

# Massachusetts Gov. Healey appoints multicultural expert to Board of Elementary, Secondary Education

“Governor Maura T. Healey announced that she is appointing Ericka Fisher, Ed.D. to the state’s Board of Elementary and Secondary Education (BESE). Dr. Fisher is a leading expert in multicultural education and currently serves as an Associate Professor and the Chair of the Department of Education at College of the Holy Cross in Worcester. This is the first appointment to the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education by the Healey-Driscoll administration, besides Secretary of Education Patrick Tutwiler.

Dr. Fisher’s scholarly research focuses on social and education issues, particularly multicultural education and the intersection of social justice and education. At Holy Cross, colleagues and community members have lauded Dr. Fisher’s leadership and commitment to students, as well as her dedication to creating positive change, particularly for students of color and other historically marginalized students. Dr. Fisher is the author of “Educating the Urban Race: The Evolution of an American High School,” in which she uses historical and quantitative data, interviews, and observations to capture the many factors at play in an urban high school like Burncoat High School in Worcester.

Governor Healey is appointing Dr. Fisher to the seat previously held by Springfield business leader Tricia Canavan, whose position was coterminous with the Baker-Polito administration. Following her appointment, Dr. Fisher will join current BESE member Michael Moriarty in representing Massachusetts residents, students, and educators from Central

and Western Massachusetts.

“Dr. Ericka Fisher has demonstrated a life-long commitment to advancing education in her home of Worcester, and it’s clear she will bring that same dedication to expanding opportunities across Massachusetts,” said Governor Healey. “With her expertise in multicultural education, Dr. Fisher will bring a necessary perspective to the Board as they seek to deliver a high-quality education to all of our students, especially students of color, English learners, and students with disabilities.”

“Our students benefit when we have experts at the decision-making table. We’re grateful to Dr. Fisher for accepting this leadership position and serving the people of Massachusetts with the goal of advancing access and closing achievement gaps in public education across the state,” said Lieutenant Governor Kim Driscoll.

“I am thrilled that Governor Healey is appointing Dr. Ericka Fisher to the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education. Dr. Fisher is a seasoned expert on urban schooling and education through the lens of equity and social justice, which is experience that will serve the Board well as we seek to improve educational opportunities for all students, particularly those who have been historically underrepresented. She will bring a valued new perspective to the Board,” said Secretary of Education Patrick Tutwiler.

“The process of education, when done correctly, affords students agency and contributes to healthy students and ultimately a healthy society. As an educator and parent, engaging in conversation and decision-making regarding education in the Commonwealth is an honor,” said Dr. Ericka Fisher. “I look forward to working with the Commissioner, Secretary, and fellow board members in ensuring a quality and equitable education for all of our students, regardless of location or demographic. I am grateful for the opportunity.”

In her native town of Worcester, Dr. Fisher is a well-known community leader serving on the Board of Directors of the Joy of Music program, as well as a Board of Trustee Associate at the Nativity School of Worcester. As an expert in the field, Dr. Fisher has also served on the Worcester Public Schools Principal Search Committee and on the Worcester Mayor's Committee on the Creation of an Exam School.

Dr. Fisher has a bachelor's degree from Holy Cross, and master's and doctoral degrees in education from the University of Massachusetts Amherst. As a multicultural education expert, Dr. Fisher currently serves as a reviewer of the Current Issues in Education, Teachers College Press, and Child Abuse & Neglect academic journals. Dr. Fisher is also the mother of two school-age children in Worcester.

Dr. Fisher was sworn into BESE on Wednesday, June 21, 2023. As such, she will participate as a full voting member at BESE's normal meeting scheduled for today, June 27, 2023. Today's BESE meeting will be held at 9:00 am at the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education. The meeting will also be streamed live at <https://livestream.com/accounts/22459134>. The agenda is posted at <https://www.doe.mass.edu/bese/docs/fy2023/2023-06/>."-Mass.gov.