

OFFERED BY COUNCILORS ERIN MURPHY, BREADON, COLETTA ZAPATA, CULPEPPER, FITZGERALD, FLYNN, LOUIJEUNE, PEPÉN, SANTANA, WEBER, AND WORRELL



CITY OF BOSTON IN CITY COUNCIL

ORDER FOR A HEARING TO CONSIDER A FULL, INDEPENDENT AUDIT OF BOSTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS' FINANCES, OPERATIONS, AND PROGRAM EFFECTIVENESS

WHEREAS, The Boston City Council has a responsibility to exercise oversight of the City's largest public investments to ensure sound financial management, transparency, and alignment between spending decisions and intended outcomes; and

WHEREAS, Boston Public Schools operates with an annual budget of approximately \$1.7 billion, making it the single largest expenditure in the City of Boston's operating budget and accounting for more than one-third of all City spending; and

WHEREAS, In addition to its recurring operating budget, Boston Public Schools received approximately \$470 million in federal ARP and ESSER pandemic recovery funding over several fiscal years, significantly expanding the scale and complexity of district spending during that period; and

WHEREAS, Despite this level of investment, student academic outcomes remain persistently low, and Boston Public Schools has now identified a \$52 million budget shortfall, resulting in hiring and spending freezes and raising concerns about long-term fiscal sustainability; and

WHEREAS, The combination of historic funding levels, limited evidence of improved outcomes, and current fiscal instability necessitates a comprehensive examination of how resources are allocated, managed, and evaluated across the school system; and

WHEREAS, While individual program reviews and internal reports may provide partial insight, the scale of Boston Public Schools' budget and operations warrants an independent, systemwide audit to assess financial stewardship, operational efficiency, and program effectiveness; and

WHEREAS, Educators, families, advocates, and community members have called for greater transparency regarding spending decisions, central administration costs, contracting practices, and whether investments are reaching classrooms and producing results for students; and

WHEREAS, A full, independent audit would provide the City, the School Committee, and the public with objective information needed to make informed decisions, improve accountability, and ensure future investments are aligned with student needs and outcomes;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDERED: That the appropriate committee of the Boston City Council hold a hearing to examine the scope, structure, and necessity of a full, independent audit of Boston Public Schools, including systemwide financial management, operational practices, and

alignment between spending decisions and student outcomes. The Committee is requested to invite representatives from Boston Public Schools and the Boston School Committee, as well as financial and oversight experts, educators, families, advocates, and members of the public, to testify regarding district finances, spending practices, accountability, and the effectiveness of major investments.

Filed on: February 11, 2026