

OFFERED BY COUNCILORS BRIAN WORRELL, COLETTA ZAPATA, FERNANDES ANDERSON, FITZGERALD, MEJIA, PEPÉN, SANTANA, WEBER AND 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 nearly 400 years, predating the founding of the United States; and
and
- WHEREAS,** The enduring value and significance of a high-quality education have only grown over time; *and*
- WHEREAS,** Boston Public Schools (BPS) serve a diverse student body, with approximately 44% Hispanic/Latino, 28% African American/Black, 9% Asian, and 15% White students, many of whom face historical and ongoing structural disparities limiting their access to high-quality educational opportunities; *and*
- WHEREAS,** More than half of low-income college students drop out due to the exorbitant costs of educational opportunities; *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, which 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 in college; *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; *and*

WHEREAS, Programs like the Menino Scholarship at Boston University and the Boston Public High School Scholarship at Northeastern University provide full-tuition awards to a limited number of Boston Public School graduates annually, highlighting the need for expanded scholarship opportunities to meet the growing demand and rising costs of higher education; *and*

WHEREAS, Boston's major educational institutions, including Boston University and Northeastern University, benefit significantly from their tax-exempt status under the PILOT (Payment in Lieu of Taxes) program, and engaging these institutions to expand their existing scholarship programs would further their commitment to Boston residents and help address financial barriers faced by Boston students; *and*

WHEREAS, Enhanced investments in scholarships and tuition assistance will not only create pathways to higher education but also equip Boston's students with the tools to secure higher-paying jobs, contributing to the city's economic growth and workforce development; *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 3, 2025