

Legislation Text

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Authorizing Council's Committee on Public Safety and Committee on Education to hold hearings to examine the problem of gun violence occurring near Philadelphia schools, and to consider enhancing and establishing video surveillance cameras near schools as School Safe Corridor zones for students, school personnel and residents.

WHEREAS, Gun violence poses a serious, ongoing threat to public safety and welfare, across Philadelphia; and

WHEREAS, Gun violence near schools in Philadelphia is particularly troubling, putting children, teachers and others in harm's way: Four persons were shot, two critically, in a shooting that happened in broad daylight, within feet of a North Philadelphia elementary school on February 19, 2020. Officials with the School District of Philadelphia, recognizing the increased incidence of gun violence near schools, have put in place new procedures for school lockdowns and student safety. As of February 19, 2020, there have been 51 homicides in 2020, up 21 percent from February 2019, according to the Philadelphia Police Department's webpage, www.phillypolice.com/crime-maps-stats/. Last year, 14 children under 18 were shot fatally with guns. The homicide rate in Philadelphia has risen steadily, from 277 in 2016, to 315 in 2017, to 353 in 2018, to 356 in 2019; and

WHEREAS, Philadelphia Police, recognizing the problems associated with gun violence happening near Philadelphia schools, have researched the issue and identified four Philadelphia schools within each of the City's six police divisions that have the greatest incidence of violent crimes within a 1000-foot safe corridor zone surrounding the schools; and

WHEREAS, Philadelphia Police, using that data, have determined locations where the addition of video cameras will assist the Police Department in reducing the number of violent incidents in and around these schools. The camera locations are based on the likely travel or corridor route of students to and from school, their areas of congregation, blocks with higher incidence of crimes, and the location of existing cameras; and

WHEREAS, Police have identified a need for at least 85 additional cameras that will effectively create School Safe Corridors around 24 Philadelphia schools located throughout the City's six police divisions; and now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA, That it hereby authorizes the Committee on Public Safety and the Committee on Education to hold hearings on the subject of gun violence near Philadelphia schools, for the purpose of considering the effectiveness of adding video surveillance cameras near schools to enhance public safety and create School Safe Corridors for students, school personnel and nearby residents.