

WARREN COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT

RESOLUTION NO.: 02-06-03

**Resolution Calling for the General Assembly to Provide Critical Support and  
Mandate Relief Benefitting Public Schools and Students**

**WHEREAS**, Pennsylvania's more than 1.7 million public school students deserve the highest quality education; and the state's public schools work best when they have the resources to give all students the opportunities they need to succeed, meet prescribed standards, support adequacy and promote equity; and

**WHEREAS**, the unexpected closure of school buildings beginning in March 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic has forced unparalleled challenges upon school districts to stretch funding to meet the needs of students and families with meals, online education programs, technical resources and other needs; and in addition to these unbudgeted expenses, school districts are required to continue paying operational bills, including the costliest expenses such as salaries, pensions, and charter school tuition; and

**WHEREAS**, mandated school district costs have eclipsed state funding increases; and the Warren County School District's mandated costs for pension and charter school tuition among other expenses, have increased by \$9,378,517.94 from 2010-11 through 2017-2018; and

**WHEREAS**, due to the economic implications of this pandemic, school districts statewide face declining local revenue collection that is projected at more than \$325 million this year and as much as an additional \$1 billion in local revenue next year; and the Warren County School District is facing projected local deficits of \$1,313,864 and school districts need support from the General Assembly as they continue to navigate these developing situations; and

**WHEREAS**, the Warren County School District recognizes the Commonwealth will experience significant shortfalls in revenue; and that the federal CARES Act funds will provide important support to help maintain education funding levels; and the District believes that the use of federal funds by the state should not supplant the allocation of critically-needed state subsidies in current or future budgets; and

**WHEREAS**, as school districts must confront numerous challenges in order to re-open schools, they face difficult decisions about how to allocate declining financial resources to sustain high-quality instruction and other essential services with the physical and mental health and safety of their students in mind; and school districts need certainty from the state on matters of funding so they can plan and budget appropriately for the entire 2020-21 fiscal year; and

**WHEREAS**, school districts could realize cost savings through the enactment of broad, long-term relief from unfunded and underfunded mandates that consume much of district budgets; and one specific solution is the enactment of a permanent mandate waiver program that could provide significant savings, both in terms of dollars and efficiency, as well as reduce the number of burdensome mandates placed on schools.

**NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** that the Warren County School District Board of School Directors along with the Pennsylvania School Boards Association calls upon the General Assembly to prioritize public education in the commonwealth's 2020-21 state budget and, at a minimum, maintain the 2019-20 level of state investments for public education without reductions in basic education, special education and other critical subsidies.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Warren County School District Board of School Directors calls upon the General Assembly to provide costs savings to school districts through approval of a permanent mandate waiver program which would enable districts to improve instructional programs or operate in a more effective, efficient and economical manner.

Adopted this 8th day of June, 2020.

Signed,

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School Board President

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Board Secretary