


COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE
1350 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20004

MEMORANDUM

TO: Nyasha Smith, Secretary to the Council

FROM: Phil Mendelson, Chairman 

DATE: July 3, 2024

RE: **Request to Agendize for the July 11, 2024 Legislative Meeting**

The following measures are placed on the agenda for the July 11, 2024 Legislative Meeting:

- **Pilot Truancy Reduction Emergency Declaration Resolution of 2024**
- **Pilot Truancy Reduction Emergency Amendment Act of 2024**
- **Pilot Truancy Reduction Temporary Amendment Act of 2024**

The purpose of these measures is to test the Mayor's proposal to change truancy referrals in our schools. The goal of the referrals (current and proposed) is to help students. The purpose of the pilot is to test both the ability and the effectiveness of the Department of Human Services to handle truancy referrals – the Mayor's proposal.

The emergencies and temporary measures would amend the Act to provide for compulsory school attendance, for the taking of a school census in the District of Columbia, and for other purposes to select 3 primary educational institutions to refer students aged 5-13 to the Department of Human Services if they accrue 10 unexcused absences within a school year; 3 secondary educational institution to refer students aged 14-17 to the Department of Human services if they accrue 10 unexcused absences within a school year; and an additional 3 secondary educational institution to refer students aged 14-17 to the Department of Human services if they accrue 15 unexcused absences within a school year.

The emergency sets three requirements for the Department of Human Services. They must: (1) notify the selected schools of all relevant procedures for referral 10 business days before the start of this coming School Year 2024-2025, (2) produce a preliminary report by March 31, 2025, and (3) a final report by August 15, 2025. The report will measure the success of the referrals.

On June 12th, 2024, the Council approved the Fiscal Year 2025 Local Budget Act of 2024 which included \$3.38 million for the expansion of truancy intervention services at the Department of Human Services. This emergency will enable DHS to begin services at the start of the school year rather than the fiscal year.

Draft copies of the measures are attached. Please call me or Bijan Verlin, Legislative Policy Advisor, if you have any questions at (202) 724-8865.

cc: All Councilmembers
Council Officers