



Malden, Massachusetts

Date: June 21, 2023

Paper # 256 Series of 2023

Below is a true attest copy of same:

Resolve: That it is the sense of the Malden City Council that it is vital for our city's future to have a fair requirement for local education funding, one that reflects the city's true ability to pay as tied to our actual revenue sources. The Massachusetts Student Opportunity Act (SOA), now in its fourth year of implementation, is providing critical resources for the Malden Public Schools to support our students and families.

We recognize and appreciate the ongoing efforts of Malden's state delegation in supporting the passage of the SOA and its continued funding for implementation, from which Malden is already seeing substantial benefits. With \$9 million in new Chapter 70 state funds for next year, we are grateful to be able to hire new teachers and support staff for our students, who are 74% Black, Indigenous and People of Color, 63% low income, 23% English Language Learners, and 18% students with disabilities.

However, as the full SOA foundation funding formula is phased in, it is also dramatically raising Malden's expected contribution to the schools beyond our ability to pay. Next year requires Malden to contribute \$3.1 million more in local funding for schools, capturing 85% of the total expected increase in local tax revenue and receipts for the whole city. As a Gateway City, Malden is a high-need, diverse, mixed income city with a large immigrant community. Yet Malden currently has one of the lowest per-capita expenditures of Massachusetts cities on all other non-school services, and our local property taxes are already at the limit allowed by state law. As the SOA continues to phase in over the next few years, increases in much-needed education state aid are likely to come with a steep price of requiring Malden to reduce other city services for our residents, such as public health, infrastructure, libraries, parks, and emergency responders.

In its 2020 local contribution study, the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) noted that the required local contribution calculation is "problematic" and has been almost unchanged since 2007. We thank our state delegation for their support, and call on our state leaders in the legislature, Governor's office and DESE to fix the required local contribution so that it reflects the ability to pay equitably and accurately for schools and other essential city services, for Malden and all other high-need communities.

Sponsored by Carey McDonald, Peg Crowe, Paul Condon, Amanda Linehan, Ryan O'Malley, Barbara Murphy, Stephen Winslow, Chris Simonelli, Jadeane Sica, Karen Colon-Hayes, Craig Spadafora

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Passed, by eleven (11) yea and zero (0) nay votes of the City Council consisting of eleven members at their June 20, 2023 meeting.

Attest:

City Clerk Carol Ann T. Desiderio

Council President Barbara M. Murphy