



Legislation Text

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Res. No. 156

Resolution calling upon the New York City Department of Education to implement models of expanded learning time, based on the NYC Coalition for Educational Justice campaign for redesign and expansion of the school day and year, as a strategy to assist low-performing schools to improve student performance.

By Council Members Jackson, Barron, Brewer, Chin, Dromm, Fidler, James, Koppell, Lander, Mark-Viverito, Palma, Rodriguez, Vann, Williams, Dickens, Levin, Cabrera, Mendez, Dilan, Crowley, Van Bramer and Recchia Jr.

Whereas, In the United States, the typical school year consists of 180 six-hour days; and

Whereas, *A Nation at Risk*, the seminal 1983 report of the National Commission on Excellence in Education, urged schools to add another hour to the day and 20 to 40 days to the typical 180-day year to ward off “a rising tide of mediocrity” in American education; and

Whereas, The National Time and Learning Commission echoed the call to extend the school day and year in a 1994 report, *Prisoners of Time*; and

Whereas, Despite these and other calls to expand instructional time, the school calendar has remained essentially unchanged in the U.S. since the mid-20th century; and

Whereas, According to a 2007 report by the Center on Education Policy, 44% of the nation’s school districts report that the amount of instructional time spent on subjects other than English and math has actually *decreased* since passage of the No Child Left Behind Act in 2002; and

Whereas, With increasing demands to improve student performance and close the achievement gap between minority and disadvantaged students and their white counterparts, many education policymakers are considering reforms that would expand learning time for students; and

Whereas, In 2005, Massachusetts became the first state in the nation to undertake a systemic initiative to

significantly expand learning time as a strategy for improving student performance and closing the achievement gap; and

Whereas, Preliminary data on schools that expanded learning time in Massachusetts and elsewhere in the nation show a possible link to increased student achievement; and

Whereas, A 2009 study by the National Center on Time & Learning (NCTL) found that 6th, 7th, 8th and 10th graders in expanded-time schools outscored other students by 3 to 8 percentage points; and

Whereas, Further, the NCTL study found that schools that added the most learning time had better student performance in grades 7 and 10 than those that added less time; and

Whereas, There have been some prior efforts to increase learning time in New York City public schools, including a 1999 extended-time pilot program that gave veteran teachers a 15% pay raise for working an additional week and 40 extra minutes per day in 40 of the lowest performing schools in the City; and

Whereas, According to a Board of Education review of the pilot program, extended-time schools saw test scores improve at a far greater rate than other schools between 1999 and 2001; and

Whereas, The study showed that reading scores climbed 7.5 percentage points in schools with the extra time compared with a 4.2 point increase in other schools and math scores rose 3.2 points in extended-time schools compared with virtually no citywide increase; and

Whereas, More recently, in 2006 the New York City Department of Education (DOE) extended the school day by 37 ½ minutes for mandatory tutoring sessions for struggling students, pursuant to a contract agreement with the United Federation of Teachers (UFT); and

Whereas, In addition, The After-School Corporation (TASC) initiated a 3-year Expanded Learning Time/New York City pilot program in 2008 to expand learning time by at least 30% in 10 middle and elementary schools; and

Whereas, Another organization, Generation Schools Network, opened the Brooklyn Generation School in September 2007 as an extended-time school inside the South Shore High School campus; and

Whereas, The NYC Coalition for Educational Justice (CEJ) has launched a campaign calling for the redesign and expansion of the school day and year in low-performing schools; and

Whereas, This CEJ campaign calls for the addition of 30% more time to the school day and year at low-performing schools to provide students with rigorous and engaging academics, diverse enrichment courses and teacher planning and learning time; and

Whereas, Some models of expanded learning time, such as those used by Massachusetts and TASC, entail additional costs that can vary widely from a few hundred to more than a thousand dollars per student each year; and

Whereas, Other expanded learning time models do not require additional expenditures, such as the Generation Schools model, which expands learning time by up to 30% for all students, without increasing the teacher work year, and thus operates at current per pupil funding levels; and

Whereas, Students in New York City's public schools would benefit from employing methods such as expanded learning time that can raise student achievement; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Council of the City of New York calls upon the New York City Department of Education to implement models of expanded learning time, based on the NYC Coalition for Educational Justice campaign for redesign and expansion of the school day and year, as a strategy to assist low-performing schools to improve student performance.

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