

Offered by City Councilors Ricardo Arroyo and Ed Flynn



CITY OF BOSTON IN CITY COUNCIL

ORDER FOR A HEARING TO DISCUSS SAFETY CONDITIONS IN BOSTON PUBLIC SCHOOL CLASSROOMS DURING EXTREME TEMPERATURES

WHEREAS: The City of Boston has now experienced two heat waves in the month of June 2021, including several days of temperatures exceeding 90 degrees and a record-setting temperature of 100 degrees recorded on June 30th; *and*

WHEREAS: A majority of BPS classrooms do not have infrastructure, such as air conditioners, access to water facilities, and shaded windows, to handle these excessive temperatures, resulting in temperatures upward of 93 degrees in some cases; *and*

WHEREAS: In the fall of 2020, Boston Public School classrooms were required to keep windows open because of the COVID-19 pandemic, despite frigid outdoor temperatures; *and*

WHEREAS: Concerns over classroom conditions in extreme temperatures occur every year and with the ongoing climate crisis, temperatures are likely to continue to reach or exceed these extremes; *and*

WHEREAS: The Centers for Disease Control has found that extreme heat events are dangerous to health and sometimes fatal, and can result in conditions like heat stroke, respiratory problems, permanent disability, and even death; *and*

WHEREAS: The Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) requires that room temperatures not fall below 68 degrees or rise above the outside temperature when above 80 degrees; *and*

WHEREAS: DESE also only allows heat-related half-days as long as schools still meet their required amount of student learning time for the year; *and*

WHEREAS: BPS should have official policies in place during extreme temperatures to ensure that not only are students in optimal learning conditions, but also to ensure the safety of students, teachers, and staff; ***NOW THEREFORE BE IT***

ORDERED: That the appropriate committee of the Boston City Council hold a hearing to discuss the Boston Public School classrooms conditions in extreme temperatures and ways in which we can ensure regulation of extreme temperatures; and that representatives from the Boston Public Schools, Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, the Boston Teachers Union, and other interested parties be invited.

Filed on: July 21, 2021