



CITY OF BOSTON IN CITY COUNCIL

ORDER FOR A HEARING REGARDING THE JACKSON/MANN AND HORACE MANN B.P.S. SCHOOL COMMUNITIES

WHEREAS, The Armington Street site in Allston shared by the Jackson/Mann K-8 School and the Horace Mann School for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing opened in 1975, and the Boston Centers for Youth and Families (BCYF) Jackson Mann Community Center opened in 1976; *and,*

WHEREAS, The Jackson/Mann School is a Boston Community Hub School, a model which ensures wraparound services, integrated student supports, expanded learning time and opportunities, active family and community engagement, collaborative leadership, curriculum grounded in critical pedagogy, and a Community Hub School staff member supports the school community; *and,*

WHEREAS, The Horace Mann School for the Deaf was founded in 1869 and is the oldest public day school for the Deaf and hard of hearing in the United States, celebrating its 150th anniversary in 2019, with a rich history of providing quality education for the Deaf and hard of hearing as the first and only “dual-language school” in the U.S. to teach both American Sign Language and English; *and,*

WHEREAS, The Horace Mann School is the only public school serving Deaf students in Massachusetts, and has an established ecosystem of connected programs and services in Allston-Brighton, including partnerships with Boston College and Boston University, making it essential that the School remain in the Allston-Brighton community; *and,*

WHEREAS, Both school communities provide essential programs serving student populations with unique needs, with the Jackson/Mann being a special education inclusion school with an Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) autism program and multilingual Sheltered English Instruction (SEI) program, and the Horace Mann School serving students with distinctive cultural and linguistic identities, providing learning environments and instructional methodologies that reflect individual learning styles enabling them to achieve their fullest potential; *and,*

WHEREAS, The City of Boston and Boston Public Schools (BPS) have allocated \$1 billion to school infrastructure through the BuildBPS initiative’s 10-Year Educational and Facilities Master Plan for new construction, major renovations, and facilities improvements; *and,*

WHEREAS, In fall 2018, BPS requested the City’s Public Facilities Department commission an external full-scale building assessment of the Jackson/Mann facility, resulting in an independent engineering report, and an April 2019 letter from the BPS Interim Superintendent identified the necessity to initially vacate the Jackson

Mann facility following the 2020-2021 academic year, impacting both school communities and the BCYF Community Center, but with the assurance that all three would relocate on-site after construction of a new building; *and*,

WHEREAS, After initially discussing a relocation of and search for swing space for both the Jackson/Mann and Horace Mann schools, BPS announced in May 2021 that the Jackson/Mann School would be closed altogether, and that Jackson/Mann students are promised priority in the school assignment process for the 2022-2023 school year; *and*,

WHEREAS, BPS announced an intention that as part of Phase II of BuildBPS for K-6 Expansions and New Buildings, the current Jackson/Mann building site would be repurposed to house a new Allston-Brighton PK-6 school, reflective of a larger trend in BPS of gradually phasing out middle schools and have elementary and high schools absorb grades 6-8; *and*,

WHEREAS, On December 15, 2021, the Boston School Committee voted to close the Jackson/Mann K-8 School at the end of the 2021-2022 school year with five votes in favor and two abstentions; *and*,

WHEREAS, It is essential for BPS to ensure a Community Hub School returns to the Jackson/Mann site when a new facility is completed, and that the Horace Mann School remain in the Allston-Brighton community; *and*,

WHEREAS, The cooperation and commitment of all City agencies involved is essential to ensure a holistic and transparent community engagement process to ensure the present Armington Street site remains dedicated to a state-of-the-art school site and community center serving the Allston-Brighton community, and that all students, families, and educators are involved; **NOW, THEREFORE BE IT**

ORDERED: That the appropriate committee of the Boston City Council hold a hearing to discuss the present status and most recent updates affecting the Jackson/Mann and Horace Mann school communities, and that representatives of the Boston Public Schools, Public Facilities Department, students and their families, school officials, educators, and the public be invited to attend.

Filed in City Council: January 20, 2022