

Senate passes Education Bill – New Bedford set to receive millions in additional school aid

Senate Assistant Majority Leader and Rules Committee Chairman Mark Montigny (D-New Bedford) voted today to pass legislation which will implement significant state dollars toward local public schools. Under this legislation, New Bedford stands to receive millions of dollars in additional state aid and will rank among the top five communities to receive the largest funding increase.

In 1993 the “Foundation Budget” was created to fund school districts across the Commonwealth based upon a specific formula. In 2015 the Foundation Budget Review Commission determined that the original formula required updates to reflect changes in health care and special education costs as well as increased resources to close the achievement gap for low-income and English Language Learner students.

S2325, passed by the Senate today, will implement the Commission’s recommendations through a staggered approach. Each year, the Secretary of Administration and Finance and the Senate and House Committees on Ways and Means are required to determine an implementation schedule to fulfill the recommendations by the Commission. This annual process will include a public hearing and allow for annual updates to the plan to reflect changes in enrollment, inflation, student populations or other relevant factors.

“We must do everything in our power to ensure all children, regardless of means, have all the resources they need to succeed in the classroom,” said Senator Montigny. “We cannot

accept an achievement gap where students succeed based on what zip code they come from or whether they can afford tuition and other extraneous costs. This legislation implements the Commission's recommendations through a realistic process and can lead to tens of millions in additional state aid to New Bedford."