

# RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL

No. 593

Approved December 22, 2015

WHEREAS, Governor Gina Raimondo, on October 22, 2015, signed Executive Order 15-16 establishing the Working Group to Review the Permanent Education Foundation Aid Formula; and

WHEREAS, The purpose of the Working Group is to review the State's current education funding formula--created in 2010 under the Education Equity and Property Tax Relief Act-- to review its efficacy, and to determine if it is achieving its original goals, including to provide all children in our state "access to adequate and meaningful education, regardless of their residence or economic means"; and

WHEREAS, One component of the Working Group's duties is to examine funding for students with special needs, and English language learners; and

WHEREAS, Documentation prepared by the Rhode Island Department of Education explained that in the 2014-2015 school year, seven percent of students in Rhode Island were English language learners (ELLs), and that 75 percent of ELLs lived in four core cities of the state--Providence, Pawtucket, Woonsocket and Central Falls--with ELLs making up 23 percent of the student population in Providence; and

WHEREAS, The documentation also states that Rhode Island is one of only four states that does not have a mechanism for ELL-specific funding at the state level; and

WHEREAS, Rhode Island Department of Education data shows that the special education rate is 15.9 percent statewide, and 16.7 percent in Providence, and that the average per pupil expenditure varies widely based on the level of supports required for each student, ranging on average from \$11,327 to \$30,928; and

WHEREAS, Across the United States, funding mechanisms for students with disabilities range from formula funding and categorical funding to reimbursements, and Rhode Island's core instructional amount includes a flat dollar amount for special education, and the state makes reimbursements from a categorical fund for some of the highest cost special education students; and

WHEREAS, Rhode Island's special education funding mechanism is an outlier among states, and prior reports on Rhode Island's funding formula have recommended including a weight for students with disabilities to ensure the diverse needs of Rhode Island students are being met.

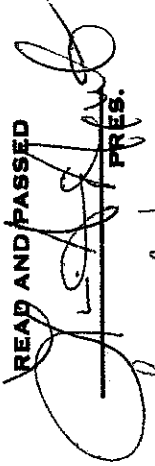
NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, That the City Council of the City of Providence does hereby urge the Governor's Working Group to Review the Permanent Education Foundation Aid Formula to include in its final recommendation a plan to include weights in the funding formula for students with disabilities, as well as ELL students.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That upon passage, a copy of this resolution be delivered to Governor Gina Raimondo, the members of the Working Group, Speaker of the House Nicholas A. Mattiello, Senate President M. Teresa Paiva Weed, and the Providence members of the Rhode Island General Assembly.

IN CITY COUNCIL


DEC 17 2015

READ AND PASSED

  
PRES.

  
CLERK

I HEREBY APPROVE.

  
Mayor

Date: 12/22/15

A true copy,  
Attest

  
Lori L. Hagen  
City Clerk