

CITY COUNCIL
CITY OF NEW YORK

----- X

TRANSCRIPT OF THE MINUTES

Of the

COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION

----- X

January 19, 2023
Start: 10:56 a.m.
Recess: 11:01 a.m.

HELD AT: COUNCIL CHAMBERS - CITY HALL

B E F O R E: Eric Dinowitz, Chairperson

COUNCIL MEMBERS:

Charles Barron
Gale A. Brewer
Oswald Feliz
Inna Vernikov

2 SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: This is a microphone
3 check for the Committee on Higher Education. Today's
4 date is January 19, 2023. Located in Council
5 Chambers. Recorded by Steven Sadowsky.

6 SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: Quiet down, please.
7 Quiet down, please. Good morning and welcome to the
8 New York City Council vote of the Committee on Higher
9 Education.

10 At this time, could everyone please
11 silence your cell phones? Thank you for your
12 cooperation.

13 Chair, we are ready to begin.

14 CHAIRPERSON DINOWITZ: [GAVEL] Good
15 morning. I'm Council Member Eric Dinowitz, Chair of
16 the Committee on Higher Education. Today, the
17 Committee will vote on Proposed Introduction 660-A, a
18 Local Law to amend the Administrative Code of the
19 City of New York in relation to establishing a
20 program to provide transition services for students
21 with disabilities entering higher education.

22 This legislation was previously heard by
23 the Committee on Higher Education and the Committee
24 on Mental Health, Disabilities, and Addiction Chaired
25 by Council Member Linda Lee at a joint hearing on

2 November 2, 2022. The topic of that oversight hearing
3 was Accommodations for College Students with
4 Disabilities. At that time, we heard testimony from
5 administrators, from the City University of New York,
6 the Mayor's Office for People with Disabilities,
7 MOPD, current and former CUNY students, and other
8 interested stakeholders.

9 If you're a student with a disability in
10 New York City, you may have an IEP, supports,
11 accommodations and then you graduate, and everything
12 that helped you thrive is taken away from you as soon
13 as you graduate so this bill, which I introduced,
14 calls for the MOPD or any other agency or office
15 designated by the Mayor in consultation with the
16 Department of Education and relevant stakeholders to
17 develop and manage a program to help advise students
18 with disabilities who are graduating from high school
19 about how to obtain accommodations at institutions of
20 higher education. Among other provisions and, very
21 importantly, the bill calls for the development and
22 implementation of a system to facilitate the
23 electronic sharing of information about the student's
24 special education services between the Department of
25 Education and institutions of higher education, of

2 course after obtaining necessary consents. Further,
3 the bill calls for the availability of student
4 advocates to assist those graduating from high
5 school. While we believe that many of the students
6 will be headed for post-secondary education will
7 attend CUNY, the bill will apply to students
8 attending other higher education institutions as
9 well. As many of you know, the bill is based on my
10 experience as a high school teacher of students with
11 disabilities for 14 years right here in New York City
12 and from my concern for them as they enter the world
13 of higher education. This bill puts in place the
14 assistance that many of my students needed to
15 transition smoothly into institutions of higher
16 education and will now help future students get the
17 accommodation and support services they need to excel
18 in college courses and college life. Making the
19 transition from high school to college is hard
20 enough, and I want to make sure that all high school
21 seniors with disabilities in New York City have some
22 help in doing that from now on so that they have
23 every opportunity to succeed.

24 I want to acknowledge the Committee
25 Members who are present, Council Members Feliz,

2 Vernikov, Brewer, and Barron, and I would like to
3 thank my Staff as well, the Committee Staff and
4 others who worked on preparing this legislation
5 including Adam Staropoli, my Director of Legislation,
6 Jenna Klaus, my Chief-of-Staff, Christina Yellamaty,
7 the Committee's Counsel who drafted the amended
8 version of the bill, Regina Paul, the Committee's
9 Policy Analyst, and Nia Hyatt, the Committee's Senior
10 Finance Analyst.

11 I think we're ready for the vote now.

12 COMMITTEE CLERK WILLIAM MARTIN: Good
13 morning. William Martin, Committee Clerk. Roll call
14 vote, Committee on Higher Education, Proposed
15 Introduction 660-A. Chair Dinowitz.

16 CHAIRPERSON DINOWITZ: Yes.

17 COMMITTEE CLERK WILLIAM MARTIN: Feliz.

18 COUNCIL MEMBER FELIZ: Yes.

19 Congratulations, Chair Dinowitz, on this important
20 bill.

21 COMMITTEE CLERK WILLIAM MARTIN: Barron.

22 COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: I'd like to
23 commend Chair Dinowitz for a much-needed bill and
24 with pleasure and honor I vote yes.

25 COMMITTEE CLERK WILLIAM MARTIN: Brewer.

2 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: I vote yes, and I
3 want to say at the hearing it became very clear the
4 reason that Council Member Dinowitz got elected which
5 is that he had been a teacher of young people in K
6 through 12 who have special needs and he was able to
7 see the lack of coordination between DOE and CUNY,
8 and the fact that he is here to make that transition
9 into legislation is why we are elected so I want to
10 congratulate him on many levels and obviously it's a
11 great bill, and it also means that hopefully the
12 offices of people with disabilities at CUNY which are
13 sometimes underfunded and not used in a way that is
14 appropriate for the students will now get boosted and
15 be fully staffed as they should be. Thank you very
16 much.

17 COMMITTEE CLERK WILLIAM MARTIN: Thank
18 you. Vernikov.

19 COUNCIL MEMBER VERNIKOV: Yes.
20 Congratulations, Chair Dinowitz.

21 COMMITTEE CLERK WILLIAM MARTIN: By a vote
22 of five in the affirmative, zero in the negative, and
23 no abstentions, item has been adopted by the
24 Committee. Mr. Chair, that is a full Committee.

1 COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION

7

2 CHAIRPERSON DINOWITZ: The meeting is
3 adjourned. [GAVEL]

4

5

6

7

8

9

10

11

12

13

14

15

16

17

18

19

20

21

22

23

24

25

C E R T I F I C A T E

World Wide Dictation certifies that the foregoing transcript is a true and accurate record of the proceedings. We further certify that there is no relation to any of the parties to this action by blood or marriage, and that there is interest in the outcome of this matter.



Date January 23, 2023