

OFFERED BY COUNCILORS JULIA MEJIA, BRIAN WORRELL, ARROYO, BOK, BREADON, COLETTA, LOUIJEUNE AND FLYNN



## CITY OF BOSTON IN CITY COUNCIL

### RESOLUTION CALLING ON BOSTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS FOR COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND FULL TRANSPARENCY IN THE ONGOING EFFORTS TO CLOSE AND MERGE PUBLIC SCHOOLS

**WHEREAS,** The Green New Deal for Boston Public Schools (BPS) is a long-term facilities action plan that includes major capital projects that will affect at least 20 school communities. These district-wide initiatives intend to address environmental concerns within our school facilities and expand educational opportunities for our students; *and*

**WHEREAS,** The City of Boston has contracted with 1) Bureau Veritas Technical Assessments to complete a Facilities Condition Assessment (FCA) to indicate the building conditions and offer recommendations for repair, replacement, and renovation; and 2) DLR Group, Inc., Jonathan Levi Architects, and St. Fleur Communications to complete a School Design Study that also create standards for future school construction and renovation projects; *and*

**WHEREAS,** Some of the capital projects include closing and merging several public schools in the next few years. The process to merge schools has begun with the Sumner and Philbrick schools in Roslindale, the Shaw and Taylor schools in Dorchester and Mattapan, and the Hyde Park-based Boston Community Leadership Academy (BCLA) and the Dorchester-based McCormack school; *and*

**WHEREAS,** BPS will likely continue to consolidate small school communities into larger new or renovated buildings, necessitating more school closures and mergers. Such decisions impact our school communities greatly and it is the responsibility of BPS to communicate any proposal to close or merge schools and make public the reasons these schools, and not other schools, should be closed or consolidated. Moreover, in the event that schools are to be closed or consolidated in anticipation of better facilities for students, construction projects should be complete before schools are closed or merged; *and*

**WHEREAS,** The City of Boston has committed to 1) using the Racial Equity Planning Tool (REPT) to analyze how District policies and proposals impact students and communities with the greatest needs and 2) building a Dashboard that integrates data from the SY22 Opportunity Index and information on each school building's capital assets and environmental conditions; *and*

**WHEREAS,** In the absence of an elected School Committee, there is no governance body for BPS that is directly accountable to families. Therefore, direct communication and engagement with school communities is imperative at a system wide level. Fair, equitable decisions cannot be made piecemeal, as each school is a part of an interlocking system of schools impacting one another; *and*

**WHEREAS,** It is the responsibility of the Boston City Council to ensure the City of Boston and Boston Public Schools are engaging the community in the decision-making process and offering full transparency to the changes; ***NOW, THEREFORE BE IT***

**RESOLVED:** That the Boston City Council calls on the Boston Public Schools for community engagement and full transparency in the ongoing efforts to close and merge public schools. This includes: 1) provide a listing of all school closings since 2010 by neighborhood, type of school, size, student demographics, the reason for closing, and the impact on marginalized students, as specified in the REPT; 2) data on the students attending any school proposed for closure or merger who have experienced the trauma of a previous school closing, as included in the equity impact analysis; and 3) all school community meetings about closures and consolidation must be advertised at least ten days in advance and conducted in multiple languages and child care must be provided.

Filed on: April 26, 2023