

Resolution

Preserving Local Governance of Massachusetts Schools
Submitted by the Arlington School Committee

Whereas: The Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education has exercised its power to take over school districts in Lawrence in 2011, Holyoke in 2015, and Southbridge in 2016; and

Whereas: The placement of the public schools of Lawrence, Holyoke, and Southbridge in receivership has removed their respective school committees from their role as the governing board for their schools, and has replaced local governance with a state receiver; and

Whereas: A Boston Globe analysis of test scores, graduation rates, college enrollment, and a dozen other metrics in Lawrence, Holyoke, and Southbridge shows state receivers have failed to meet almost all of its stated goals for the districts; and

Whereas: The Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education has no plan, strategy, or timeline for restoring local governance and accountability to the voters of Lawrence, Holyoke, and Southbridge; and

Whereas: The Massachusetts Association of School Committees asserts that a strong system of local governance and accountability is the foundation of excellent schools;

Therefore be it resolved that the Massachusetts Association of School Committees calls on the Commonwealth of Massachusetts to restore local governance and accountability for the Lawrence, Holyoke, and Southbridge Public Schools no later than July 1, 2023, and

Be it further resolved that the Massachusetts Association of School Committees calls on the Massachusetts Legislature to enact legislation to limit any future state takeovers to a term of no more than three years.