

Legislation Text

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Authorizing the City Council Committee on Education to hold public hearings examine the levels of learning loss as well as attendance trends as a result of the COVID-19 Pandemic, and to understand how the School District of Philadelphia plans to address these issues.

WHEREAS, As a result of the COVID-19 Pandemic, The Philadelphia School District made the decision to suspend in-person learning in public schools to stop the spread of the virus. Students did not return for full-time, five days-a-week, in-person learning until August of 2021; and

WHEREAS, Throughout the duration of the pandemic, students took part in virtual learning practices in their own homes. Unfortunately, many students in Philadelphia lacked the necessary technological infrastructure to be able to fully succeed in their new environment; and

WHEREAS, Many students had difficulties with virtual learning and faced challenges across the board on numerous different fronts. Some students lacked the necessary technology to complete their assignments. Others did not have the necessary internet broadband to attend their classes. Some students with IEP's struggled with the challenges of not have their academic needs met. On a deeper level, children living in divested communities struggled with different environmental challenges; and

WHEREAS, As a result of the COVID-19 Pandemic and a result of school closures, students in the Philadelphia public school system have faced levels of learning loss. According to an article by the Philadelphia Tribune. Current 4th graders in Philadelphia had an average math score of 209. This is eight points lower than the 2019 average. For 8th graders in the District, the average score was 252, four points below 2019 levels; and

WHEREAS, According to the same report, 4th Grade reading scores were 195, which was down two points. In addition, reading scores for 8th graders was 242, down one point compared to 2019; and

WHEREAS, Philadelphia Public Schools missed the large city average in 4th grader scores by 18 points in math and 14 points in reading. 8th graders missed the average by 14 points in reading and 13 points in math; and

WHEREAS, In order for students to be successful, they must attend their academic institutions on a regular basis. It is necessary to understand the School District's current attendance levels and compare them with what the levels were before the pandemic and what they were during virtual learning; and

WHEREAS, The levels of learning loss that our City has seen is unacceptable. It is necessary for this Council body to examine the levels of learning loss our students are facing and to understand what measures the School District is putting in place to address it. In addition, it is important to understand how many students are attending class across the grade levels in the District to understand how it will affect students; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA, That it hereby authorizes the City

Council Committee on Education to hold public hearings examining the levels of learning loss and attendance trends as a result of the COVID-19 Pandemic, and to understand the School District of Philadelphia plans to address these issues.