



Legislation Text

File #: Res 1894-2009, **Version:** *

Res. No. 1894

Resolution urging the Chancellor of the New York City Department of Education to make full-day kindergarten mandatory for children five years of age and to mandate that Community School Districts accommodate kindergartners so that they may attend their locally zoned school.

By Council Members Katz, Brewer, James, Liu, Mealy, Sanders Jr., Weprin, Lappin and Foster

Whereas, The New York State Education Law (“SEL”) and the regulations of the Commissioner of the State Education Department contain a requirement that a child who becomes six years of age on or before the first day of December in any school year shall be required to attend full-time instruction from the first day that school is in session; and

Whereas, According to the State law, a child who reaches the age of five by December first is entitled, but not required, to attend kindergarten in the home district where the child lives; and

Whereas, The SEL does not require full-day kindergarten for all such students in New York State; and

Whereas, Attendance of kindergartners at their locally zoned school is preferable to having young children travel outside of their community which presents safety issues and child welfare risks; and

Whereas, The No Child Left Behind Act supports local efforts to enhance the early language, literacy and pre-reading development of pre-school aged children; and

Whereas, The No Child Left Behind Act also places a high priority on closing the achievement gap between disadvantaged children and other children; and

Whereas, Imposing full-day kindergarten requirements can help to narrow that achievement gap; and

Whereas, According to a June 2005 report by the Education Commission of the States entitled “Full Day Kindergarten: a Study of State Policies on the United States,” children in full-day kindergarten programs

experience statistically significant short term gains in both reading and math, and generally enjoy better cognitive development, as well as improved physical, social and emotional development; and

Whereas, According to a July 2007 survey conducted in Washington State by the Economic Opportunity Institute, full day kindergarten produces cost savings to schools because fewer students will require remedial services in later grades; and

Whereas, According to the New York State Early Childhood Data report, released in June 2008, approximately 47% of all New York State children age five years and younger live in New York City; and

Whereas, According to that same New York State Early Childhood Data report, more than half of these children have all available parents in the workplace, which makes it difficult for parents to be the primary educators of their children and hence increases the significance and importance of ensuring that young children accrue the benefits of a full-day early childhood education; and

Whereas, Mandating that all New York City five year olds attend kindergarten would ensure greater opportunities for these children now and in the future; and

Whereas, New York City children who attend full-day programs would likely have an easier transition into first grade; and

Whereas, New York City's children deserve to have a high level of academic preparedness; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Council of the City of New York urges the Chancellor of the New York City Department of Education to make full-day kindergarten mandatory for children five years of age and to mandate that Community School Districts accommodate kindergartners so that they may attend their locally zoned school.

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