File #:	Res 1659-2008	**Version:**	*	Name:	Department of Education to ensure that there are cameras, tracking systems and security personnel on all school buses.
Type:	Resolution			Status:	Filed
				In control:	Committee on Education
On agenda:	10/23/2008				
Enactment date:				Enactment #:	
Title:	Resolution calling upon the Department of Education to ensure that there are cameras, tracking systems and security personnel on all school buses.				
Sponsors:	Gale A. Brewer, Leroy G. Comrie, Jr., Simcha Felder, Lewis A. Fidler, Letitia James, John C. Liu, Annabel Palma, James Sanders, Jr., Larry B. Seabrook, James Vacca				
Indexes:					
Attachments:					

Date	Ver.	Action By	Action	Result
10/23/2008	*	City Council	Introduced by Council	
10/23/2008	*	City Council	Referred to Comm by Council	
12/31/2009	*	City Council	Filed (End of Session)	

Res. No. 1659

Resolution calling upon the Department of Education to ensure that there are cameras, tracking systems and security personnel on all school buses.

By Council Members Brewer, Comrie, Felder, Fidler, James, Liu, Palma, Sanders Jr., Seabrook and Vacca

Whereas, On September 23, 2008, the Daily News reported that a school bus driver upon completing his route, dropped off far from his home a first-grader who was mistakenly placed on the bus, forcing him to wander unfamiliar streets alone; and

Whereas, The New York Times reported that on September 3, 2008, a bus driver bringing children home for the day, traveled aimlessly for four and a half hours with kindergarten and first-grade students on board; and

Whereas, In March 2007, the Daily News ran an investigatory series exposing a series of abuse and misconduct on school buses, including instances of abuse and neglect, underreporting of incidents and an overall poor regulatory system to track and follow-up on complaints; and

Whereas, The Daily News investigatory series also revealed that complaints against drivers and bus escorts had risen 79% between 2002 and 2006, from 1,980 to 3,547 complaints; and

Whereas, The Department of Education currently serves approximately 1.1 million school children in New York City; and

Whereas, Within the Department of Education, the Office of Pupil Transportation (OPT) provides transit service to over 600,000 students attending public and non-public schools located within the five boroughs, neighboring counties and New Jersey and Connecticut; and

Whereas, OPT services include stop-to-school busing, door-to-door busing, issuing student MetroCards and providing bus service for over 160,000 school field trips each year; and

Whereas, Rules pertaining to pupil transportation are included in the Chancellor's Regulations, including transportation policy, eligibility requirements, bus driver and escort responsibilities, and behavior of students on school buses; and

Whereas, In the wake of the 2007 bus incidents, the Department of Education developed a strategic plan to address safety on school buses; and

Whereas, The plan included hiring additional investigators, including a unit manager, increasing oversight such as regular case review and audits, revising student behavior requirements, and improving data collection and reporting; and

Whereas, Despite these reforms and pilot programs being administered by the Department of Education, situations on school buses continued to arise, underscoring the need for additional safeguards to be immediately implemented; and

Whereas, Placing cameras, security personnel and global positioning devices on buses are the best methods available to keep schoolchildren safe when transporting them to and from school; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Council of the City of New York calls upon the Department of Education to ensure that there are cameras, tracking systems and security personnel on all school buses.

JM
LS# 6242
September 30, 2008