

Legislation Text

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Calling on the Archdiocese of Philadelphia to keep John W. Hallahan Catholic Girls High School and Bishop McDevitt High School open and to engage with students, alumni, board, and other stakeholders in decision making around the schools' futures.

WHEREAS, John W. Hallahan Catholic Girls High School is the first all-girls Catholic diocesan school in the country and is approaching its 120th Anniversary; and

WHEREAS, Hallahan was founded to provide an education to girls of immigrant families and remains to this day a model of diversity, with young women of all backgrounds and faiths enrolled as students; and

WHEREAS, Hallahan is the only school to have written permission to use Walt Disney's Mickey Mouse as its mascot; and

WHEREAS, Hallahan has adapted to meet the needs of its students by forging important partnerships, such as a new program with the Community College of Philadelphia to allow all Hallahan graduates to receive both a High School Diploma and an Associate Degree; and

WHEREAS, The Hallahan High School Board of Directors, alumnae, current students and their families have spoken out against the closure of the school and worked to identify opportunities to increase its enrollment numbers and improve its financial outlook; and

WHEREAS, Hallahan's Board is confident it has the financial resources to cover the school's deficits and keep the school open for the next two years; and

WHEREAS, Bishop McDevitt High School is rich in diversity, with over seventy percent of students identifying as Black and from Philadelphia; and

WHEREAS, McDevitt has long prioritized diverse post-secondary opportunities by adding vocational and technical education curriculum in 1965; and

WHEREAS, School closures can have a negative impact on students who must transfer schools, students at schools that receive new students, and even on students who would have attended that school had it not closed; and

WHEREAS, Data on school closures shows hard to measure consequences, such as community institutional mourning and decreased relationships and friendships among alumni; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA, Calls on the Archdiocese of Philadelphia to keep John W. Hallahan Catholic Girls High School and Bishop McDevitt High School open and to engage with students, alumni, board, and other stakeholders in decision making around the schools' futures.

