



Legislation Text

File #: Res 0837-2005, **Version:** *

Res. No. 837

Resolution calling upon the appropriate committee of the City Council to hold a hearing on the impact of the Department of Education Superintendent Suspension Sites on schools that house such sites, including concerns regarding increased criminal incidents within the schools and surrounding neighborhoods, the academic placement of suspended students, and the adequacy of education for suspended students.

By Council Members Perkins and Foster

Whereas, Students and staff members within the New York City public school system deserve to learn and teach in an environment free of harassment, intimidation and other disruptive and violent misconduct; and

Whereas, Residents living around New York City public schools deserve to live in a safe, secure and orderly environment; and

Whereas, The New York City Department of Education currently employs Regional Superintendent Suspension policies where students may be placed in continued suspension for a fixed period of 6-30 school days, 30-90 school days, or on extended suspension for one year depending on the level and type of infraction; and

Whereas, In some of these long term suspension cases, students of compulsory attendance age are placed in an alternative instruction site in order to comply with New York State Education Law §3241; and

Whereas, According to the New York City Department of Education, seriously dangerous or violent students are placed in a Second Opportunity School (SOS) site and chronically disruptive students are evaluated for placement in New Beginnings or another alternative program; and

Whereas, Although some off-site centers are housed in community centers, some of these suspension sites, especially those that accommodate students with various disciplinary problems, including those awaiting

placement in New Beginnings or other alternative programs and who are suspended for up to 90 days, are housed in buildings with other schools; and

Whereas; A high school superintendent suspension site currently exists within George Washington High School in District 6, a middle school superintendent suspension site exists in Choir Academy of Harlem in District 5, a middle school superintendent suspension site was recently housed within PS 242, an elementary school in District 3, and a superintendent suspension site has been established in the Wadleigh School for Visual and Performing Arts in District 3; and

Whereas, There have been a number of reported incidents in these “shared facilities,” where both the suspension site and school are located in the same building; this sharing of facilities often contributes to a sense of fear and anxiety in both the schools and their surrounding neighborhoods; and

Whereas, Although students under these disciplinary actions deserve continued nurturing in their scholastic preparation with adequate instruction, it should not be at the expense of other students in these schools and/or the communities that surround them; and

Whereas, These shared facility arrangements also come at the expense of the students who have been sent to the suspension site, whose education, discipline and social service needs are not being met; and

Whereas, Region 10, which spans from the west side of Manhattan at 59th Street to Inwood at the upper tip of Manhattan and encompasses three school districts, has four suspension sites within its boundaries; despite the size of the district, however, three out of the four suspension sites are in Harlem, all within a 14 block radius; and

Whereas, Currently, not enough information is provided to the public with regard to increased incidents within the schools that house suspension sites and their surrounding communities, and further study on the effect of placing these sites in shared facilities is necessary; and

Whereas, These matters must be discussed openly so that a collaborative effort can be made to address these problems, and review of the close proximity of these sites, as evidenced in Region 10, must be conducted;

and

Whereas, The Department of Education must also be made aware that community input in the placement of these facilities is vital; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Council of the City of New York calls upon the appropriate committee of the City Council to hold a hearing on the impact of the Department of Education Superintendent Suspension Sites on schools that house such sites, including concerns regarding increased criminal incidents within the schools and surrounding neighborhoods, the academic placement of suspended students, and the adequacy of education for suspended students.