

**Resolution to Encourage The Commonwealth of Massachusetts to Revisit the Process
for the Approval of New Private Schools**

WHEREAS, local School Committees are expected to approve new private schools in their jurisdiction; and

WHEREAS, in most communities this is a rare occurrence and thus School Committee members and district administrators may be unfamiliar with the process and requirements; and

WHEREAS, the cost of legal guidance on these matters comes out of general funds which could otherwise support student learning; and

WHEREAS, the time district administrators spend evaluating a private school application in order to provide a recommendation to School Committee takes away from them supporting district priorities; and

WHEREAS, private schools typically draw from a wider geographic area than just the city or town within which they will physically exist, potentially impacting neighboring cities/towns even more than the one where the school would be approved; and

WHEREAS, the criteria laid out in Chapter, 76, Section 1 of the Massachusetts General Law is both vague and highly limiting; and

WHEREAS DESE guidance misrepresents the true legal standard; and

WHEREAS, the process only involves approval at the opening of the school and never looks at the curriculum of the school again, which renders the oversight meaningless;

NOW THEREFORE, be it;

RESOLVED that The Somerville School Committee requests that The Massachusetts State Legislature revisit the process for approving new private schools in Massachusetts; And Further

RESOLVED That a copy of this resolution be delivered to the Governor, Attorney General, and the Somerville state and local legislative delegations and otherwise widely distributed.

Voted: Unanimously

Date: April 25, 2022

By: Somerville School Committee