

CITY COUNCIL
CITY OF NEW YORK

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TRANSCRIPT OF THE MINUTES

Of the

COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

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September 6, 2018

Start: 2:18 p.m.

Recess: 2:45 p.m.

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

B E F O R E: MARK TREYGER
Chairperson

COUNCIL MEMBERS: Alicka Ampry-Samuel
Inez D. Barron
Joseph C. Borelli
Justin L. Brannan
Andrew Cohen
Robert E. Cornegy, Jr.
Chaim M. Deutsch
Daniel Dromm
Barry S. Grodenchik
Ben Kallos
Andy L. King
Brad S. Lander
Stephen T. Levin
Mark Levine
Ydanis A. Rodriguez
Deborah L. Rose
Rafael Salamanca, Jr.
Eric A. Ulrich

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

2 [sound check, pause] [gavel]

3 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: Okay. Thank you.

4 Good afternoon. I am Council Member Mark Treyger,
5 and I'm proud to serve as Chair of the Education
6 Committee. Thank you for joining us today as we vote
7 on proposed Introduction Nos. [background comments]
8 [gavel] It's okay, 449-A and 461-A, both sponsored
9 by Council Member Daniel Dromm. Proposed Introduction
10 No. 729-A sponsored by Council Member Ben Kallos.
11 Proposed Introduction No. 757-A sponsored by Council
12 Member Vanessa Gibson, and Resolution No. 289
13 sponsored by Council Member Paul Vallone. I'd like
14 to thank the members of the Education Committee who
15 are here, Council Member Ampry-Samuel, Council Member
16 Cornegy, Council Member Lander, Council Member
17 Barron, Council Member Dromm, Council Member Ulrich,
18 Council Member Cohen, Council Member Grodenchik,
19 Council Member Kallos. If I'm missing anyone, please
20 let me know. [background comments] Council Member
21 Deutsch was here as well.

22 COUNCIL MEMBER DEUTSCH: I'm here.

23 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: Yes, he's here.

24 The Council's working group on school planning and
25 siting, which was established under former Council

2 Speaker Melissa Mark-Viverito, who brought staff from
3 the Council's Legislative, Finance and Land Use
4 Divisions together with stakeholders, planning
5 experts and members of the public. Over the course
6 of a year, the group worked to identify and better
7 understand the issues that are resulting in
8 overcrowding in our city schools. Overcrowded
9 classrooms subject our students to substandard
10 learning conditions and we must improve the school
11 siting and planning process to not only reverse, but
12 avoid worsening this already significant problem.
13 The group also engaged with the Administration
14 including both the School Construction Authority and
15 the Department of Education to gain a clearer picture
16 of the current process. I'd like to thank both the
17 SCA and DOE for their input in that process. The
18 Council looks forward to continuing to work with you
19 on this important issue. The report released by the
20 working group in March of this year provides a
21 detailed analysis and meaningful set of
22 recommendations to address the challenges facing
23 schools—school space needs including the—the
24 legislative proposals we are voting on today. These
25 bills will work to create more transparency in the

2 school planning and siting process, and give the
3 public and policymakers the information they need to
4 make it easier to build schools. I'd like to thank
5 the members of the working group for their efforts as
6 well as our Committee Counsel Beth Golub, Policy
7 Analyst Jan Atwell, Colima Johnson, Finance Analyst
8 Kaitlyn O'Hagan, Elizabeth Hoffman. I'd like to also
9 thank my staff Anna Scafe, Vanessa Ogle, Eric
10 Feinberg and I will now turn it over to Council
11 Member Daniel Dromm who will speak about
12 introductions 449 and 461.

13 COUNCIL MEMBER DROMM: Thank you very
14 much, Chair and I'm very happy that this committee is
15 continuing to address the problem of school
16 overcrowding, and the need to increase the number of
17 seats in districts throughout the city. As the
18 former Chair of the Education Committee and now Chair
19 of the Finance Committee, I've working to improve how
20 the city identifies and develops space for new
21 schools. Data tracking and sharing are critical to
22 this process, and that is precisely what the bills I
23 introduced and we are voting on today aiming to do.
24 Intro 449-A would require the DOT to post an online
25 map showing the geographic boundaries or subdistricts

2 used by the DOE and the SCA to identify where new
3 capital funding will be targeted for building new
4 schools. Intro 461-A would require the Department of
5 Citywide Administrative Services to provide written
6 notice to the New York City Department of Education
7 and School Construction Authority within 30 days
8 after city-owned or leased property of at least
9 20,000 square feet is determined to have no current
10 use. I want to thank you Chair Treyger for your
11 leadership and especially for guiding this
12 legislation through your committee. I also want to
13 acknowledge Smita Deshmukh for her initial work on
14 these bills and current committee counsel Beth Golub
15 for taking them through to the finish line, and let
16 me thank also Jan Atwell, Colima Johnson, Elizabeth
17 Hoffman and Kaitlyn O'Hagan for the work that they di
18 did on it while I was chair of the Education
19 Committee and finally to thank Council Member Julissa
20 Ferreras and Melissa Mark-Viverito, our former
21 Speaker for initially pulling together the working
22 group on school planning and siting. It's been a
23 pleasure to bring to fruition. Thank you.

24 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: Thank you, Mr.
25 Chairman Dromm for your leadership and I guess a big

2 shout out as well to Smita as well. Thank you. We
3 miss you Smita here in the Education Committee, and
4 thank you again Council Member Dromm for your
5 comments. We'll now hear from Council Member Kallos
6 sponsor of Introduction 729, and also we've been
7 joined by Council Member Levine.

8 COUNCIL MEMBER KALLOS: Thank you to our
9 Education Chair and former teacher Mark Treyger as
10 well as our Finance Chair, former Education Chair and
11 also former teacher Danny Dromm and Speaker Corey
12 Johnson himself for all of your leadership on these
13 bills in this package in particular my legislation.
14 Every year I hear from parents in my districts who
15 kids cannot attend their local schools because
16 there's just not enough seats. These parents tell me
17 that their child is commuting to another neighborhood
18 or more dispiriting that they're going to a private
19 school or even leaving the city for a school district
20 with more capacity. Meanwhile construction
21 continues. Thousands of new apartments are being
22 built in a neighborhood with cranes everywhere and on
23 end in sight. Yet, every year since 2014 when I
24 would ask the Department of Education and School
25 Construction Authority about the need in our

2 overcrowded schools, the answer was the same: There
3 is no new need for additional seats in your school
4 district. Our goal with Introduction 729 is to
5 provide to New Yorkers information on how our city
6 determines the need for school seats in districts
7 throughout the five boroughs and especially to make
8 transparent the process of anticipating future needs
9 that would prevent the overcrowding of tomorrow today
10 rather than just addressing last year's numbers
11 always be being behind the eight ball. With
12 elementary schools at 106 capacity that's over-
13 capacity citywide. We need this information in order
14 to address this challenge holistically and
15 knowledgably. The school seat shortage received
16 increased attention earlier this year when the
17 Council issued a report that dug into the SCA's
18 methodologies highlighting the need for increased
19 transparency so that the public, the Council and the
20 Administration can agree on facts and work from there
21 to provide local seats in a quality public school for
22 all New Yorkers. In my district we're already making
23 progress with Universal Pre-K. Specifically in 2014
24 the Upper East Side Rosie O'Donald had 154 full day
25 seats. Through advocacy and partnership the School

2 Construction Authority we've been able to add 750
3 seats for a total of 900 in the area, but that makes
4 the information in this bill and made public so
5 necessary is that in 2015 there will be 2,500 babies
6 who are born on the Upper East Side from 2015. If we
7 want to get those kids into the public school system
8 we need to start next year when they are four years
9 old and eligible for Universal Pre-K, and we have
10 nowhere near the 2,500 seats we need. I want to
11 thank the Council staff to work on the Council's
12 report and this bill including Laura Popa, Jeff
13 Baker, Smita Deshmukh, Beth Golub, and I want to
14 thank Lamey Hampson and Class Size Matters who have
15 been leading the fight for over a decade to eliminate
16 school overcrowding in the New York City. I want to
17 thank all of the committee members for being here,
18 and I ask you to vote in support.

19 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: Thank you, Council
20 Member and with that, I will ask our committee clerk
21 to call the roll and begin the vote.

22 CLERK: William Martin, Committee Clerk,
23 roll call vote Committee on Education. All items are
24 coupled. Chair Treyger.

25 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: I vote aye.

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2 CLERK: Grodenchik.

3 COUNCIL MEMBER GRODENCHIK: Aye on all,
4 and just want to wish all my colleagues who are
5 celebrating a happy and healthy Shinatobe. Thank
6 you.

7 CLERK: Barron.

8 COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: I vote aye on
9 all.

10 CLERK: Cohen.

11 COUNCIL MEMBER COHEN: Aye.

12 CLERK: Cornegy.

13 COUNCIL MEMBER CORNEGY: Aye on all.

14 CLERK: Deutsch.

15 COUNCIL MEMBER DEUTSCH: Aye.

16 CLERK: Dromm.

17 COUNCIL MEMBER DROMM: Aye.

18 CLERK: Kallos.

19 COUNCIL MEMBER KALLOS: Aye.

20 CLERK: Lander.

21 COUNCIL MEMBER LANDER: Aye on all.

22 CLERK: Levine.

23 COUNCIL MEMBER LEVINE: Aye on all.

24 CLERK: Salamanca.

25 COUNCIL MEMBER SALAMANCA: Aye on all.

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2 CLERK: Ampry-Samuel.

3 COUNCIL MEMBER AMPRY-SAMUEL: Aye on all.

4 CLERK: Ulrich.

5 COUNCIL MEMBER ULRICH: Pass. [pause]

6 CLERK: Ulrich.

7 COUNCIL MEMBER ULRICH: Aye on all.

8 CLERK: By a vote of 13 in the
9 affirmative, 0 in the negative and no abstentions all
10 items have been adopted by the committee. [pause]

11 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: We've also been
12 joined by Council Member Brannan. [laughter]

13 CLERK: Council Member Brannan.

14 COUNCIL MEMBER BRANNAN: What is it?

15 CLERK: Please.

16 COUNCIL MEMBER BRANNAN: I vote aye on
17 all.

18 CLERK: The vote now currently stands at
19 14. [background comments, pause]

20 CLERK: Continuation roll call the
21 Committee on Education, Council Member Levin.

22 COUNCIL MEMBER LEVIN: I vote aye on all.

23 CLERK: The vote currently stands--
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2 COUNCIL MEMBER LEVIN: [interposing] I'm
3 sorry, with permission, with the Chair I'd like to
4 add my name as a co-sponsor.

5 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: Alright. All of
6 them.

7 COUNCIL MEMBER LEVIN: Yes. On all three
8 pieces of legislation. Thank you.

9 CLERK: The vote currently stands at 15
10 in the affirmative. [pause] Continuation roll call
11 the Committee on Education. Council Member Borelli.

12 COUNCIL MEMBER BORELLI: Aye on all.

13 CLERK: Final vote Committee on Education
14 all items have been adopted by the Committee 16 in
15 the affirmative, 0 in the negative, and no
16 abstentions.

17 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: This is now
18 adjourned. [gavel]

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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 September 11, 2018