

Legislation Text

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Authorizing City Council's Committee on Public Safety to hold public hearings to investigate methods used by school security officers and non-teaching assistants in their encounters with students in the City's public schools; to investigate student complaints concerning inappropriate behavior by some officers and non-teaching assistants; to examine the qualifications and training required for such officers and assistants; and to explore ways of improving the interaction between security and non-teaching personnel and students.

WHEREAS, Maintaining order and security in the City's public schools is vitally important to the safety of students and staff and is a necessity in providing a stimulating educational environment; and

WHEREAS, In any large public school, minor behavior problems are likely to occur daily in corridors, cafeterias, and on school grounds, and too often, serious problems occur as well; and

WHEREAS, How such problems are handled by security officers and other personnel, such as non-teaching assistants, and their methods of interaction with students frequently can make the difference between whether the situation is defused or becomes more serious; and

WHEREAS, A recent incident at Martin Luther King, Jr. High School, involving a student who was beaten by school police officers, sparked a student walk-out and protest against, what students claim to be, the heavy-handed approach used by school police in dealing with students; and

WHEREAS, There also have been complaints by students in some schools of other inappropriate behavior by some of the security officers and non-teaching assistants; and

WHEREAS, It is essential that security officers and non-teaching assistants have the appropriate qualifications, temperament, training, sensitivity and experience to interact with children and adolescents so that their encounters with students do not exacerbate problematic situations and their conduct, in all situations, remains professional; now therefore,

RESOLVED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA, That Council hereby authorizes City Council's Committee on Public Safety to hold public hearings to investigate methods used by school security officers and non-teaching assistants in their encounters with students in the City's public schools; to investigate student complaints concerning inappropriate behavior by some officers and non-teaching assistants; to examine the qualifications and training required for such officers and assistants; and to explore ways of improving the interaction between security and non-teaching personnel and students.