

## RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT OF EDUCATION FUNDING IN THE COVID-19 ERA

**WHEREAS**, as of June 4, 2020, 7,152 Massachusetts residents have died of COVID19 causing both a public health crisis and an economic depression; and

**WHEREAS**, those joint crises have severely impacted tax revenues at both the state and local level; and

**WHEREAS**, lacking either the authority to run a deficit nor adequate taxation authority the City of Somerville, like all cities and towns, depends on state aid to provide core services; and

**WHEREAS**, while cities and towns across America face austerity budgets, reports show that the country's billionaires have made an additional \$434 billion since March; and

**WHEREAS**, the Massachusetts Legislature and governor enacted the *Student Opportunity Act* in 2019 because the state's school funding formula was out of date and failed to provide all students with the education to which they are constitutionally entitled; and

**WHEREAS**, the Student Opportunity Act should be seen as the first step towards adequate educational funding not the last; and

**WHEREAS**, our students' needs are even greater now after public schools and colleges were shut down in mid-March in response to the COVID-19 pandemic; and

**WHEREAS**, the Commonwealth of Massachusetts has a moral, constitutional and fiscal responsibility to support districts in providing students the education they deserve; and

**WHEREAS**, that responsibility needs resources to be met, not austerity budgets.

**NOW THEREFORE**, be it:

**RESOLVED**: that the Somerville School Committee calls on the Massachusetts Legislature and Governor Charlie Baker to fund public education — at the level needed to maintain current staffing and services-- including fully funding the first year of the *Student Opportunity Act*, and to support school districts providing the extra supports needed to best serve students in the COVID19 era; AND FURTHER

**RESOLVED**: that the Somerville School Committee calls on the legislature to use progressive taxation to ensure the revenue necessary for all cities and towns to receive more, not less, local education aid; AND FURTHER

**RESOLVED** that the Legislature act to give cities and towns more financial tools to raise revenue, including if necessary, by establishing their own forms of progressive taxation; AND FURTHER

**RESOLVED:** that copies of this resolution be shared with the Somerville legislative delegation, the Commonwealth's constitutional officers, and otherwise widely distributed.

Voted: Unanimously

Date: June 22, 2020

By: The Somerville School Committee