



Legislation Text

File #: Res 0501-2024, **Version:** *

Res. No. 501

Resolution calling on the New York State Legislature to pass, and the Governor to sign, S.2545A/A.4846 to require school districts to send water safety informational materials home to students' parents or guardians and to permit school districts to provide water safety instruction in school for K-12 students.

By Council Members Krishnan, Menin, the Public Advocate (Mr. Williams) and Council Members Cabán, Rivera, Hanks, Brooks-Powers, Riley, Won, Schulman, Banks, Narcisse, Sanchez, Nurse, Hanif, Brannan, Brewer, Stevens, Paladino and Vernikov

Whereas, According to the Centers for Disease Control, drowning is the leading cause of death for children aged one to four and the second leading cause of death for children under the age of 14; and

Whereas, Children who can swim are 88 percent less likely to drown than those who cannot swim, thus making the availability of swimming lessons for children an important strategy in preventing deaths by drowning; and

Whereas, For every child's death by drowning, five more children face brain and spinal cord injuries resulting from water accidents; and

Whereas, New York City has experienced tragic drowning deaths of teens this summer, including teenagers Elyjah Chandler and Christian Perkins, who drowned in the waters off Jacob Riis Park in Rockaway on June 21; and

Whereas, New York City also tragically lost teenaged sisters Zainab and Aisha Mohammed, who drowned at Coney Island Beach on July 5; and

Whereas, As a result of the recent drownings, elected officials from Queens and Brooklyn have called for more lifeguards to be hired, for lifeguards to work longer hours to protect swimmers who are tempted to swim after the beaches close, and for more free swimming lessons and other safety measures to be made

available; and

Whereas, S.2545A, introduced on January 23, 2023, by State Senator Joseph Addabbo, Jr., representing the 15th State Senate District in Queens, would amend the State education law to allow school districts to provide water safety instruction to K-12 students in school and to require that schools send home to students' parents or guardians asynchronous water safety informational materials annually; and

Whereas, S.2545A also would permit the Commissioner of Education to provide technical assistance in developing age-appropriate water safety instructional curricula for students for grades K-12 and to make model curricula and resource materials available on the State Education Department's website; and

Whereas, Companion bill A.4846, introduced on February 23, 2023, by State Assembly Member Stacey Pheffer Amato, representing the 23rd State Assembly District in Queens, would provide for the same water safety instructional measures; and

Whereas, S.2545A/A.4846 would require that appropriate water safety instruction for use in schools and for use by parents and guardians at home be defined by the Commissioner of Education in regulations, after consulting with the Department of Health; and

Whereas, Such water safety instruction would include “the proper use of flotation devices, awareness of water conditions, how to respond if caught in a rip current, the proper lifeguarded supervision of swim areas, [and] safe behaviors in and around water”; and

Whereas, Such water safety instruction would include material on the importance of pool barriers and fencing, swim lessons, the avoidance of alcohol and drugs when swimming, cardiopulmonary resuscitation for drowning victims, and the order of administering first aid; and

Whereas, S.2545A/A.4846 would require each school district to notify the Commissioner of Education before the beginning of each school year as to whether the school district chooses to provide water safety instruction; and

Whereas, If passed, S.2545A/A.4846 would take effect on the following July 1; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Council of the City of New York calls on the New York State Legislature to pass, and the Governor to sign, S.2545A/A.4846 to require school districts to send water safety informational materials home to students' parents or guardians and to permit school districts to provide water safety instruction in school for K-12 students.

LS #17395 and #5919
7/16/2024
RHP