is not, and often cannot be, tested.

NOW THEREFORE, IT IS HEREBY

RESOLVED, that the Corporation encourages state policymakers to increase their awareness of the implications of assessments and accountability for their respective states, and ensure collaboration with their state board of education and state-level departments.