OFFERED BY COUNCILORS RUTHZEE LOUIJEUNE, BREADON, COLETTA ZAPATA, CULPEPPER, DURKAN, FITZGERALD, MEJIA, MURPHY, PEPÉN, SANTANA, WEBER, AND WORRELL

CITY OF BOSTON

IN THE YEAR TWO THOUSAND TWENTY FIVE

ORDER FOR A HEARING ON THE CREATION OF A BOSTON SCHOOL BUILDING AUTHORITY

WHEREAS, Boston Public Schools (BPS) has long struggled with deferred maintenance, aging infrastructure, and an insufficient pace of new school construction, contributing to repeated cycles of school closures, consolidations, and disruptions to school communities; *and*

WHEREAS, Research shows that safe, healthy, and inspiring school facilities are foundational to academic achievement, positive school culture, and overall student well-being; *and*

WHEREAS, Despite city initiatives such as BuildBPS and the Green New Deal for BPS, there remains no true comprehensive, equity-driven, or transparent master facilities plan to build new school buildings and oversee more than one hundred aging school buildings across Boston; *and*

WHEREAS, Boston, like many other municipalities, is simultaneously navigating declining enrollment, aging and underutilized buildings, fiscal constraints, and rising operational costs, creating enduring and systemic facilities challenges; *and*

WHEREAS, Recent school closures and reconfigurations have intensified community concern and distrust, particularly when families and educators see a disconnect from timely reinvestments in modernized or replacement school buildings; *and*

WHEREAS, The lack of sustained or systematic maintenance has led to the closure of essential large facilities such as the West Roxbury Education Complex and the Jackson-Mann School, displacing entire school communities and leaving large sections of the city without vital educational assets; *and*

WHEREAS, Responsibility for school facilities planning and delivery is currently fragmented across multiple entities, including Boston Public Schools, the School Committee, City of Boston administrative departments, and the Massachusetts School Building Authority, contributing to slow timelines, unclear accountability, and difficulty sustaining momentum across political and economic cycles; *and*

WHEREAS, The City must balance the urgent need to improve school facilities with broader fiscal constraints, making it increasingly important that limited capital resources

be deployed strategically, transparently, and in alignment with a coherent, citywide facilities plan rather than on an ad hoc basis; *and*

WHEREAS, A Boston School Building Authority (BSBA) could be structured as an independent entity focused exclusively on school facilities, charged with long-term capital planning, coordination with state and federal partners, proactive maintenance strategies, and meaningful community engagement, while allowing the School Committee and BPS leadership to remain focused on student outcomes; *and*

WHEREAS, A BSBA type authority could help align decisions about closures, consolidations, renovations, and new construction within a single, publicly accountable framework that emphasizes predictability, equity, and follow-through; *and*

WHEREAS, The scope of Boston's school facilities demands an aggressive pursuit of multiple financing options, including city, state, and federal funding, including municipal bonds, new education revenue streams, and closer collaboration with government, non-profit, and for-profit partners, to modernize and expand educational infrastructure, while the City's AAA bond rating and available debt capacity provide a strong foundation for construction and renovation projects; *and*

WHEREAS, School buildings require planning, investment, and public trust on timelines that extend beyond electoral cycles or economic fluctuations, and Boston would benefit from a permanent institution focused on the long-term stewardship and community engagement of its educational infrastructure; ***NOW, THEREFORE BE IT***

ORDERED: That the appropriate committee of the Boston City Council hold a hearing to examine the feasibility, structure, and potential benefits of establishing a Boston School Building Authority, and include discussion of: operational scope and governance; funding mechanisms, including public, private, and innovative financing models; protocols for community engagement and transparency; alignment with Boston School Committee, MSBA and other agencies; and the inclusion of equity measures in planning and project selection. Representatives from the School Committee, Boston Public Schools, relevant City departments, the MSBA, DESE, community organizations, parents, educators, and students shall be invited to testify, with the goal of delivering on the promise of safe, high-quality school buildings for every child, in every neighborhood across Boston.

Filed in Council: February 2, 2026