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## SCHOOL DISTRICT LEGAL STATUS

The legal basis for public education in the District is vested in the will of the people as expressed in the Constitution of Massachusetts and state statutes pertaining to education.

Under the General Laws of Massachusetts,

"... Every city shall maintain... a sufficient number of schools for the instruction of all children who may legally attend a public school therein."

The public educational system of Fall River structurally is a department of the city operated under laws pertaining to education and under regulations of the Massachusetts Board of Education. The area served by the Fall River Public Schools is coterminous with the City of Fall River.

Established by law

LEGAL REFS.: Constitution of Massachusetts, Part II, Chapter V, Section II  
M.G.L. 71:1

CROSS REF.: BB, School Committee Legal Status

Historical Note: Massachusetts has the oldest public school system in the nation. Dating back to 1647, the laws of the Massachusetts Bay Colony required cities and towns to provide for a program of public education.

THE PEOPLE AND THEIR SCHOOL DISTRICT

The School Committee has the dual responsibility for implementing statutory requirements pertaining to public education and local citizens' expectations for the education of the community's youth. It also has an obligation to determine and assess citizens' desires. When citizens elect delegates to represent them in the conduct of public education, their representatives have the authority to exercise their best judgment in determining policies, making decisions, and approving procedures for carrying out the responsibility.

The School Committee therefore affirms and declares its intent to:

1. Maintain two-way communication with citizens of the community. The public will be kept informed of the progress and problems of the school system, and citizens will be urged to bring their aspirations and feelings about their public schools to the attention of this body, which they have chosen to represent them in the management of public education.
2. Establish policies and make decisions on the basis of declared educational philosophy and goals. All decisions made by this Committee will be made with priority given to the purposes set forth, most crucial of which is the optimal learning of the children enrolled in our schools.
3. Act as a truly representative body for members of the community in matters involving public education. The Committee recognizes that ultimate responsibility for public education rests with the state, but individual School Committees have been assigned specific authority through state law. The Committee will not relinquish any of this authority since it believes that decision-making control over the children's learning should be in the hands of local citizens as much as possible.

7KH 6FKRRO & RPPLWVHH DQG WKH )DOO 5LYHU 3XEOLF 6FKRROV DUH UHVSQRVLEOH WR SURYLGH DQ H[HPSODU\ HGXFDWLRQ IRU DOO LWV VWXGHQWV ,Q VR GRLQJ ZH VWULYH IRU LQFOXVLYHQHVV IRW RQO\ GR ZH SURKLELW GLVFULPLQDWLRQ RI DQ\ NLQG EDVHG XSRQ UDFH FRORU JHQGHU LGHQWLW\ UHOLJLRQ QDWLRQDO RULJLQ VH[XDO RULHQWDLRQ KRPHOHVVQHVV RU GLVDELOLW\ ZH PRUHRYHU VWULYH WR UHDFK RXW WR DOO RXU VWXGHQWV LQ D SURDFWLYH DQG YLJLODQW PDQQHU WR HQVXUH WKDW WKH\ DUH PDGH DZDUH RI DQG DUH LQFOXGHG LQ DOO SURJUDPV DQG H[WUDFXUULFXODU DFWLYLWLHV (TXDO HGXFDWLRQDO RSSRUWXQLW\ LV QRW RQO\ D OHJDO UHTXLUHPHQW EXW VRPHWKLQJ ZH VWURQJO\ YDOXH )RU DGGLWLRQDO LQIRUPDWLRQ UHIHU WR 6HFWRQ \$& 1RQGLVFULPLQDWLRQ SROLF\