



Legislation Text

File #: Res 0640-2018, **Version:** *

Res. No. 640

Resolution calling upon the New York City Department of Education to place an escort or attendant on board all public school buses.

By Council Members Treyger, Cumbo and Ayala

Whereas, The New York City Department of Education's (DOE) Office of Pupil Transportation (OPT) provides contracted school bus services to approximately 150,000 students daily, according to DOE testimony at an October 2018 Council hearing; and

Whereas, The OPT contracts with about 65 private bus companies to provide general education, special education and special education pre-K and Early Intervention busing; and

Whereas, According to DOE, OPT provides bus services to students in over 2,700 district schools, charter schools and private schools up to 50 miles outside of City limits each day on 8,500 bus routes on a fleet of 9,000 vehicles staffed by 14,000 bus drivers and attendants; and

Whereas, General education students in grades K to 2 who live one-half mile or more from school and those in grades 3 to 6 who live one mile or more from school are eligible for busing; and

Whereas, Special education students are exempt from the minimum grade and distance requirement, but are eligible for busing based on their Individualized Education Program; and

Whereas, Currently, only buses that transport special education students have an escort or attendant in addition to the bus driver; and

Whereas, This means that tens of thousands of young general education students ride school buses each day without escorts or attendants on board; and

Whereas, In recent years, there have been a number of press reports regarding safety issues involving

children on school buses, including incidents of young children left alone on buses for hours after falling asleep on the bus; and

Whereas, In another case, at the beginning of the 2017-18 school year, Charlotte, a four-year-old general education kindergarten student in Community School District 2, was released off her school bus at the wrong stop three times, and the last time a stranger picked her up and took her to a nearby hospital; and

Whereas, Having an escort or attendant on the school bus could have prevented and/or reduced the occurrence of such incidents; and

Whereas, Further, having an escort or attendant on all school buses could help maintain order and reduce distractions for bus drivers, resulting in safer and possibly shorter bus trips; and

Whereas, School buses carry a minimum of 11 students and may carry over 50 students; and

Whereas, Adding an escort or attendant on board all public school buses would improve safety for students who ride school buses daily; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Council of the City of New York calls upon the New York City Department of Education to place an escort or attendant on board all public school buses.

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JA
11/7/18