



Legislation Text

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Res. No. 225

Resolution calling upon the New York State Department of Education to improve the process by which eligible students enroll in Supplemental Education Services and to improve oversight of the providers of such services.

By Council Members Brewer, Barron, Comrie, Foster, Gerson, Jackson, James, Liu, Mark-Viverito, Mendez, Palma and Seabrook

Whereas, Pursuant to the federal No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB), public schools that have failed to meet “adequate yearly progress” in reaching State academic standards are listed as “Title I Schools in Need of Improvement”; and

Whereas, New York State identifies such elementary and middle schools based on State English language arts and mathematics tests taken by students in grades 4-8, and the State further identifies high schools based on the results in English language arts and/or math Regents and graduation rates; and

Whereas, Pursuant to NCLB, low-income students attending a school that has been identified by the State as “in need of improvement” for two consecutive years, may be eligible for a school transfer or Supplemental Education Services (SES); and

Whereas, SES programs are free tutoring programs in English language arts, reading or math, and are provided by New York State approved educational organizations, including community-based organizations, faith-based organizations and for-profit education companies; and

Whereas, The New York City Department of Education lists over 200 schools that are eligible for SES programs for 2005-06; and

Whereas, According to a September 2005 press release from the New York City Department of Education, there are currently 87 State approved SES providers operating in the City; and

Whereas, The New York City Department of Education indicates that the number of New York City students participating in such programs has been steadily increasing, reaching 87,318 in 2004-05; and

Whereas, Despite the increasing number of students being served, there remains a significant number of eligible students who are going without supplemental services; and

Whereas, According to a *New York Times (NYT)* article appearing on February 12, 2006, less than half of the 215,000 New York City students eligible for SES actually received such services; and

Whereas, In addition, the *NYT* article also stated that approximately 34,000 New York City students attended only a few tutoring sessions and did not complete the SES program; and

Whereas, State and City officials as well as providers and education advocates have suggested that students are not participating in the free tutoring programs for a number of reasons, including the lack of parent awareness and a complicated enrollment procedure; and

Whereas, In addition to the lack of student participation, there have also been oversight concerns regarding the SES providers; and

Whereas, A Report done by the special commissioner of investigation for the City's school system found that some tutoring companies may have inappropriately recruited students through gift certificates, tickets to sporting events and electronic gifts; and

Whereas, Further, some education advocates have suggested that some tutoring companies have avoided serving students with learning or language difficulties because the measurement of a company's performance is partially based on the progress its students make; and

Whereas, According to the New York State Education Department's Request for Qualifications (RFQ), approved SES providers must submit annual progress reports to be reviewed by the State Education Department, which are used to determine continued eligibility as an approved provider; and

Whereas, According to the RFQ, providers will be removed as an approved SES provider if they fail, for two consecutive years, to contribute to a student's academic performance; and

Whereas, Action must be taken to ensure that the services offered by SES providers are having a positive impact on student achievement in the quickest time possible; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Council of the City of New York calls upon the New York State Department of Education to improve the process by which eligible students enroll in Supplemental Education Services and to improve to improve oversight of the providers of such services.

JC
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