

Offered by City Councilors Julia Mejia and Brian Worrell, Arroyo, Breadon, Coletta, Fernandes Anderson, Flaherty, Lara, Flynn, Louijeune and Bok



CITY OF BOSTON IN CITY COUNCIL

ORDER FOR A HEARING ADDRESSING SEXUAL ASSAULT AND HARASSMENT IN BOSTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

- WHEREAS,** According to the Boston Public Schools Code of Conduct, last updated in 2016, incidents of unwelcoming sexual advances and requests for sexual favors happen when a rejection is made explicitly or implicitly, conditions of sexual advances are connected to academic achievement, benefits, or privileges, or such act interfere with a student's education by creating a hostile environment; *and*
- WHEREAS,** A 2017 study by the Department of Justice's National Criminal Justice Reference service found that 10% of K-12 students will experience sexual misconduct in their academic career; *and*
- WHEREAS,** As of 2019, The Department of Education was investigating 279 cases of sexual assaults in K-12 schools while the Center for Disease Control reported in 2018 that more than 20% of female and 10% of male high school students experienced dating violence. The CDC also reported that 33% of women first experienced sexual violence between the ages of 11 -17; *and*
- WHEREAS,** The Department of Education released new Title IX rules for how school districts must handle reports in May 2020, but groups such as the American Psychological Association and the National Women's Law Center strongly reject these regulations stating that it will silence survivors; *and*
- WHEREAS,** During a Boston City Council Committee hearing on School Resource Officers, countless students shared their experience of sexual assault and expressed frustration with the lack of action or accountability by Boston Public Schools; *and*
- WHEREAS,** Too often there is an assault-to-prison pipeline, where students who are survivors of sexual assault are punished for noncompliance with attendance and academic

performance in criminal justice settings, indicating the need to dismantle the “model survivor” mentality; *and*

WHEREAS, Boston Public Schools is responsible for over 54,000 students and there is a clear need to follow up on the efforts being made to investigate and protect survivors;
NOW THEREFORE BE IT

ORDERED: That the appropriate committee of the Boston City Council holds a hearing to examine how sexual assaults and misconduct are handled by the Boston Public School Administration. Representatives from the City of Boston, Boston Public Schools, the Boston Police Department, youth leaders, members of the public, and any other interested parties shall be invited and are encouraged to attend.

Filed in Council: January 9, 2023