

Offered by City Councilor Ayanna Pressley



CITY OF BOSTON

ORDER FOR A HEARING TO DISCUSS A POLICY REFORM AND PUBLIC EDUCATION PROJECT WITH THE NATIONAL BLACK WOMEN'S JUSTICE INSTITUTE (NBWJI) AND THE BOSTON CITY COUNCIL

- WHEREAS,** Recent reports show that appearance-neutral school climate and policies may uniquely impact Black girls; and
- WHEREAS,** National statistics reveal that Black girls are subject to disproportionate applications of exclusionary discipline for behaviors associated with subjective, sometimes biased, decision-making; and
- WHEREAS,** A growing body of evidence supports that school climate and policies impact Black girls' academic self-esteem, risk of teen pregnancy, juvenile and adult delinquency, and a host of mental and physical health problems; and
- WHEREAS,** The most recent publically available data from 2012 shows that in Boston school districts, Black girls comprised 28% of female students, but accounted for 61% of girls suspended, 63% of girls expelled, and were disciplined at 11 times the rate of White girls; and
- WHEREAS,** The US Department of Education Office for Civil Rights reports that nationally Black girls are 6 times more likely to be suspended than girls of any other race or ethnicity; and
- WHEREAS,** In order to help understand and direct school policies' intent and impact, we should conduct focus groups with Black girls from BPS and BCYF, and BPS and BCYF school administrators; and
- WHEREAS,** Incorporating Black girls' experiences into the school policy dialogue can guide evaluations of equitable intent and impact practices. ***THEREFORE BE IT***
- ORDERED,** That the appropriate committee of the Boston City Council hold a hearing with leading topical scholar, Monique Morris, Ed.D., and the National Black Women's Justice Institute (NBWJI) that centers Black girls' experiences with school climate and policies; and that representatives from Boston public and charter schools, along with other interested parties be invited to participate/listen to girls' testimony and guidance.

Filed on: June 5, 2013