

Legislation Text

File #: 010075, **Version:** 0

Authorizing City Council's Education and Public Safety Committees to hold a committee hearing to evaluate the progress made by the Philadelphia Public Schools in their implementation of the School District's Safety Plan pursuant to Resolution No. 990650.

WHEREAS, in a public hearing on October 21, 1999 regarding Resolution No. 990650 then Philadelphia School District Superintendent David Hornbeck appeared before City Council and presented testimony that City Council would receive a detail safety plan by late November 1999 and Council has yet to receive the plan; and

WHEREAS, since the shooting of Vice Principal William Burke at John Bartram High School by a student who brought a gun to school on October 4, 1999, there have been more incidents and concerns of safety issues ranging from the lack of metal detector installations, weapons in schools, sexual assaults to fires being set by students on school grounds; and

WHEREAS, on January 4, 2001 a Philadelphia School District spokesman noted through news accounts that there are no metal detectors at Philadelphia Public Middle Schools; and

WHEREAS, on January 4, 2001 according to news reports a 5th grade student at Shaw Middle School attempted to sell a 9mm handgun in school, posing a danger to all students, teachers, and employees; and

WHEREAS, two other Philadelphia School students, ages 9 and 12, were found with a loaded 9mm handgun and a .25-caliber in Spring Garden Elementary and Julia DeBurgos Middle School respectively, indicate the need for metal detectors and other security precautions at Philadelphia Elementary and Middle Schools; and

WHEREAS, Philadelphia School District data shows that sexual assaults of students was up 32% from the year before when in the 1999-2000 school year there were 213 indecent assaults reported; and "those figures are on track to be even higher this year, with about 130 indecent assaults reported since school started last fall"; and

WHEREAS, in November 2000 the House of Representatives' created a subcommittee to investigate violence in Philadelphia Schools pursuant to House Resolution No. 303 and concluded, according to the Daily News, that the district under-report crime, fails to properly punish violent students and is insensitive to victims; and

WHEREAS, on August 30, 2000 a Philadelphia School District employee testified before the House of Representatives' subcommittee about student disorder, which included more than 70 fires, set in schools in 1998-99, to which he indicated only two were reported to the Office of Safe Schools, and he later indicated in a December 6, 2000 Daily News article that fires are still being set by students.

THEREFORE, THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA, Hereby resolves to authorize the City Council's Education and Public Safety Committees to evaluate the progress made by the

Philadelphia Public Schools in their implementation of the School District's Safety Plan pursuant to Resolution No. 990650.