



Legislation Text

File #: Res 0134-2006, **Version:** A

Proposed Res. No.134-A

Resolution calling upon the New York City Department of Education to make schoolyards available for public use outside of school hours.

By Council Members Brewer, Gerson, Gonzalez, James, Koppell, Sanders Jr., Seabrook, Stewart, Weprin, Felder, Foster, Dickens and Katz

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, A schoolyard refers to an open recreational space attached to school grounds that may include a playground, blacktop and other recreational equipment; 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 schoolyards controlled by the Department of Education; and

Whereas, Not all schoolyards operated by the Department of Education are open and available for

public use outside of school hours, and such schoolyards 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 schoolyards operated by the Department of Education were open and available for public use outside of school hours; and

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

Whereas, Allowing Department of Education schoolyards 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 make schoolyards available for public use outside of school hours.

JC
Res. 652/2004
8/2/06, 2:00pm