

CITY COUNCIL
CITY OF NEW YORK

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TRANSCRIPT OF THE MINUTES

Of the

COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

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February 24, 2021
Start: 2:39 PM
Recess: 2:48 PM

HELD AT: REMOTE HEARING (VIRTUAL ROOM 4)

B E F O R E: CHAIR MARK TREYGER

COUNCIL MEMBERS: Ben Kallos
Mark Levine
Ydanis Rodriguez
Kevin Riley
Rafael Salamanca Jr.
Barry Grodenchik
James Gennaro
Daniel Dromm
Daneek Miller
Eric A. Ulrich
Stephen T. Levin
Robert E. Cornegy, Jr.
Brad Lander
Alicka Ampry-Samuel
Inez Barron
Justin Brannan
Farah N. Louis
Deborah Rose
Joseph C. Borelli

A P P E A R A N C E S (CONTINUED)

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3 TECHNICIAN 1: Computer recording is up.

4 TECHNICIAN 2: Recording to the Cloud all set.

5 OKAY. Good afternoon everyone. Welcome to today's
6 remote New York City Council vote of the Committee
7 on Education. At this time would all panelists
8 please turn on your video. To minimize disruption
9 please place electron devices to vibrate or silent.
10 Thank you for your cooperation. Chair Treyger, we
11 are ready to begin.

12 CHAIR TREYGER: Good afternoon and welcome every
13 one to today's Committee on Education, a vote on
14 Resolution Number 1473 sponsored by Council Member
15 Louis. This resolution, which I am proud to have
16 signed onto as a co-sponsor calls on the New York
17 City Department of Education to provide families
18 with children with disabilities the necessary
19 training and equipment to properly enable distance
20 learning. Before we hear from Council Member Louis
21 I'd like to just say a few words. This is the...
22 Last year we chaired this committee. In the last
23 three years this committee has held numerous
24 hearings on students with disabilities and a myriad
25 of challenges they face in the New York City public

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2 school system representing nearly 20% of the public
3 school population time and time again at education
4 hearings we have heard from students parents and
5 advocates that we are not fully meeting the needs of
6 the students, and that was before the pandemic. The
7 DOB has made strides in providing all services
8 students are held to under their IEP, but we are not
9 there yet. We are not at a place where students
10 with disabilities have all the tools and resources
11 they need in order to have a full and free education
12 as all students are entitled to under law. COVID has
13 only exacerbated the problem and I fear it's put us
14 backwards on gains made. When COVID hit and the DOB
15 opened up rec centers I advocated early on that
16 students with disabilities should be prioritized for
17 placement. When the DOB ordered 300,000 plus I-Pads
18 I advocated for the priority of distribution to
19 students with disabilities in addition to other
20 types of devices not just Ipads. In formulating my
21 own ideas for school reopening I have ideas for
22 students with disabilities to be amongst those at
23 the front of the line when buildings reopen. We can
24 and must do better for our students with
25 disabilities and their families. Resolution 1473

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2 calls on the DOE to ensure that families with
3 students with disabilities have all the resources
4 they need to successfully support their children
5 during this time of distance learning, and I
6 encourage all my colleagues to please join us in
7 doing this. I want to thank my staff and committee
8 staff, and I will now turn it to Council Member
9 Louis and I really appreciate her leadership and her
10 attention and time to kids who need support and I
11 really always appreciate her centering them as well,
12 and I turn to Council Member Louis for her remarks.

13 COUNCIL MEMBER LOUIS: Thank you so much Chair
14 Treyger for the opportunity for my bill to be voted
15 on in today's committee hearing. Your staunch
16 advocacy for educational equity in a city as diverse
17 as ours has definitely been critical especially
18 during the pandemic. So, thank you so much. My bill
19 Resolution 1473 puts the focus on children with
20 disabilities, a group of individuals who have been
21 overlooked and ignored for a very long time.
22 Children with disabilities comprise more than 20% of
23 New York City public students, and each of their
24 unique circumstances must be accounted for to ensure
25 that they are able to get the most out of their

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2 education. Families with children with disabilities
3 are still struggling to cope with the difficulties
4 of distance learning which was exacerbated even
5 further by the additional needs of their children.
6 Many of these children need individual professional
7 support with learning, and this role has not fallen
8 into the hands of parents who have received little
9 or no training nor support that is critical in
10 ensuring education equity for their children. So,
11 it's about time that we tackled this issue and we
12 cannot continue to permit the most vulnerable
13 members of our community to fall behind, our
14 children. Your vote today will provide much needed
15 relief for families of children with disabilities.
16 Once again, thank you Chair Treyger for your support
17 and I hope everyone supports this bill today. Thank
18 you.

19 CHAIR TREYGER: Thank you Council Member Louis and
20 I will now turn to the Clerk to call the roll.

21 CLERK: Good afternoon. William Martin, Committee
22 Clerk roll call vote. (coughs) Excuse me. Committee
23 on Education. Resolution 1473 Chair Treyger.

24 CHAIR TREYGER: I vote aye.

25 CLERK: Dromm.

2 COUNCIL MEMBER DROMM: Aye.

3 CLERK: Lander.

4 COUNCIL MEMBER LANDER: I vote aye. Thank you.

5 Congratulations Council Member Louis, and thank you.
6 Chair.

7 CLERK: Barron.

8 COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: Thank you.

9 Congratulations to Council Member Louis. I vote aye
10 and if I'm not already on the bill I ask to be
11 added. Thank you.

12 CLERK: Absolutely. Kallos.

13 COUNCIL MEMBER KALLOS: Aye.

14 CLERK: Levine.

15 COUNCIL MEMBER LEVINE: Yes, with congratulations
16 to Council Member Louis and thank you for your
17 continued great work Chair Treyger. I will be voting
18 aye.

19 CLERK: Grodenchik.

20 COUNCIL MEMBER GRODENCHIK: And thank Council
21 Member Louis for bring this to the floor. I
22 represent five stand-alone District 75 schools. I've
23 had many discussions with Chair Treyger and I want
24 to thank both of you for your advocacy for these
25 young people. Just to give you an idea, one of the

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2 young people in my district travels all the way
3 almost to the far end of Eastern Queens from Staten
4 Island every day to get an education. We have to be
5 doing better by these young people, and I know that
6 when the pandemic hit they were the first to suffer.
7 So, I want to thank you again Council Member Louis
8 and Chair Treyger for bringing this to the floor,
9 and please add me to the resolution if I'm not on it
10 already, and I vote aye.

11 CLERK: Council Member Cornegy.

12 COUNCIL MEMBER CORNEGY: Permission to explain?
13 (pause) Permission to explain my vote.

14 CHAIR TREYGER: Yes, sir. Yes.

15 COUNCIL MEMBER CORNEGY: So, I want to say to the
16 Chair Treyger who always does tremendous work for
17 our young people and to Council Member Louis thank
18 you so much for this advocacy. I don't know if you
19 both know I have a child or I had a son with NIEP
20 who ultimately suffered tremendously. He got some
21 service all kinds of different things. So, we as a
22 family understand and appreciate your advocacy and
23 standing up for those families. My sone is now, you
24 know a grown man and he's doing okay, but What he
25 went through I wouldn't want any family to have to

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2 go through. So, thank you making sure that families
3 will not have that as an issue going forward. Thank
4 you both. I vote aye. Oh, and please add to the
5 resolution if I'm not on it already.

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CLERK: You got it. Salamanca.

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COUNCIL MEMBER SALAMANCA: Congrats to my
8 colleagues. Council Member Louis, I would like to be
9 added to the resolution and I vote aye.

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CLERK: Brannan

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COUNCIL MEMBER BRANNAN: With thanks to Chair
12 Treyger for his leadership and, of course Council
13 Member Louis. This is Such an important reso. I
14 mean (chime) it's common sense. It's crazy that we
15 even have to call for this, but as they say: Common
16 sense these days ain't so common. So thank you for
17 standing up for our most vulnerable and looking out
18 for students with disabilities who make up such a
19 large portion of our public school system. I proudly
20 vote aye. Thank you.

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CLERK: Louis.

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COUNCIL MEMBER LOUIS: I vote aye.

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CLERK: Riley.

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COUNCIL MEMBER RILEY: Thank you. I just want to
25 give congratulations to my colleagues Council Member

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2 Louis. I give praise to Chair Teyger for always
3 being an advocate for education. I also would like
4 to be added to the resolution and I vote aye. Thank
5 you.

6 CLERK: Ulrich.

7 COUNCIL MEMBER ULRICH. I proudly vote aye.
8 Congratulations to the Chair. I vote aye.

9 CLERK: thank you. Borelli.

10 COUNCIL MEMBER BORELLI: Congratulations to
11 Council Member Louis on this and to Chair Treyger
12 and I happily vote aye, and please add me to the
13 bill as well. Thank you.

14 CLERK: Council Member Levin.

15 COUNCIL MEMBER LEVIN: I want to congratulate
16 Council Member Louis and vote aye on the resolution.
17 I would also like my name to be added as a co-
18 sponsor of the resolution. As a note to Council
19 Member Riley I can see that you're also conducting
20 school in your home. I would like you to take some
21 of the rest of them. Thanks. Nice to have you.

22 CLERK: So by a vote of 15 in the affirmative,
23 zero in the negative and no abstentions the
24 resolution has been adopted by the committee. Thank
25 you.

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2 CHAIR TREYGER: Thank you and congratulations
3 again to Council Member Louis and thank you for your
4 leadership on this issue and also pushing the DOE to
5 get devices to all kids as well. We appreciate you
6 always looking out for our kids, and I really
7 appreciate Ms. Louis, and also great to be joined by
8 Council Member Brannan and great to hear you are
9 feeling so much better and pushing for him a full to
10 occur for him in a way. We need Council Brannan
11 strong and the Brooklyn Delegation enforce in New
12 York City we appreciate you and I thank all my
13 colleagues and all staff for doing well. It's great
14 to see you guys virtually. Hopefully we'll beat this
15 pandemic soon and get back at City Hall. So, I
16 appreciate you all. Alright that concludes this
17 vote and we are adjourned. We are adjourned. Thank
18 you. See you later Billy. Thank you.

19 WILLIAM MARTIN: Thank you everybody. Watch out
20 for those filters.

21 CHAIR TREYGER: (laughs) Have a good day.
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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 4, 2021