



Legislation Text

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**File #:** Res 0847-2015, **Version:** \*

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Res. No. 847

Resolution calling upon the New York City Department of Education to expand vegetarian lunch menu options for students at New York City public schools.

By Council Members Ferreras-Copeland, Espinal, Barron, Cabrera, Chin, Constantinides, Eugene, Koo, Koslowitz, Lander, Mendez and Richards

Whereas, The New York City Department of Education (DOE) is the largest public school system in the United States (U.S.) serving approximately 1.1 million students; and

Whereas, Accordingly, DOE's Office of School Food, known as "SchoolFood," is the largest school food service provider in the U.S., providing over 850,000 total meals each day to students in over 1,700 locations; and

Whereas, In recent years, SchoolFood has taken a number of steps to improve the health and nutrition of school meals and to expand access to more students; and

Whereas, In 2004, SchoolFood hired an executive chef to introduce new recipes and to reformulate popular menu items to make them healthier and more enticing to students; and

Whereas, According to the DOE, SchoolFood has reduced sodium, fat and cholesterol content in meals served; and

Whereas, In addition, SchoolFood has replaced white flour pasta with whole grain pasta, replaced whole milk with fat free and low fat milk varieties and has included more fresh fruits and vegetables in school meals; and

Whereas, DOE has also made significant investments in kitchen and cafeteria infrastructure in recent years, including the installation of more than 600 salad bars in schools throughout the City; and

Whereas, Additionally, SchoolFood has piloted several programs, such as the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program, in a small number of City schools; and

Whereas, Another initiative, “Garden to Café” was started by SchoolFood and the New York State Department of Agriculture and Markets in collaboration with Cornell Cooperative Extension, GreenThumb, and more than 20 community-based organizations; and

Whereas, The goals of “Garden to Café” are to promote vegetarian options, connect students to local food and farming, increase awareness of school gardening, and provide opportunities to integrate school gardening and school lunch; and

Whereas, SchoolFood has also created vegetarian breakfast and lunch menus, to provide vegetarian options for students who prefer them; and

Whereas, The number and range of vegetarian menu options is not as extensive as the non- vegetarian options available; and

Whereas, Further, vegetarian lunch menus are currently only available for elementary and Kindergarten through 8<sup>th</sup> grade schools but not for middle or high schools; and,

Whereas, To promote good health and combat childhood obesity, a wide variety of vegetarian menu options should be offered to students at all grade levels in all schools; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Council of the City of New York calls upon the New York City Department of Education to expand vegetarian lunch menu options for students at New York City public schools.

LS# 1480, 1890  
JA  
8/7/14