



Legislation Text

File #: 210978, Version: 0

Calling for public hearings in Council's Committee on Education to examine the School District's newly proposed admission process for criteria-based middle and high schools.

WHEREAS, The School District of Philadelphia recently announced the implementation of a new admission process for criteria-based schools in an effort to promote racial equity; and

WHEREAS, There are currently 37 criteria-based schools in the District, the overwhelming majority of which have African American students as the largest represented racial group; and

WHEREAS, Details of this new admissions process are unclear and developing; and

WHEREAS, However, it is known that the overhauled process would utilize a computerized lottery system with a weighted preference for students from select zip codes designated as under-represented or disadvantaged; and

WHEREAS, In addition, admission essays will be evaluated by a computer program which specifically states it is not to be used for grading; and

WHEREAS, Under the new policy, students from these designated zip codes will receive preference at five specific schools: Masterman, Central, Academy at Palumbo, Carver High School of Engineering and Science, and Parkway Center City Middle College; and

WHEREAS, This decision comes after the district announced it would no longer consider standardized testing scores for admission at criteria-based schools for the 2022-2023 school year, with consideration being given to make the policy permanent; this discounts and discredits students who may not get good grades but perform well on standardized test scores; and

WHEREAS, While well-intentioned, many students and parents have expressed feeling blindsided by the changes, believing the new process will have unintended consequences for the students it seeks to help; and

WHEREAS, These policies greatly impact parents and students across Philadelphia; further dialogue should be pursued to ensure fair outcomes for our City's youth; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA, that it hereby calls for public hearings in Council's Committee on Education to further explore the school district's newly proposed admission process for selective middle and high schools.