



Legislation Text

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Res. No. 981

Resolution calling upon the New York City Department of Education to mandate that every public school in New York City has a dedicated library space

By Council Members King, Rodriguez, Gentile, Cumbo, Koo and Ulrich

Whereas, The impact of school libraries on student achievement has long been studied by many researchers; and

Whereas, These studies, collectively known as the “School Library Impact Studies,” concluded that school libraries have a positive effect on student outcomes, as they teach 21st Century skills, promote achievement, and play major role in closing the achievement gap; and

Whereas, This research shows that schools that utilize school libraries to support student growth in the areas of literacy, information literacy, technological skills, and access to resources and equipment, have seen increased motivation, higher assessment scores and higher graduation rates; and

Whereas, In 2011, the New York Comprehensive Center (NYCC) was asked to prepare a brief that highlight specific examples of programs in states that have had success utilizing school libraries to improve student achievement; and

Whereas, The NYCC brief stated that “through political and fiscal state support, effective school library programs can serve as consistent drivers for student achievement in times of constant change and churning educational reform”; and

Whereas, According to the Regulations of the New York State Commissioner of Education, “a school library shall be established and maintained in each school;” and

Whereas, Additionally, “the library in each elementary and secondary school shall meet the needs of the

pupils, and shall provide an adequate complement to the instructional program in the various areas of the curriculum” according to the same regulations; and

Whereas, A New York State Board of Regents report entitled *Creating the Future: a 2020 Vision Plan for Library Service in New York State*, recommends expanding the existing Commissioner’s Regulations to require an elementary school librarian in every school to strengthen instructional leadership in meeting the P-12 Common Core Learning Standards, and enforce library staffing regulations in all public schools; and

Whereas, The New York City Department of Education’s (DOE) School Library System is operated by the DOE’s Office of Library Services; and

Whereas, According to the Office of Library Services’ website, library skills are built continuously from kindergarten to 12th grade through library instruction, and are aligned to the Common Core Learning Standards; and

Whereas, Unfortunately, years of fiscal constraints, increased overcrowding and co-locations have often resulted in this important resource for students to be targeted for reduction or elimination; and

Whereas, While there is common agreement to the importance of libraries, many advocates and parents state that too many public schools in New York City are lacking dedicated library space; and

Whereas, In order to ensure the goals of preparing all students to successfully participate in the 21st century economy, it is imperative that the DOE prioritizes the need for libraries in each school; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Council of the City of New York calls upon the New York City Department of Education to mandate that every public school in New York City has a dedicated library space.

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