



Legislation Text

File #: 170888, **Version:** 0

Honoring and recognizing the students, staff, and partners of Hill-Freedman World Academy High School, in collaboration with LiveConnections, on the release of *FIRST VERSE*, a student-led, original CD album of poetry set to music.

WHEREAS, In the Fall of 2016, Hill-Freedman World Academy High School, under the leadership of Principal Anthony Majewski, opened its new music studio, record label, and music technology program; and

WHEREAS, Music Technology Teacher, Ezechial Thurman, who designed and implemented the new program and launched Hill-Freedman Records, taught all 10th graders as they immersed themselves in learning computer-based music production and composition as part of the school's International Baccalaureate Programme; and

WHEREAS, As students developed their music composition skills, Thurman reached out to LiveConnections, a non-profit dedicated to inspiring learning and building community through collaborative music-making, to partner together through an artist residency at the school, led by Founding Director, David Bradley; and

WHEREAS, LiveConnections brought City of Philadelphia Poet Laureate, Yolanda Wisher, to the Music Studio to lead a poetry-writing program; and

WHEREAS, Students wrote about personal struggles and issues they were dealing with at home, at school, and in the community. They wrote verses inspired by the imagery of color and poems driven by what Ms. Wisher called "John Henry" level hyperbole; and

WHEREAS, Working in the recording studio, the students performed and recorded their poems and joined their writing with their music compositions, with additional support from LiveConnections Artist, Andrew Lipke; and

WHEREAS, In the final phase of the project, producers Thurman and Bradley worked with student producers to create an original CD album; and

WHEREAS, Student leadership led to the project expanding from a planned 15-track album to one comprising 29 tracks, entitled *FIRST VERSE*. In total, the project involved 88 students, including two student producers; and

WHEREAS, The debut from Hill-Freedman Records, *FIRST VERSE*, announces the school's ambition for what's ahead: distinctive student voices, rigorous process, and collaborations with top artists and arts organizations in the City; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, THAT THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA, Hereby honors and recognizes the students, staff, and partners of Hill-Freedman World Academy High School, in collaboration with LiveConnections, on the release of *FIRST VERSE*, a student-led, original CD album of poetry set to music.

FURTHER RESOLVED, That an Engrossed copy of this resolution be presented to the students and staff of Hill-Freedman World Academy High School as a sincere expression of the Philadelphia City Council's recognition.