



City of Philadelphia

City Council
Chief Clerk's Office
402 City Hall
Philadelphia, PA 19107

Legislation Text

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Authorizing the Committee on Education to conduct hearings concerning the time and financial costs of standardized testing administered to Philadelphia public school students as well as the effects of testing on teaching and learning.

WHEREAS, Philadelphia public school students attend schools that are dangerously under-resourced; and

WHEREAS, The State of Pennsylvania is one of only three states that does not have an education funding formula in place that guarantees funds for districts are distributed according to need; and

WHEREAS, In this climate of austerity, standardized testing requirements have continued to increase. The costs associated with standardized testing, development, administration and technology for online testing may mean that there will be fewer funds available for classroom resources; and

WHEREAS, The over reliance on high-stakes standardized testing in state and federal accountability systems may be undermining educational quality and equity in U.S. public schools by hampering educators' efforts to focus on the broad range of learning experiences that promote innovation, creativity, problem solving, collaboration, communication, critical thinking and deep subject-matter knowledge that will allow students to thrive in an increasingly global society and economy; and

WHEREAS, "Cut scores", which determine if a student is proficient or underachieving, may have negative effects for students from all backgrounds, especially low-income students, English language learners, children of color, and those with disabilities; and

WHEREAS, The use of standardized testing may be used to make major decisions that will affect individual students, educators and schools; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That the Council of the City of Philadelphia authorizes hearings to be conducted to understand the impact the current regime of high-stakes standardized testing is having on schools, teachers, and children. To also explore options that may better support engaging school experiences, joy in learning, depth of thought and breadth of knowledge for students.

Mark F. Squilla
1st District Councilman
September 11, 2014

Ed Neilson
Councilman-At-Large