



Legislation Text

File #: Res 0267-2006, **Version:** A

Res. No. 267-A

Resolution calling upon the Department of Education to assess the impact of its decision to decrease milk choices in New York City's public schools in order to evaluate the effect of this policy change on children's milk consumption and nutrition.

By Council Members de Blasio, Brewer, Foster, Gennaro, Gentile, James, Nelson, White Jr., Rivera, Felder, Martinez, Mendez, Vann, Liu, Monserrate and Recchia Jr.

Whereas, In September 2005, the New York City Department of Education (DOE) began a pilot program in public schools in the Bronx that reduced the availability of milk varieties to students; and

Whereas, According to a *New York Times* article dated February 2, 2006, the DOE stated that by the end of that month, public schools in all five boroughs would serve only low-fat and non-fat milk; and

Whereas, Milk choices are now limited to low-fat and non-fat unflavored milk on a daily basis, with some schools serving flavored non-fat chocolate milk on occasion; and

Whereas, The decision to discontinue serving a wider variety of milk was apparently made as part of an overall effort to reduce childhood obesity by serving healthier meals and snacks at New York City public schools; and

Whereas, According to a 2003 survey conducted by the New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (DOHMH), 43% of New York City public school children enrolled in kindergarten through fifth grade are either overweight or obese; and

Whereas, According to a July 2003 press release from DOHMH, "obesity puts people, even children, at a greater risk for a number of chronic health conditions, including diabetes;" and

Whereas, While recognizing the need to address the childhood obesity issue, some health professionals are concerned that limiting milk choices too strictly may decrease the overall consumption of milk, reducing

the chances of a child to meet his/her daily requirements for calcium and other essential nutrients; and

Whereas, The 2005 Dietary Guidelines for Americans recommend that children age 8 and older consume three servings of milk and milk products a day; and

Whereas, According to statistics from the United States Department of Agriculture, more than 70% of girls and 60% of boys do not get enough calcium in their daily diet; and

Whereas, The February 2, 2006 *New York Times* article mentioned that officials had already noticed a 5% decrease in milk consumption in public schools; and

Whereas, Further, the same article states that public schools that stopped serving flavored milk saw a 15% decrease in milk consumption; and

Whereas, The DOE's decision to sharply limit milk offerings to only non-fat or low-fat unflavored milk and non-fat chocolate flavored milk on occasion, could have a negative impact on a child's consumption of calcium and other essential nutrients (including vitamin A, vitamin D, vitamin B12, riboflavin, protein, phosphorous, magnesium and potassium); and

Whereas, In fact, the 2005 Dietary Guidelines for Americans indicates that "in some cases, small amounts of sugars added to nutrient-dense foods, such as breakfast cereals and reduced-fat milk products, may increase a person's intake of such foods by enhancing the palatability of these products, thus improving nutrient intake without contributing excessive calories;" and

Whereas, The nutritional content of milk should not be overlooked, and efforts should be made by the DOE to ensure that the health of every child is taken into consideration; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Council of the City of New York calls upon the Department of Education to assess the impact of its decision to decrease milk choices in New York City's public schools in order to evaluate the effect of this policy change on children's milk consumption and nutrition.

12/11/06, 12:00pm