



Office of the City Clerk

City Hall
121 N. LaSalle St.
Room 107
Chicago, IL 60602
www.chicityclerk.com

Legislation Text

File #: R2018-678, **Version:** 1

safety of children in Chicago Public Schools Committee on Education and Child Development

Committee on Education and Child Development

June 27, 2018 City Council Meeting

RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, Chicago Public Schools and its employees are mandated reporters of suspected or alleged child abuse, including sexual abuse, under both state and federal law; and

WHEREAS, the Illinois Abused and Neglected Child Reporting Act (ANCRA), 325 ILCS 5, mandates that "...school personnel (including administrators and both certified and non-certified school employees)...educational advocate assigned to a child pursuant to the School Code, member of a school board or the Chicago Board of Education" must immediately report any instance where there is reason to believe that a child known to them may be a victim of abuse; and,

WHEREAS, failure of a mandated reporter to comply with ANCRA is a Class A Misdemeanor; and,

WHEREAS, despite these legal responsibilities and mandates, recent reports highlight the repeated and egregious failures of teachers and principals to fulfill their legal obligation to alert child welfare investigators or police of the claims; and

WHEREAS, specifically, the Chicago Tribune investigation found that police investigated 523 reports of rape or sexual abuse at city schools over a period of a decade and that CPS failed to protect abused students in more than 100 cases; and

WHEREAS, allegations and charges have been leveled against a wide array of CPS employees; and

WHEREAS, reports further outline investigation and interviewing protocol that further traumatized children attempting to report abuse; and

WHEREAS, conflicts of interest contrary to the best practices and findings of child welfare experts abound under current protocol wherein CPS district attorneys handle both investigations into claims of sexual abuse based in the school, as well as defend the school district in any lawsuits arising therefrom; and

WHEREAS, it is also reported that CPS' central office and the district's Law Department kept the results of investigations into sexual abuse secret and on at least one occasion sought to undermine a student who had been raped in the course of fighting her civil lawsuit; and

1

WHEREAS, it is the obligation of CPS and the city to hold hearings and take action immediately, before school commences in the autumn to address the public -- especially parents and students -- on precisely what action will be taken to address all current complaints, as well as how CPS intends to adjust procedures regarding investigations of complaints, legal representation, background checks and any other pertinent information to ensure that no students are again victimized or placed in harm's way in their houses of education,

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Mayor and the members of City Council call for hearings by or before July 25, 2018 before the Committee on Education and Child Development to address the critical and emergent issue of sexual abuse and the safety of Chicago's children in their houses of education, and to further address any violations of state and/or federal mandated reporting acts, especially ANCRA, and;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that representatives from the following offices, departments and fields shall be present:

- Dr. Janice Jackson, CEO of CPS
- Frank Clark, President of the Chicago Board of Education
- the Office of the Mayor
- the Department of Children and Family Services -the Chicago Police Department
- relevant experts in the fields of child welfare, children's rights and child abuse.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the City of Chicago resolves to protect the youth of Chicago in their house of education by any and all means and resources necessary to address and prevent harm to them. A

Scott Waguespack Alderman,
32nd Ward

2

27