



Legislation Text

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Res. No. 1026

Resolution calling upon the Department of Education to have a full time mental health counselor on staff at every elementary and middle school.

By Council Members Cabrera, Levin, Chin, Rose, Cohen and Borelli

Whereas, New York City has approximately 1,800 schools; and

Whereas, New York City public schools educate 1.1 million children every year; and

Whereas, Children spend most of their day at school; and

Whereas, Eight percent of public high school students report attempting suicide, according to New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (DOHMH); and

Whereas, According to DOHMH, that percentage doubles if a student has been bullied on school grounds, which eighteen percent of students report having experienced; and

Whereas, According to DOHMH, twenty-seven percent of New York City high school students report feeling sad or hopeless each month; and

Whereas, According to Journal of the American Medical Association of Psychiatry (JAMA), adolescents exposed to childhood adversity, including family malfunctioning, abuse, neglect, violence, and economic adversity, are nearly two times as likely to experience the onset of mental disorders; and

Whereas, According to JAMA, the likelihood of experiencing the onset of mental health disorders grows with additional exposures to childhood adversity; and

Whereas, According to Data Resource Center for Child and Adolescent Health, approximately eighteen percent of children in New York State between the ages of zero and seventeen experienced two or more adverse family experiences in their lifetime; and

Whereas, According to the Children's Defense Fund's 2014 State of America's Children report, nearly forty percent of youth in the United States who needed mental health care between 2011-12 didn't receive the necessary treatment; and

Whereas, As part of ThriveNYC, New York City plans to hire 100 School Mental Health Consultants who will work with every school citywide to ensure that school staff can connect high need students with the appropriate mental health care; and

Whereas, One hundred School Mental Health Consultants is not sufficient to serve the mental health needs of approximately 1800 schools and 1.1 million students; and

Whereas, New York City will assess the need and availability of mental health services at 52 schools starting in the 2017 school year; and

Whereas, New York City will train selected staff of middle and high schools in youth Mental Health First Aid and Youth Suicide Prevention; and

Whereas, New York City will open mental health clinics at a number of community schools; and

Whereas, School climate has a significant impact on mental health; and

Whereas, ThriveNYC has announced several initiatives to improve school climate; and

Whereas, Providing mental health services in school improves the school environment and provides resources to address the emotional and behavioral needs of students; and

Whereas, According to ThriveNYC, the availability of on-site mental health services has been linked to higher GPA scores, reduced absenteeism, and improvements in graduation rates, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Council of the City of New York calls upon the Department of Education to have a full time mental health counselor on staff at every elementary and middle school.

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3/30/2016
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