

Legislation Text

File #: 230089, Version: 0

Authorizing the joint City Council Committees on Public Safety and Education to hold public hearings to examine the status of capital programs for infrastructure repair as well as for toxic hazard remediation in Philadelphia's public schools.

WHEREAS, A capital plan is a short-range plan that identifies needs for upcoming capital purchases and repairs and provides a timeline for these purposes. Capital projects are projects to construct either new facilities or make significant, long-term renewal improvements to existing facilities; and

WHEREAS, According to the School District, capital projects fall into five main categories for repair. "New construction" provides funds for the creation of entirely new buildings and, for building additions to current structures. "Major renovation" provides for a comprehensive overhaul of a school building's interior and exterior. "Minor renovation" provides for renovation of school cafeterias, auditoriums, and classrooms. "Major systems replacement" provides for comprehensive upgrades in systems like environmental abatements and HVACS, lighting, and roof repairs. Finally, "site improvement" provides for improvements of playgrounds as well as for classrooms; and

WHEREAS, Many schools in the Philadelphia public school system have crippling infrastructure issues. It is necessary to understand, how the School District plans to address the issues that have arisen; and

WHEREAS, Environmental issues have caused massive problems for the Philadelphia public school system. But currently, the School District is involved in a lawsuit challenging the implementation of a necessary law to keep our students safe. The law, passed by Council requires that 1/3 of district schools be inspected for safety issues like asbestos, water quality, and led paint, by August 1, 2023. The next 1/3 of schools will need to be inspected by 2024, and the final 1/3 be inspected by 2025; and

WHEREAS, It is necessary for this Council body to understand what the School District has planned to remediate many of the toxic hazards that our students can be exposed to while trying to learn. While closing schools is unacceptable, so is exposing our youth to dangerous substances on a daily basis; and

WHEREAS, In March of 2022, The School District announced a Facilities Master Planning Process to develop a set of recommendations, informed by community engagement to for new school buildings but for what must be done with existing school buildings. It is necessary to hold hearings to understand the School District's progress in their planning process; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA, That it hereby authorizes the joint City Council Committees on Public Safety and Education to hold public hearings to examine the status of capital programs for infrastructure repair as well as for toxic hazard remediation in Philadelphia's public schools.