



Legislation Text

File #: Res 1259-2008, **Version:** *

Res. No. 1259

Resolution calling upon the Department of Education to waive the fee associated with fingerprinting for parent volunteers in schools to encourage parent participation in the school system.

By Council Members James, Brewer, Felder, Fidler, Gerson, Liu, Mark-Viverito, Mealy, Mendez, Sanders Jr. and Stewart

Whereas, Many schools rely on parents/guardians or members of the community who volunteer to share their time, knowledge and ability with students and school staff; and

Whereas, Volunteering at school is one of the most common forms of parental involvement in education; and

Whereas, More than three decades of research evidence has linked parental involvement with improved student achievement; and

Whereas, Volunteering has been identified as one of six key types of parental involvement by Dr. Joyce Epstein of Johns Hopkins University, who is one of the country's premier researchers on school-family-community connections; and

Whereas, According to research conducted by Dr. Epstein, parent volunteering efforts have been specifically linked to increased student learning of targeted skills, and improved student communication with adults; and

Whereas, Additionally, volunteering has been shown to improve the skills and self-confidence of parents and enhance their understanding of the teacher's job, according to Dr. Epstein; and

Whereas, Notably, Dr. Epstein's research also found that efforts by parent volunteers enabled teachers to give greater individual attention to students and increased teachers' awareness of parents' talents and interests

in school and children; and

Whereas, Because the safety of children in New York City's public schools is paramount, in order to volunteer in the classroom, parents/caregivers are subject to certain security clearance procedures, including fingerprinting; and

Whereas, The Department of Education requires individuals subject to fingerprinting to pay a fee, currently in the amount of \$115, to cover fingerprinting costs; and

Whereas, This fee is too high for many parents to afford and undoubtedly acts as a deterrent to volunteering for many parents with limited financial means; and

Whereas, Waiving this fee for parents/caregivers would act as a stimulant to encourage greater parent participation in school, with the attendant benefits cited above; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Council of the City of New York calls upon the Department of Education to waive the fee associated with fingerprinting for parent volunteers in schools to encourage parent participation in the school system.

LS#4418
JA
1/29/08
3:10pm