

## **RESOLUTION FOR THE SCHOOLS RELATED TO THE INCLUSION EDUCATION IN NEWTON CLASSROOMS**

**Councilors Noel, Humphrey, Kalis, Crossley, Lipof, Bowman, Leary, Danberg, Kelley, Albright, Krintzman, Greenberg, Gentile, Norton, Ryan, Wright, Markiewicz, Lucas, Grossman, Downs, and Oliver support the following Resolution.**

Although we are disappointed to see that Understanding Our Differences was eliminated from the City budget, we were optimistic to learn about the School Committee's decision to maintain inclusion education in our Newton classrooms by restoring partial funding of the UOD line item. As pleased as we were to see partial funding restored, we were disheartened to see there was no requirement for the School Department to use all or part of those funds to continue Understanding Our Differences' quality inclusion programming for Newton students.

Since 1975, children with disabilities have been guaranteed equal access to public education, and studies have repeatedly shown that a reduction in stigmas and exclusion by peers yields better educational outcomes for individuals with developmental disabilities. UOD's work is grounded in disability awareness that will lessen these stigmas and exclusions for individuals with disabilities, the impact of which inevitably expands beyond that goal to teach and promote compassion, empathy, and patience for all of their peers and community members.

THEREFORE, Councilors Noel, Humphrey, Kalis, Crossley, Lipof, Bowman, Leary, Danberg, Kelley, Albright, Krintzman, Greenberg, Gentile, Norton, Ryan, Wright, Markiewicz, Lucas, Grossman, Downs, and Oliver offer the following resolution. We strongly encourage the School Department to take advantage of UOD's 45 years of experience to ensure thoughtful and compassionate inclusive programming remains in the Newton Public School system.