

RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL

No.

WHEREAS, The Achievement First Mayoral Academy applied to the Rhode Island Council on Elementary and Secondary Education (“CESC”) to expand its enrollment from 912 to 3,112, with likely more than 80% of that enrollment coming from Providence residents; and

WHEREAS, The Achievement First Board approved the application through two resolutions; and

WHEREAS, The first resolution authorized the expansion of the existing Providence and Illuminar Mayoral Academies to include a middle school and a high school, increasing their combined enrollment by approximately 1,376 students; and

WHEREAS, The second resolution authorized the creation of a third Providence mayoral academy with projected enrollment of 824 students, subject to

a subsequent affirmative vote by the Board of Directors of AFRI and provided further that such vote must include an affirmative vote by the Mayor of Providence based on his assessment that the opening of this additional school will be aligned with the best interests of the Providence Public School District; and

WHEREAS, The Council on Elementary and Secondary Education approved the full expansion; therefore, Achievement First has at a minimum the authority to expand by 1,376 pursuant to the first resolution and may choose to expand by 2,200; and

WHEREAS, The Internal Auditor has projected the 10-year cumulative fiscal impact upon the School Department due to the first resolution alone to exceed \$90 million, and up to \$153 million if both resolutions are implemented; and

WHEREAS, State educational “catch up” aid increases to the Providence Public Schools are slated to continue for only one more fiscal year; and

WHEREAS, The Providence Public Schools have seen recent reductions in federal educational aid, and there is a risk of imminent federal policy changes that could produce further reductions; and

WHEREAS, The City has maintained a municipal appropriation of \$125 million to the School Department since 2011; and

WHEREAS, Further increases beyond the cost of living (i.e. 2%, or \$2.5 million per

year) would require difficult resource allocation decisions for which planning is necessary.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, That the Providence City Council hereby requests that the School Department prepare 5-year budgets that identify the fiscal impact of the approved Achievement First expansions (one set of budgets assuming the expansion of the two existing schools only, and one set of budgets including the expansion of those two schools plus the opening of the third school), including in those budgetary projections appropriate assumptions regarding:

- a. State aid increases at the cost of living;
- b. Federal aid either level-funded or reduced by 10%;
- c. Enrollment projections based on the best available current data;
- d. Local aid at the current \$125 million level;
- e. Other appropriate assumptions (and changes to the above assumptions) as the School Department considers appropriate; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That the City Council requests that the School Department prepare a summary projection to share with the Internal Auditor on or before February 2, 2017; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That the City Council requests that the Superintendent and/or his designee(s) present their findings to the Education Committee at a mutually convenient date in February, 2017.