



Legislation Text

File #: Res 0652-2004, **Version:** *

Res. No. 652

Resolution calling upon the New York City Department of Education to hold open for public use, outside of school hours, playgrounds located on school property.

By Council Members Brewer, Barron, Dilan, Foster, Gerson, Jackson, James, Koppell, Liu, Martinez, Quinn, Rivera, Sanders Jr., Stewart, Vann, Yassky, Gonzalez and Lopez

Whereas, According to statistics compiled by the New York City Department of Education and others, approximately 1.6 million children attend primary or secondary school in New York City; and

Whereas, Most neighborhoods in New York City, especially those that are densely populated, lack sufficient open space for recreation and, in particular, lack sufficient open space suitable for recreation for children, such as playgrounds; and

Whereas, The New York City Department of Education operates approximately 1300 public school buildings, of which approximately 800 are elementary schools; and

Whereas, Under New York State law, all public elementary schools are required to have outdoor recreational space attached to, or associated with such schools; and

Whereas, The New York City Parks Department operates approximately 1000 playgrounds citywide, some of which are attached to public schools; and

Whereas, At least several hundred public schools have playground equipment located on school property or that is otherwise controlled by the Department of Education; and

Whereas, Not all playgrounds operated by the Department of Education are open and available for public use outside of school hours, and such playgrounds remain empty and unused during such periods; and

Whereas, A study published in the *Journal of the American Medical Association* in 2003 found that

adolescents who had low fitness levels were three to six times more likely to develop conditions such as diabetes and high blood pressure than were adolescents with high fitness levels; and

Whereas, Additionally, according to the United States Department of Health and Human Services, nearly 15% of all children - almost 9 million young Americans - are overweight; and

Whereas, The health and recreational needs of City children would better be served if such playgrounds operated by the Department of Education were open and available for public use outside of school hours; and

Whereas, Because many children in New York City attend schools distant from their homes; and

Whereas, Allowing Department of Education playgrounds to be shared and used by community members as well as school children would serve to encourage a relationship between both groups, which are often dissociated from each other; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Council of the City of New York calls upon the New York City Department of Education to hold open for public use, outside of school hours, playgrounds located on school property.

MHG
LS# 1758
October 21, 2004