



Legislation Text

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**File #:** Res 1330-2012, **Version:** \*

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Res. No. 1330

Resolution calling on the New York State Legislature to pass and the Governor to sign A.9861/S.7015, legislation which would amend the State Education Law enabling New York City to require that all 5 year old children in the City attend kindergarten.

By Council Members Levin, Brewer, Chin, Comrie, Eugene, Fidler, Garodnick, Jackson, James, Koo, Koppell, Lander, Lappin, Mendez, Recchia, Rose, Sanders Jr., Seabrook, Vann, Williams, Wills, Koslowitz, Rodriguez, Arroyo, Dromm, Barron and Gennaro

Whereas, Early childhood education can have a lasting impact on children's academic and social outcomes; and

Whereas, Research in neuroscience has shown the importance of the early childhood years in human development; and

Whereas, Quality early childhood education helps prepare young children to succeed in school and become better citizens as adults: they earn more, pay more taxes, and commit fewer crimes; and

Whereas, Early childhood education has been shown to reduce the need for remediation and special education, as well as grade repetition and dropouts; and

Whereas, Early childhood education also makes economic sense, as economists project that every dollar invested in quality early care and education saves taxpayers up to \$13 in future costs; and

Whereas, Kindergarten is a critical part of early education, setting the stage for success in school and in life; and

Whereas, While kindergarten has been shown to provide positive benefits, not every child has the opportunity to access those benefits; and

Whereas, Currently, in New York State, kindergarten is not mandatory; and

Whereas, The State Education Law mandates that a child begin his or her education at six years of age; and

Whereas, However, state law also permits the City of Syracuse to require full day kindergarten at age five for its residents, and the City of New York has no such authorization; and

Whereas, In the past five years, there are, on average, 7% more children who attend first grade than kindergarten at New York City public schools, meaning that annually, over 2,500 children are not attending kindergarten and getting an early start on education that is so critical; and

Whereas, Districts with the largest difference in kindergarten enrollment tend to be mostly Black and Latino and have over 75% of students eligible for free and reduced lunch and many have high percentages of English language learners, indicating that some of the city's neediest children may not be getting the early start they need for success; and

Whereas, Further, community based organizations report that parents and guardians of some of the City's most vulnerable children, including English language learners, children with special needs, and foster children, are told that 5 year olds are not required to go to school and are turned away from kindergarten enrollment; and

Whereas, Requiring that all 5 year olds in New York City attend kindergarten would ensure that more young children in New York City would reap the benefits of early childhood education; and

Whereas, A.9861, introduced by Assembly Education Committee Chair Cathy Nolan, and S.7015, introduced by Senate Education Committee Chair John Flanagan would authorize the school district of the City of New York to require children five years of age to attend kindergarten; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Council of the City of New York calls upon the New York State Legislature to pass and the Governor to sign A.9861/S.7015, legislation which would amend the State Education Law enabling New York City to require that all 5 year old children in the City attend kindergarten.

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