

Offered by City Councilors Julia Mejia, Breadon, Culpepper, Durkan, FitzGerald, Louijeune, Murphy, Pepén, Santana, Weber, and Worrell



CITY OF BOSTON IN CITY COUNCIL

IN THE YEAR TWO THOUSAND TWENTY-SIX

ORDER FOR A HEARING TO REVIEW PREVENTION AND RESPONSE TO BULLYING, SEXUAL HARASSMENT, SEXUAL ASSAULT, AND SEXUAL MISCONDUCT IN BOSTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

- WHEREAS,** Boston Public Schools (BPS) has an obligation to provide students with safe, welcoming, and supportive learning environments free from bullying, sex-based discrimination, harassment, and violence; *and*
- WHEREAS,** BPS policies and guidance recognize that bullying and sexual misconduct can include unwelcome conduct by students or adults, and that off-campus conduct may still violate district policy when it disrupts a student's ability to learn; *and*
- WHEREAS,** National research has long documented the prevalence and impact of bullying and sexual misconduct in K–12 settings, including educator sexual misconduct, and highlights the importance of prevention, reporting pathways, early intervention, and institutional accountability; *and*
- WHEREAS,** Public health data show that many young people experience bullying, dating violence, and sexual violence during adolescence, underscoring the need for schools to have clear prevention strategies, trauma-informed supports, and effective response protocols; *and*
- WHEREAS,** Students and families have raised concerns—locally and nationally—about inconsistent reporting experiences, uneven follow-through, fear of retaliation, and the risk that students who report harm are punished, marginalized, or pushed out of school instead of supported; *and*
- WHEREAS,** There is a need for transparent, data-informed oversight of how BPS prevents bullying and sexual harm; receives and investigates reports; provides supportive measures; ensures accountability; and communicates

with students and families while protecting privacy and due process; ***NOW
THEREFORE BE IT***

ORDERED: That the appropriate committee of the Boston City Council hold a hearing to review Boston Public Schools' policies, procedures, training, staffing, data systems, and accountability measures related to the prevention of and response to bullying, sexual harassment, sexual assault, and sexual misconduct involving students, including student-to-student and adult-to-student incidents; that such hearing examine BPS prevention efforts, anti-bullying education and intervention strategies, reporting pathways accessible to all students and families, supportive measures provided to students who report harm, investigation protocols and safeguards against retaliation, discipline practices to ensure students experiencing trauma are not penalized for trauma-related impacts, school-based staffing and coordination capacity, and data collection and public accountability practices. Representatives from Boston Public Schools, parents, students, educators, community organizations, and members of the public shall be invited and encouraged to attend.

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