

Offered by City Councilors Julia Mejia, Tania Fernandes Anderson, Arroyo, Breadon, Coletta, Durkan, Lara, Louijeune, Mejia, Murphy and Worrell



**CITY OF BOSTON
IN CITY COUNCIL**

**ORDER FOR A HEARING ON THE VIABILITY, TRANSPARENCY
AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT PROCESS REGARDING THE
PROPOSED PLAN TO MOVE THE JOHN D. O'BRYANT SCHOOL
OF MATH AND SCIENCE FROM ROXBURY TO WEST ROXBURY**

- WHEREAS,** On June 6, 2023, Mayor Michelle Wu and Superintendent Mary Skipper announced a proposal to move the John D. O'Bryant School of Math and Science from Roxbury to the West Roxbury Educational Complex in West Roxbury, with the promise that the facility will be renovated; *and*
- WHEREAS,** The success of any educational relocation project depends on careful planning, resource allocation and community engagement to ensure there is a seamless transition and minimal disruptions to students' education and extracurricular activities; *and*
- WHEREAS,** On June 20, 2023, over 200 students, parents and educators rejected the proposal at a community meeting held via zoom. Community members and stakeholders have expressed a lack of clarity and transparency in the decision as well as concerns on the impact this relocation will have on the school community and neighborhood; *and*
- WHEREAS,** The O'Bryant is the most diverse of Boston's three exam schools, with about two-thirds of its students identifying as either Black or Latino. The diversity of Roxbury offers students and their families culturally responsive support, resources and services, such as after school programs and the wealth of community partnerships ranging from the surrounding colleges and universities to the hospitals and technology facilities who provide internships, dual enrollment courses and jobs for students; *and*
- WHEREAS,** Transportation concerns have been raised as estimates suggest that the average student would face an increase of 75 minutes of travel time on the MBTA, and fewer families from East Boston, Charlestown, Roxbury, South Boston, and Dorchester will choose to enroll their students if the school moves to West

Roxbury, given the additional travel time. The city’s reassurances about shuttle buses do not account for the MBTA’s current hiring difficulties, a nationwide bus driver shortage, long-term financial and environmental costs or the increasing traffic in the city; *and*

WHEREAS, The viability of the proposed plan should be thoroughly examined, considering factors such as funding availability, construction timelines, transportation logistics and the long-term sustainability of relocating. Boston Public Schools should also conduct a comprehensive facilities plan to ensure school building decisions are based on community needs by assessing the racial demographics of the area in order to support an inclusive and welcoming environment that is in the best interest of the students, parents and educators; *and*

WHEREAS, Alternative solutions and options should be explored to determine if the same objectives of expansion and renovation can be achieved while also preserving the strengths and attributes of the neighborhood; *and*

WHEREAS, It is the responsibility of the Boston City Council to prioritize the needs of students, parents/guardians, and educators in school building decisions that directly impact residents and their neighborhood. Moreover, decisions should not be rendered without an equitable community engagement process; ***NOW THEREFORE BE IT***

ORDERED: That the appropriate committee of the Boston City Council hold a hearing to assess the viability, transparency and community engagement process regarding the proposed plan to move the John D. O’Bryant School of Math and Science from Roxbury to West Roxbury. Representatives from the administration, including the Mayor’s Office, Boston Public Schools and Boston Public Schools Transportation Department. O’Bryant students, parents and educators, as well as the Madison Park School community and members of the public are also encouraged to testify.

Filed in Council: August 9, 2023