



Legislation Text

File #: Res 0162-2004, **Version:** *

Res. No. 162

Resolution calling upon the New York City Department of Education to reconsider its proposed policy to retain certain students in the third grade based solely upon their scores on standardized English language and mathematics tests.

By Council Members Moskowitz, Dilan and Jennings

Whereas, On January 8, 2004, Mayor Bloomberg announced that the New York City Department of Education intended to adopt a policy of not promoting to the fourth grade as many as 16,000 of those third grade students who do not meet the cutoff score on the City's standardized tests in English language arts and mathematics (hereinafter the "Promotion Policy"); and

Whereas, The Promotion Policy removes teacher judgment and input from the decision to promote or retain individual students; and

Whereas, Neither retention nor social promotion addresses the fundamental problem facing many New York City students - that they are not receiving the services that they need until they have fallen far behind grade level and have often spent years struggling in school; and

Whereas, The Promotion Policy runs contrary to consensus among educators and the research community, as well as the historical experience of the Department of Education and its predecessor, the Board of Education; and

Whereas, Many parents of New York City schoolchildren, and dozens of professional associations including The National Academy of Science, the American Psychological Association, the National Council on Measurement in Education, the National Council on Teachers of English, the National Center for Fair & Open Testing, PerformanceAssessment.org, and others, have issued statements in opposition to the use of a single test

to determine promotion; and

Whereas, The United States Department of Education's Office of Civil Rights has expressed concern that test scores may not lawfully be used as the sole criterion to determine advancement within the educational system; and

Whereas, The City of New York previously implemented a policy similar to the proposed Promotion Policy in the early 1980s and subsequently revoked that policy because it failed to improve education achievement; and

Whereas, Advocacy groups like Advocates for Children believe that that the Promotion Policy will cost an estimated \$150 million per year; and

Whereas, Furthermore, such funds might be better spent on policies, services and programs proven to raise student achievement, such as Universal Pre-K, increased support services in the early grades, early identification of learning disabilities and other special needs, lower class sizes, mixed grade classes, flexible kindergarten enrollment age, and increased teacher support; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the City Council of New York calls upon the New York City Department of Education to reconsider its proposed policy to retain certain students in the third grade based solely upon their scores on standardized English language and mathematics tests.

MHG
LS# 517
Feb. 20, 2004