

CITY COUNCIL  
CITY OF NEW YORK

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TRANSCRIPT OF THE MINUTES

Of the

COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

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March 10, 2015  
Start: 1:25 p.m.  
Recess: 1:55 p.m.

HELD AT: 250 Broadway - Committee Rm,  
14th Fl.

B E F O R E:  
DANIEL DROMM  
Chairperson

COUNCIL MEMBERS:  
Vincent J. Gentile  
Daniel R. Garodnick  
Margaret S. Chin  
Stephen T. Levin  
Deborah L. Rose  
Mark S. Weprin  
Jumaane D. Williams  
Andy L. King  
Inez D. Barron  
Chaim M. Deutsch  
Mark Levine  
Alan N. Maisel  
Antonio Reynoso  
Mark Treyger

[gavel]

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Good afternoon everyone. My name is Daniel Dromm and I'm the Chair of the Education Committee for the New York City Council.

Today we're going to vote on Proposed Int. No. 0435-A, which is a Local Law to amend the Administrative Code of the City of New York in relation to requiring the Department of Education to provide data regarding students receiving special education services.

So I'm very proud to be the main sponsor and I wanna thank all my co-sponsors for their support as well. But this is a piece of legislation that I think has been a long time coming and something that's really, really necessary. In fact, many of the advocates have come to me and congratulated me on being able to move this through the hearing and now through Committee vote and eventually onto the floor of the Council, which will happen this week. And it's a reporting bill, but a reporting bill allows us to have accountability and oversight and insight into the practices of the Department of Education. And as I've said on many

1 occasions, you know I was a New York City public  
2 school teacher for 25 years before I got elected to  
3 the Council and the issues around special education  
4 that are still prevalent today are issues that we are  
5 addressing in this legislation. So for example, the  
6 length of time that it takes for a referral to be  
7 completed after parental consent, or the types of  
8 services that students are being offered; the  
9 frequency of services. All of these are concerns  
10 that have been written about, that have been talked  
11 about and now finally are going to be legislated and  
12 codified so that we can get the correct information  
13 to know what it is exactly that we're talking about.  
14 So those numbers will vitally important to changing  
15 or fixing policies that have existed in the past  
16 where, in my opinion, for far too long many special  
17 education students have not gotten the services that  
18 they need and deserve or have been slow in getting.  
19 So it's with much pride that finally we're able to  
20 move this forward.

22 I also wanna thank Public Advocate James  
23 for her role in this and her support in this  
24 legislation as well. And I wanna thank all of the  
25 staff, particularly Aysha Schomburg, who was very,

1  
2 very helpful and worked very hard over long weekends  
3 trying to get this legislation completed. I wanna  
4 thank the Department of Education as well, the  
5 administration. I wanna thank Jan Atwell, Joan  
6 Povolny, Norah Yahya and Madina Nizamitdin, Finance  
7 Analyst for the Education Committee. And with that I  
8 am going to call the vote, so clerk.

9 COMMITTEE CLERK: Kevin Penn [sp?],  
10 Committee Clerk, roll call in the Committee on  
11 Education, Int. 0435-A. Council Member Dromm.

12 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Aye.

13 COMMITTEE CLERK: Gentile.

14 COUNCIL MEMBER GENTILE: With  
15 congratulations to our Chairman on this bill, I vote  
16 aye.

17 COMMITTEE CLERK: Chin.

18 COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: I vote aye.

19 COMMITTEE CLERK: Rose.

20 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSE: Aye and I'd like to  
21 be added [background comment].

22 COMMITTEE CLERK: Barron.

23 COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: Permission to  
24 explain my vote.

25 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Yes.

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2 COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: I just wanted to  
3 commend you for bringing this forth; also having  
4 shared the legacy of having been a teacher with the  
5 Board of Education as it was called at that time,  
6 this is very significant to be able to have the data  
7 that we need disaggregate it to see how additional  
8 services might be rendered to those schools that have  
9 an inordinate number and have special problems. I  
10 vote aye.

11 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Thank you.

12 COMMITTEE CLERK: Deutsch.

13 COUNCIL MEMBER DEUTSCH: Aye.

14 COMMITTEE CLERK: Reynoso.

15 COUNCIL MEMBER REYNOSO: Permission to  
16 explain my vote.

17 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Yes.

18 COUNCIL MEMBER REYNOSO: Just wanna say  
19 that my brother, who is an IEP teacher, is gonna be  
20 very happy to hear that we're continuing to  
21 prioritize education in general, but IEPs and ELOs  
22 and just at-risk youth, so thank you. I vote aye.

23 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Thank you.

24 COMMITTEE CLERK: Treyger.  
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2 COUNCIL MEMBER TREYGER: Permission to  
3 explain my vote.

4 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Yes.

5 COUNCIL MEMBER TREYGER: I wanna thank  
6 the Chair and he's really done some great work; we're  
7 addressing things I never thought would be possible  
8 with the last administration and the last council,  
9 but I have to say he's been really spearheading this.  
10 I would just like to say that as we need a very deep  
11 comprehensive look at the way we're addressing the  
12 needs of students with IEPs, we also have to make  
13 sure that we work with the DOE to get information on  
14 all of our schools, both public and non-public,  
15 because they're all our kids, they get public  
16 dollars, to make sure that their needs are being  
17 addressed. So after this legislation I would hope  
18 that the Education Department works with us to make  
19 sure that we are looking and examining the needs and  
20 how much they're being addressed in non-public  
21 schools as well, but with having said that,  
22 Mr. Chairman, I think you've done great work on this  
23 bill and I vote aye. Thank you.

24 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Thank you.  
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COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

COMMITTEE CLERK: By a vote of 8 in the affirmative, 0 in the negative and no abstentions, the item has been adopted.

[background comment]

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: And yes, I'd like to ask the clerk if he could hold the vote open for 20 minutes. Yes. Thank you. And I thank all the members for being here and we will see you within another week or so, I think we have another hearing, so... we're doing a lot of work here, so thank you.

[background comments]

[pause]

[background comments]

COMMITTEE CLERK: Garodnick.

COUNCIL MEMBER GARODNICK: Thank you.  
Aye.

COMMITTEE CLERK: Vote stands at 9 in the affirmative.

[pause]

[background comments]

COMMITTEE CLERK: Maisel.

[background comments]

COUNCIL MEMBER MAISEL: Aye.

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COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

COMMITTEE CLERK: Vote stands at 10 in  
the affirmative.

[background comments]

[pause]

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: No, no, not yet, sir...  
[background comments]

COMMITTEE CLERK: Weprin.

COUNCIL MEMBER WEPRIN: I vote aye.

COMMITTEE CLERK: Vote stands at 11 in  
the affirmative.

[background comments]

[pause]

[background comments]

COMMITTEE CLERK: Levine.

COUNCIL MEMBER LEVINE: I vote aye.

COMMITTEE CLERK: Vote stands at 12 in  
the affirmative.

[background comments]

[pause]

[background comments]

COMMITTEE CLERK: King.

COUNCIL MEMBER KING: Yes.

COMMITTEE CLERK: Vote stands at 13 in  
the affirmative.



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COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Alright, so it is now  
1:55 p.m. and this meeting is adjourned.

[gavel]

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 March 27, 2015