

New York City Council

Memorandum in Support of Legislation

This memorandum is authored by the sponsor and explains the need for the legislation references below, in accordance with Rule 6.00(d) of the Rules of the Council.

Legislative Service Number: LS 22879

Prime Sponsor: Council Member Yusef Salaam

Bill Title: To amend the administrative code of the city of New York, in relation to the distribution of information regarding the availability of halal and kosher food in schools.

Submitted by: Council Member Yusef Salaam

Justification

New York City public schools serve one of the most ethnically, religiously, and linguistically diverse student populations in the world, yet many Muslim and Jewish families, particularly immigrant, working-class, and Limited English Proficient households, remain unaware that halal and kosher meal options exist in schools, how to request them, or how the DOE ensures their religious integrity. This information gap means eligible students go without religiously compliant meals not because the meals are unavailable, but because their families were never informed, they could ask. This bill requires the DOE to distribute clear, written information to every student and parent no later than September 15 of each school year, in English and the nine most common home languages of enrolled students, and to maintain that information on its website year-round. The City should not place the burden of discovering an entitlement on the families it is obligated to serve, and this bill ensures that religious dietary accommodations are communicated proactively rather than discovered by accident.

For these reasons, I urge my colleagues to support this legislation