



Board of Commissioners of Cook County

118 North Clark Street
Chicago, IL

Legislation Text

File #: 20-1226, **Version:** 1

PROPOSED RESOLUTION

PROCLAIMING FEBRUARY 3-7, 2020 AS BLACK LIVES MATTER AT SCHOOL WEEK.

WHEREAS, Black Lives Matter At School is a national coalition organizing for racial justice in education; and

WHEREAS, during the 2017-2018 school year, from February 5 to 9, thousands of educators around the U.S. wore Black Lives Matter shirts to school and taught lessons about structural racism, intersectional Black identities, Black history, and anti-racist movements for a nationally organized week of action; and

WHEREAS, during the week of action, educators taught: 1) restorative justice, empathy and loving engagement 2) diversity and globalism 3) trans-affirming, queer affirming and collective values 4) intergenerational Black families and Black villages

WHEREAS, Black Live Matter at School movement developed these demands: 1) end “zero tolerance” discipline, and implement restorative justice 2) hire more Black teachers 3) mandate Black history and ethnic studies in K-12 curriculum; and

WHEREAS, Cook County has 109 school districts, Chicago Public Schools being the largest school district; and

WHEREAS, as of December 2019, Chicago Public Schools student body is nearly 90% students of color (46.6% of students are Latinx, 35.9% Black, 10.8% White, 4.2% Asian, and 0.3% Native American); and

WHEREAS, according to the University of Chicago CCSR (September 2015), Black students face suspensions from school at disproportionate rates even when risk factors “such as poverty and low achievement” are controlled for; and

WHEREAS, according to the “Handcuffs in Hallways” report by the Shriver Center (February 2017), “In total, between 2012 and 2016, the police officers assigned to CPS schools accumulated \$2,030,652 in misconduct settlements for activities on and off school grounds,” and “of that total, nearly \$1.5 million resulted from excessive use of force against a minor and \$215,000 from incidents that occurred on CPS grounds;” and

WHEREAS, discipline, criminalization, and over-policing of Black students has proven to be ineffective in the improvement of outcomes, damaging on their health and well-being, and restorative practices are proven to be a powerful tool in the reduction of disproportionate discipline and improved school climate; and

WHEREAS, Illinois Senate Bill 100 was signed in 2015 and intended to address the causes and consequences of the “school-to-prison” pipeline which disproportionately affects Black students. Senate Bill 100 explicitly requires that schools minimize exclusionary discipline practices such as suspension and expulsion; and

WHEREAS, Illinois House Bill 2859 was signed in 1991 and section 27-20.4 of the Illinois School Code mandated that “every public elementary school and high school shall include in its curriculum a unit of instruction studying the events of Black History;” and

WHEREAS, the implementation of ethnic studies and culturally sustaining curricula is of critical importance to supporting the leaning needs of all students, but particularly Black students.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, the Board of Commissioners of Cook County proclaims February 3-7, 2020 as Black Lives Matter At School week.