



Legislation Text

File #: Res 0837-2007, **Version:** *

Res. No. 837

Resolution calling upon the New York City Department of Education to maintain a minimum level of arts funding in New York City public schools.

By Council Members Jackson, Koppell, Recchia, Jr., Brewer, Comrie, Dickens, Felder, Fidler, Gentile, James, Nelson, Sears, Stewart, Weprin, Liu, Mark-Viverito, Mendez, Katz, Garodnick, Yassky, Avella, Reyna, Lappin, Gerson, Vallone Jr., Foster, Arroyo, Palma, Mitchell, Gennaro, White Jr., de Blasio and Oddo

Whereas, As a result of the fiscal crisis of the 1970s, the New York City public school system experienced a significant reduction in funding for arts education; and

Whereas, In 1997, former Mayor Rudolph Guiliani created Project ARTS (Arts Restoration to the Schools), which was designed to restore arts education to City schools over a three year period; and

Whereas, Project ARTS funding was intended to support direct instructional services, professional development for educators, curriculum development, equipment, art materials and supplies, as well as arts and cultural services; and

Whereas, Project ARTS was initially allocated \$25 million a year, has reached upwards of \$75 million a year, and in recent years, has received yearly allocations totaling \$67.5 million; and

Whereas, According to The Center for Arts Education, Project ARTS has been the “catalyst for the growth and expansion of arts education over the past ten years”; and

Whereas, The importance of arts education and its positive impact on a student’s education has been widely researched; and

Whereas, A report by the Arts Education Partnership (AEP) shows a correlation between instruction in the arts and greater student achievement and social development; and

Whereas, In addition, the AEP report found that economically disadvantaged students and students in need of remedial instruction experience the most gains in learning from arts education; and

Whereas, In January 2007, Mayor Michael Bloomberg outlined his most recent Children First School Reforms in his State of the City address; and

Whereas, These reforms include four initiatives, one of which is the Public School Empowerment Initiative, which gives principals greater discretion in running their schools, including hiring personnel and managing the budget; and

Whereas, Some arts advocates have expressed concern regarding the continuation of arts programming in public schools since the Department of Education (DOE) has indicated that funds previously earmarked for Project ARTS would now be made available for principals to spend at their discretion; and

Whereas, Arts advocates fear that principals may be inclined to spend funds on more academic programs, rather than arts programs, in order to raise test scores to meet accountability standards that were put forth in the most recent reform; and

Whereas, For example, in 2001 when former Chancellor Harold Levy allowed for the redirection of Project ARTS funds to cover expenses unrelated to arts education, arts education spending was reduced by fifty percent; and

Whereas, Recognizing the importance of arts education, it is imperative that the DOE take action to ensure that arts education programs continue to be made available to all students; now, therefore be it

Resolved, That the Council of the City of New York calls upon the New York City Department of Education to maintain a minimum level of arts funding in New York City public schools.

JC
LS#2913
5/1/07, 1:00pm

