

A RESOLUTION OF THE LINCOLN SCHOOL COMMITTEE

To His Excellency, Governor Charles Baker, Board of Elementary and Secondary Education Chair James Peyser, and Commissioner of Elementary and Secondary Education Jeffrey Riley

Whereas: children have a right to free public education, which is fundamental to academic, social, and emotional development, and

Whereas: public education also plays an important role in students' mental health, safety, nutrition, and care of children and adolescents, and school committees, school administrations, parents, and students across the Commonwealth are eager for a safe return to school this fall, and

Whereas: COVID-19 is a highly transmissible virus that can be spread by asymptomatic carriers and asymptomatic children and adolescents may transmit COVID-19 to both children and adults, reopening schools presents risks to public health. This is particularly concerning as there is no viable COVID-19 vaccine, no established cure for COVID-19, and COVID-19 may cause long-term morbidity affecting the respiratory, neurological, and cardiovascular systems. COVID-19 presents particular risk of morbidity and mortality among populations who have underlying risk factors. Despite these concerns, schools districts are developing plans to reopen for the 2020-2021 school year with risk mitigation strategies within school buildings to reduce exposure to COVID-19. These include social distancing, mask wearing, and improved HVAC systems and sanitation protocols, and

Whereas: Reducing transmission of COVID-19 requires a concerted and focused public health response which includes COVID-19 testing of teachers, students, and administrators, contact tracing, and proper isolation of cases and quarantining of those who have been exposed to a COVID-19 case, and without these measures in place, we will not be able to stop broader community transmission and prevent **avoidable** morbidity and mortality due to COVID-19 in our schools, and

Whereas: Recent modeling exercises show that low sensitivity tests when done at high frequencies can rapidly identify infected individuals, key to isolating the virus, stopping an outbreak and maintaining open schools. These cost effective, high frequency, low sensitivity tests are available.

Therefore, be it resolved that:

We request the Commonwealth take the following actions:

- (1) allocate funding for regular testing for teachers, staff and students in our schools;
- (2) support school districts to identify and procure appropriate testing strategies and supplies, which may include low cost, low sensitivity tests to be used at high frequencies;

- (3) mandate school districts are provided with real-time data for decision making including daily updates on the number and rates of new COVID-19 cases and percent positive tests for SARS-CoV-2 in their district.