



Legislation Text

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Res. No. 188

Resolution calling upon the New York State Education Department to require certified arts teachers in all New York City public schools.

By Council Members Cumbo, Johnson, Chin, Constantinides, Crowley, King, Levine, Richards, Rose, Treyger and Koslowitz

Whereas, Over the years, numerous research has shown that arts education can enhance students' cognitive, social and emotional development, and is an important element in a well-rounded education; and

Whereas, The New York State Education Department outlines a continuum of arts educational requirements based on grade levels; and

Whereas, Each stage of development brings important reasons for the importance of arts; for example, as students move from elementary to middle school, the arts become an important vehicle for self-expression; and

Whereas, According to the New York City Department of Education (DOE), the arts education goal for DOE is to “provide all public school students with universal access to a high quality arts education;” and

Whereas, The Office of the Arts and Special Projects (OASP) at the DOE defines its mission as “to provide New York City public school communities - students, teachers, school leaders and parents - with information and resources that will enable every student to achieve a full education in the arts, based on New York State requirements and standards for arts learning, and guided by New York City's Blueprint for Teaching and Learning in the Arts, PreK-12;” and

Whereas, A recent audit by the New York State Comptroller Thomas P. DiNapoli found that New York City public high school students are not getting the arts education required by State regulations; and

Whereas, Additionally, an April 2014 report by New York City Comptroller Scott Stringer, found many of the City's public schools are in violation of New York State Law, which sets minimal instruction requirements that schools must meet for the arts at each grade level; and

Whereas, Additionally, many arts advocates believe that current educational trends and "Common Core" conversations are shortchanging arts education for all students; and

Whereas, According to the Center for Arts Education (CAE) there is growing recognition by employers that we need high school and college graduates who are critical thinkers, creators, innovators, entrepreneurs, and collaborators, all skills that can be developed through quality instruction in the arts; and

Whereas, In light of these reports and findings, the time is right for arts education to receive attention and improvement rather than being left out of school reform plans; and

Whereas, New York City is a cultural capital and should leverage this cultural infrastructure by making its schools a leader in arts and creative education; and

Whereas, New York State should ensure adequate and dedicated funding and resources to ensure high quality arts education in all schools; and

Whereas, Arts educators are important to the educational growth of all students and certification should be required; and

Whereas, Recent reports have shown New York schools to be lacking in arts education, and now is the time for New York State and New York City to invest wholeheartedly in the future by providing students with the highest quality education available which includes arts; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Council of the City of New York upon the New York State Education Department to require certified arts teachers in all New York City public schools.

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