Legislation Details (With Text)

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Title:	Resolution calling upon the New York City Department of Education to regularly review the use and condition of transportable classrooms and to limit the amount of time that transportable classrooms are used in New York City public schools.				
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Res. No. 56

Resolution calling upon the New York City Department of Education to regularly review the use and condition of transportable classrooms and to limit the amount of time that transportable classrooms are used in New York City public schools.

By Council Members Ferreras-Copeland, Barron, Constantinides, Mendez, Palma, Rose, Williams, Rosenthal and Koslowitz.

Whereas, A transportable classroom is a temporary building installed on the grounds of a school to provide additional classroom space and to address overcrowding issues; and

Whereas, Transportable classrooms are normally removed once the capacity situation subsides, a permanent addition is made to the school building, or a new school opens in the area; and

Whereas, When properly installed and maintained, transportable classrooms can have a long useful life; and

Whereas, Although temporary classrooms can be a quick fix to overcrowding in schools, there are many

implications that a transportable classroom has for the learning environment; and

Whereas, In the 2012-13 school year, there were 352 transportable classroom units in use in New York City Department of Education schools; and

Whereas, According to the National Center for Education Statistics, public school principals report numerous problems associated with temporary classrooms including lighting, air conditioning, heating, ventilation, noise control, size, and the physical condition of buildings; and

Whereas, Further, some transportable classrooms are not equipped with proper or adequate bathrooms; and

Whereas, Among the most crowded schools in the city, for example, is Public School 19 in Corona, Queens, which has five transportable classrooms that were supposed to be temporary; and

Whereas, Eighteen years after construction the heating system in the transportable classrooms has begun to fail and children are forced to sit through lessons wearing coats and scarves; and

Whereas, Often these temporary units become permanent fixtures in growing school districts; and

Whereas, When transportable units are deemed the only viable option available, the amount of time they will be used should be anticipated and those units should be constructed out of the most durable materials in order to ensure the longest and healthiest useful life; and

Whereas, As of the 2012-13 school year, New York City's transportable classrooms had an enrollment of 7,158 students, the lowest number of students since the DOE began reporting this data to the Council in 2005; and

Whereas, It is important to set limits on the amount of time that transportable units can be used for schools in order to deter these provisional structures from becoming a long-term rather than a short-term solution and to further decrease the number of students in temporary classrooms; and

Whereas, Due to the use of transportable units, children may become sick, especially in the winter, due to inadequate heat in the temporary structure or from having to frequently go outside to access the main school

building; and

Whereas, The physical condition of transportable units should be closely monitored and any needed repairs should be completed promptly; and

Whereas, The DOE should replace transportable units that are beyond their useful lives with newer ones to ensure that educational facilities are not in disrepair; and

Whereas, The DOE should proactively strive to phase out the use of transportable classrooms except to address short term capacity needs; and

Whereas, The DOE should reduce to five the number of years that transportable units can be used to supplement space in any school or school building; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Council of the City of New York calls upon the New York City Department of Education to regularly review the use and condition of transportable classrooms and to limit the amount of time that transportable classrooms are used in New York City public schools.

JA/JHC
Res 1256/2012
LS 101&406/2014
2/19/14