



# RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL

*No.*

WHEREAS, The Providence Public School District has been under state control since 2019, a period that has brought significant challenges for the City of Providence in navigating its financial responsibilities and striving to improve educational outcomes for its students; and

WHEREAS, The Providence Public School District could return to local control as early as July of 2025, underscoring the need for the city to develop strategic approaches and leverage available tools to address systemic issues and support meaningful reforms; and

WHEREAS, While external factors such as the COVID-19 pandemic and internal setbacks have further complicated progress, the City of Providence remains focused on implementing comprehensive solutions that will create the conditions necessary for a successful return to local control of the Providence Public Schools; and

WHEREAS, From October 2023 to May 2024, a member of the Providence City Council and a representative of the Mayor's office served on the Special Senate Commission to review and provide recommendations for professional and labor-management standards that offer school-based flexibility and accountability for employees of the Providence Public Schools; and

WHEREAS, The recommendations outlined in the report of this commission are not a singular solution but are designed to create workable and positive conditions that will help the Providence Public School District prepare for a successful transition back to local governance; and

WHEREAS, The commission's report highlights the critical role of collaborative collective bargaining and capacity-building initiatives, including investments in principal training programs, teacher-led professional development, and labor-management collaboration facilitators, in fostering an environment of professional unionism and educational quality; and

WHEREAS, The Council supports the recommendations found in the commission's final report as they pertain to state legislation, including the recommendation that the Rhode Island General Assembly pass legislation codifying a state constitutional right to education; and

WHEREAS, The Special Senate Commission explored models that provide schools with increased autonomy and flexibility in decision-making, tailored to the unique needs of their students and communities; and

WHEREAS, Springfield, Massachusetts, a city of similar size and demographics as Providence, serves as a strong example of this approach, having successfully implemented it through Empower Schools, demonstrating measurable improvements in student achievement local leadership, innovation, and targeted support; and

WHEREAS, A letter of support for the commission's report was submitted and added to the public record, signed by the City Council President, the Mayor, and the President of the Providence School Board, signifying united support from the city.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, That the Providence City Council hereby expresses its full support for the recommendations put forth by the Special Senate Commission for Providence Public Schools, including meaningful exploration of establishing customized organizational models in the city of Providence; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That the Providence City Council specifically commends the leadership of the Commission Chair, Senator Sam Zurier, a former City Councilor, a former Providence Public School Board member, and a proud parent of Providence Public School graduates; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That the Providence City Council urges all relevant stakeholders to work collaboratively to implement these recommendations, recognizing the critical importance of ensuring high-quality education for all students and fostering a supportive and empowering environment for educators; and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, That copies of this resolution be transmitted to the offices of the Honorable Mayor Brett Smiley, Governor Daniel McKee, Speaker of the House K. Joseph Shekarchi, Senate President Dominick Ruggerio, Commissioner of Elementary and Secondary Education Angélica Infante-Green, Superintendent of Providence Public School District Dr. Javier Montañez, and to all those who served on the State Senate Special Commission.