

OFFERED BY COUNCILORS BRIAN WORRELL, JULIA MEIJA, TANIA FERNANDES ANDERSON, BREADON, COLETTA, DURKAN, FITZGERALD, MURPHY, PEPÉN, SANTANA, WEBER, LOUIJEUNE



CITY OF BOSTON IN CITY COUNCIL

ORDER FOR A HEARING TO EXPLORE SCHOLARSHIPS FOR BOSTON STUDENTS TO INCREASE ACCESS TO ALL FORMS OF HIGHER EDUCATION

WHEREAS, The City of Boston, a pioneer in public and higher education, has been at the forefront for almost 387 years, predating the founding of the United States; and

WHEREAS, The enduring value and significance of a high-quality education has only grown over time; and

WHEREAS, 80% of Boston Public School students, predominantly from marginalized communities, grapple with historical and ongoing structural disparities and inequities, limiting their access to high-quality educational opportunities; and

WHEREAS, More than half of low-income college students drop out because of the exorbitant costs of educational opportunities; and

WHEREAS, The majority of low-income students opt for lower degrees to mitigate costs, with 51% enrolling in two-year programs compared to 22% of high-income students; and

WHEREAS, These are the students who need scholarships that will not only enable them to pursue education but also equip them for better job opportunities in the future; and

WHEREAS, Black families in Massachusetts, with an average income of \$66,792, and Latinx families, with an average income of \$54,226, face financial challenges compared to their White non-Hispanic counterparts earning an average of \$97,665, reducing the ability to seek family assistance for educational financing; and

WHEREAS, The City currently provides tuition support for 75 students, offering up to \$2,500 per year; and

WHEREAS, \$2,500 comprises less than 7% of the current cost to attend UMass Boston or UMass Amherst and less than 5% of the current cost to attend Boston University or Northeastern University; and

WHEREAS, Students can reasonably expect to spend \$700-\$1,000 on books alone per year; and

WHEREAS, According to the Greater Boston Food Bank, 37% of public university students in Boston experience food insecurity, rising to 52% for Black students, 47% for Latinx students, 46% for LGBTQ+ students, and 53% for student-parents; and

WHEREAS, In 2019-20, 56% of Massachusetts college graduates had some student debt, averaging \$33,457, the eighth-highest nationwide, according to data compiled by the Institute for College Access and Success, leaving students without a four-year college degree; and **NOW, THEREFORE BE IT**

ORDERED: That the appropriate committee of the Boston City Council hold a hearing to explore providing Boston students with increased tuition assistance, as well as ways in which our community partners, institutions, and businesses may collaborate to ensure all Boston students can access high-quality educational opportunities. Representatives from the Center For Working Families, Economic Opportunity And Inclusion, Workforce Development, Youth Employment and Opportunity, Youth Engagement and Advancement, and other relevant and interested parties are invited to attend.

Filed on: January 24, 2024