

RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL

No. 161

Approved April 9, 2014

WHEREAS, The City of Providence appropriates more than \$5,000 per student in local funds to the School Department; and

WHEREAS, The City's local contribution is among the most generous in the State relative to the City's tax capacity, as measured by the "property tax effort" benchmark developed by the General Assembly at R.I.G.L. §16-7.1-6; and

WHEREAS, 2010 State aid funding formula "state share ratio" (R.I.G.L. §16-7.2-5) calculates that Providence's fair share of "core instruction expense" is approximately 12%, while the State's fair share is 88%, based on the City's relative ability to pay for education from its tax base; and

WHEREAS, Providence's actual share of the entire "local budget" (funded by State and municipal funds) of the Providence School Department is more than 37%; and

WHEREAS, The funding gap is the result of the current formula's restrictive definition of expenditures eligible for State aid, defined as the "core instructional amount" in R.I.G.L. §16-7.2-3; and

WHEREAS, The "core instructional amount" does not include such basic expenses as transportation expense, building maintenance expense and other operating expenses; and

WHEREAS, These expenses are just as instrumental to the provision of education as instructional expenses; and

WHEREAS, Despite this basic fact, the City pays for these operational expenses with 100% local funds, rather than a State/local split of 88%/12% as obtains for "core instructional expense"; and

WHEREAS, The State provides that teacher pension expense is funded 60% local/40% State, even though that expense is just as fundamental and unavoidable as those characterized as "core instruction expense"; and

WHEREAS, The great majority of funding formulas nationally provide State aid for transportation expense and/or other operating expenses in ways that Rhode Island does not; and

WHEREAS, The Rhode Island funding formula does not provide additional funding for English Language Learners, contrary to the mainstream practice in other states; and

WHEREAS, Rhode Island ranks near the bottom nationally of the "Nation's Report Card" for education achievement of Hispanic students and the "achievement gap" between Hispanic and Caucasian students.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, That the Providence City Council urges the Rhode Island Department of Education and Rhode Island Board of Education to review the current formula and propose changes that would make it more fair and equitable to disadvantaged children; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That the Providence City Council hereby urges its General Assembly delegation to advocate for a more fair State aid funding formula; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That upon passage of this Resolution, the Clerk is requested to distribute copies of it to the Providence School Board, the Providence General Assembly delegation, the Rhode Island Board of Education and the Rhode Island Department of Education.

IN CITY COUNCIL

APR 03 2014

READ AND PASSED

At Sun
PRES.

Low L. Hines
ACTING CLERK

I HEREBY APPROVE.

Axel Taveras
Mayor

Date: 4/9/14