



CITY OF BOSTON IN CITY COUNCIL

ORDER FOR A HEARING REGARDING BOSTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS STUDENT-ATHLETE TRANSFER AND ELIGIBILITY POLICIES

WHEREAS, Boston Public Schools serves thousands of student-athletes whose participation in interscholastic sports plays an important role in physical health, academic engagement, social development, and overall student well-being; *and*

WHEREAS, Students may seek school transfers for a variety of non-athletic reasons, including academic programming needs, access to specialized supports, health considerations, or family circumstances, and such transfers can unintentionally trigger athletic eligibility reviews governed by strict timelines and administrative requirements; *and*

WHEREAS, Eligibility determinations for interscholastic athletics are subject to coordination between Boston Public Schools and external governing bodies, including the Massachusetts Interscholastic Athletic Association, which limits local discretion once deadlines or procedural thresholds have passed; *and*

WHEREAS, Concerns have emerged that the current student-athlete transfer and eligibility review framework may allow for arbitrary or inconsistent outcomes, including situations in which eligibility determinations, allegations of recruitment, investigative decisions, and appeals processes lack clear evidentiary standards, publicly available rules, or guaranteed opportunities for students to be meaningfully heard; *and*

WHEREAS, Reliance on discretionary judgments, opaque review bodies, limited notice, and appeal mechanisms controlled solely by school administrators may create conditions in which adult actions, retaliation concerns, or fear of reprisal discourage full and fair participation in the process, raising fundamental questions about transparency, due process, and equity for students; *and*

WHEREAS, In practice, delays, miscommunication, or actions taken by adults within institutional systems, rather than the conduct of students themselves, may result in students losing athletic opportunities, creating outcomes that disproportionately impact children and undermine the intent of educational and athletic equity; *and*

WHEREAS, A review of current policies presents an opportunity to ensure that student-athlete transfer processes are transparent, clearly communicated to families, and centered on fairness, due process, and student well-being, while remaining compliant with applicable regulations; **NOW, THEREFORE BE IT**

ORDERED: That the appropriate committee of the Boston City Council hold a hearing to examine Boston Public Schools' student-athlete transfer and eligibility policies, including implementation practices, communication of deadlines, coordination with external athletic governing bodies, and potential policy reforms to prevent students from bearing adverse consequences due to administrative or adult decision-making. Representatives from Boston Public Schools central administration, including the Boston Public Schools Director of Sports Administration and the Boston Public Schools Sports Administration Review Board, legal counsel, and other relevant stakeholders shall be invited to testify.

Filed on: January 28, 2026