



Offered by City Councilor Annissa Essaibi-George
Flynn, Bok, Wu, Edwards, Arroyo, Mejia, Bok, Flaherty, Campbell,
Baker and Janey
CITY OF BOSTON
IN CITY COUNCIL

**ORDER FOR A HEARING REGARDING AUTISM
SERVICES IN THE BOSTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS**

WHEREAS: The FY21 Budget provided a \$4.7 million increase to support students with autism in BPS through the Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) program; and

WHEREAS: This new funding will provide 20 new ABA specialists and 2 new program directors to provide programmatic support across the District; and

WHEREAS: Currently, too many Black and Brown students are diverted into substantially separate ABA strands when they would instead be better served in fully funded Inclusion classrooms; and

WHEREAS: The Autistic Self Advocacy Network, among other community advocates, criticize ABA practices for trying to make autistic children appear to be neurotypical rather than embracing the neurodiversity that already exists; and

WHEREAS: More effort needs to be made to ensure that our parents and families in BPS know their rights, the resources, and the options that are available to their student, as too many services only go to those who ask for it, not those who need it; and

WHEREAS: The District can also provide more professional development to teachers and school staff so that everyone is better equipped to de-escalate situations and modify classroom or school environments so that autistic students are more able to fully participate in school; and

WHEREAS: The District and the City should also coordinate resources so that the BEST Clinicians and other support services who are typically called in to manage crises are called in only when appropriate and have a pre-existing relationship with the school to foster a better sense of trust with students in crises, **THEREFORE, BE IT**

ORDERED: That the appropriate committee of the Boston City Council hold a hearing to examine the current practices and challenges with autism services in BPS.