File #: Res 0409-2024, **Version:** *

Res. No. 409

Resolution calling on the New York City Department of Education to permit students excused absences while experiencing symptoms of menstrual disorders.

By Council Members Louis, Restler and Gutiérrez

Whereas, Menstruation, a periodic and cyclical shedding of blood and tissue from the uterus, is a normal physiological process in women of reproductive age that begins during adolescence, which is defined by the World Health Organization as the age between 10 and 19 years old; and

Whereas, Menstruation is often associated with physical discomfort and psychological upset; and

Whereas, Symptoms of menstrual disorders, such as dysmenorrhea, endometriosis, menorrhea, and polycystic ovarian syndrome can severely impact daily life; and

Whereas, Menstrual disorders could start as early as menarche sets in and can persist beyond adolescence; and

Whereas, Stressors brought about by life challenges, such as academics and relationships, can further worsen symptoms of menstruation; and

Whereas, Numerous studies on the prevalence and pattern of menstrual disorders among students, published in various scientific journals as well as the National Library of Medicine, show menstrual disorders are common among adolescence; and

Whereas, Dysmenorrhea, which is characterized by recurrent abdominal pain, headache, nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, and back pain, is the most commonly reported menstrual disorder among students; and

Whereas, Common side effects of menstrual disorders include reduction in concentration ability, academic disturbance, and changes in normal physical activities, which lead to the restriction of activities and

absenteeism; and

Whereas, However, problems related to menstruation are perceived as normal and are regularly regarded as a condition that does not require medical attention, which sends the message to menstruating students that they should quietly suffer through the pain; and

Whereas, A student experiencing symptoms of a menstrual disorder should be entitled to excused absences from school, for which they should be given the opportunity to make up any school work missed during the absence; and

Whereas, Codifying excused absences for students experiencing menstrual disorders would help to normalize the experience as well as empower them to take care of themselves; and

Whereas, The New York City (NYC) Council made a commitment toward advancing menstrual equity for students with the passage of Local Law 84 of 2016, which requires the NYC Department of Education (DOE) to make feminine hygiene products available at no cost to students in the bathrooms of school buildings located in facilities that are leased by the DOE or over which DOE has care, custody, and control, serving female students in grades six through twelve; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Council of the City of New York calls on the New York City Department of Education to permit students excused absences while experiencing symptoms of menstrual disorders.

LS #13052
06/15/2023
CGR

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