

City of Philadelphia



Council of the City of Philadelphia Office of the Chief Clerk Room 402, City Hall Philadelphia

(Resolution No. 251003)

RESOLUTION

Honoring the courage and Legacy of Ruby Bridges by Recognizing November 14th as Ruby Bridges Walk to School Day in the City of Philadelphia.

WHEREAS, On November 14, 1960, six-year-old Ruby Bridges was one of six Black children to pass the test that determined whether they could go to the all-white William Frantz Elementary School in New Orleans, LA; and

WHEREAS, Of the six children who passed the test, two of the children decided to stay at their old school, and Ruby Bridges went to William Frantz Elementary School by herself, as the only African American student to attend the school; and

WHEREAS, Everyday U.S. Marshals had to escort young Ruby and her mother to school where a crowd of people who didn't want her at the school accosted her; and

WHEREAS, As soon as Ruby Bridges entered the school, white parents pulled their own children out, and all the teachers except one refused to teach while a black child was enrolled in the school; and

WHEREAS, Barbara Henry, originally from Boston, MA was the only teacher that would teach Ruby Bridges and for the entire year Ms. Henry taught Ruby Bridges alone in the classroom; and

WHEREAS, There were threats to poison Ruby's food, so the U.S. Marshals assigned to protect her only allowed her to eat food brought from home; and

WHEREAS, The threats to Ruby extended to her family as well. Her father lost his job and the grocery store where the family shopped would no longer let them shop there, and her grandparents who were sharecroppers in Mississippi, were turned off their land; and

WHEREAS, Despite the threats and protests, the Bridges family was determined to keep sending Ruby to school; she didn't miss a single day of class that year; and

City of Philadelphia

RESOLUTION NO. 251003 continued

WHEREAS, Over time other African American students enrolled into William Frantz Elementary School, and many years later Ruby Bridges' four nieces attended the school made famous by their brave Aunt Ruby; and

WHEREAS, In 1964 artist Norman Rockwell celebrated Ruby Bridges' courage with a painting of Ruby's first day of school entitled "The Problem We All Live With"; and

WHEREAS, Ms. Bridges went on to graduate from a desegregated high school, became a travel agent, married and raised a family. Ms. Bridges also wrote several books about her experiences as a child, and she received the Carter G. Woodson Book Award for her work; and

WHEREAS, In 1999 Ruby Bridges established The Ruby Bridges Foundation to promote tolerance and create change through education and in 2000, Ms. Bridges was made an honorary deputy marshal in a ceremony in Washington, D.C.; and

WHEREAS, In 2001 Ruby Bridges was awarded the United States Presidential Citizens Medal for her bravery and service to our nation; and

WHEREAS, Ruby Bridges has asserted that, "Racism is a grown-up disease, and we must stop using our children to spread it"; and

WHEREAS, Students from The Bache-Martin School, Nebinger Elementary School, Emlen Elementary School, Logan Elementary School and Southwark Elementary School are all walking to school in honor of Ruby Bridges; and

WHEREAS, Every year on November 14th students, staff, and teachers at participating schools honor Ms. Bridges and the courage she carried to walk through the doors of William Franz Elementary School in 1960 by gathering before school begins, and families are asked to line up and walk through the school's gates while teachers, staff, and families welcome the students with words of love and encouragement to start the day. now, therefore, be it,

RESOLVED, THAT THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA, Recognizes November 14th, as Ruby Bridges Walk to School Day in the City of Philadelphia.

City of Philadelphia

RESOLUTION NO. 251003 continued

CERTIFICATION: This is a true and correct copy of the original Resolution, Adopted by the Council of the City of Philadelphia on the thirteenth day of November, 2025.

Kenyatta Johnson
PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL

Elizabeth McCollum
CHIEF CLERK OF THE COUNCIL

Introduced by: Councilmember Bass

Sponsored by: Council President Johnson, Councilmembers Bass, Phillips, Gilmore Richardson, Gauthier, Jones, Landau, Lozada, Brooks, Harritty, O'Rourke, Driscoll, O'Neill, Squilla and Ahmad