

Offered by City Councilor Julia Mejia



CITY OF BOSTON IN CITY COUNCIL

IN THE YEAR TWO THOUSAND TWENTY-SIX

ORDER FOR A HEARING TO AUDIT BOSTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS' SPECIAL EDUCATION SERVICES AND RETURN ON INVESTMENTS

- WHEREAS,** One of the fundamental responsibilities of the Boston City Council is to ensure accountability, transparency, and accessibility in all city business, including the planning, governance, and operations of Boston Public Schools; *and*
- WHEREAS,** In the 2025–2026 school year, Boston Public Schools serves approximately 44,416 students, of whom 24.2 percent are students with disabilities, reflecting a continued and growing need for robust, well-resourced special education services; *and*
- WHEREAS,** The Special Education budget totals over \$421 million in FY26, representing an increase of approximately \$3.9 million, or 1 percent, from FY25, and accounting for nearly one-quarter of the total BPS operating budget; *and*
- WHEREAS,** This investment supports more than 11,500 students with disabilities including students receiving services across in-district programs, substantially separate classrooms, and out-of-district placements; *and*
- WHEREAS,** Boston Public Schools continues to report persistent staffing shortages in special education, including unfilled positions that may contribute to service delays, unfulfilled Individualized Education Programs (IEPs), increased reliance on costly out-of-district placements, and inequitable access to legally required supports; *and*
- WHEREAS,** Despite the scale of investment, families, educators, and advocates have raised ongoing concerns regarding service consistency, staffing stability, compliance with federal and state special education mandates, and whether current spending levels are translating into improved student outcomes and long-term system sustainability; *and*

WHEREAS, The Boston City Council has a duty to evaluate whether major public investments are being deployed effectively, equitably, and in alignment with student needs, particularly when they represent a significant and growing share of the City's education budget; **NOW THEREFORE BE IT**

ORDERED: That the appropriate committee of the Boston City Council hold a hearing to review Boston Public Schools' Green New Deal, broader facilities planning efforts, and any current or proposed school closures, mergers, consolidations, or reconfigurations. The hearing shall examine planning processes, decision-making frameworks, use of public funds, equity and climate impacts, and accountability mechanisms. Representatives from Boston Public Schools, parents, students, educators, community organizations, and members of the public shall be invited and encouraged to attend.

Filed in Council: February 4, 2026