



Legislation Text

File #: Res 2143-2009, **Version:** *

Res. No. 2143

Resolution calling upon the Department of Education to change the policy that places responsibility on the child to notify the bus driver or escort when the adult who is designated to pick them up from the bus stop is not present.

By Council Members de Blasio, Barron, Brewer, Comrie, Fidler, Foster, Gentile, Gerson, Gonzalez, James, Liu, Vann and Weprin

Whereas, The Department of Education currently serves approximately 1 million school children in New York City; and

Whereas, Within the Department of Education, the Office of Pupil Transportation (OPT) provides transportation services to over 600,000 students in public and non-public schools; and

Whereas, The Chancellor's Regulations provide that if the adult designated to receive the child is not present when the child is returned home from the school by bus, the child may not be left with an unauthorized individual; and

Whereas, A parent or guardian may elect to designate another family member, neighbor or other individual to receive the student; and

Whereas, A parent may elect to permit the driver to deliver the child without an authorized adult present to receive the child; and

Whereas, In any case, such alternative designations must be in writing by the parent or guardian and provided to the principal and driver; and

Whereas, The OPT policy for general education students provides that for a student receiving school-to-stop service, the student will be allowed to get off the bus at their stop unless such student notifies the bus

driver that the designated adult is not present, at which point the student will be allowed to remain on the bus until the driver returns to such student's bus stop upon completing the bus route; and

Whereas, The OPT policy for special education students provides that for a student receiving door-to-door service, if the designated adult is not present to receive the student, the bus driver will drop off other students and return to the student's home stop on the return trip; and

Whereas, The OPT policy provides further that if the designated adult is still not there, the driver will radio the dispatcher at OPT to determine if there is a pre-existing arrangement; and

Whereas, on September 23, 2008, the Daily News reported that a good Samaritan brought a five year old boy home after the boy was placed on the wrong bus and a bus driver forced him to get off of the bus at the end of the line without a designated adult; and

Whereas, On May 13, 2009, the Post reported that a five year old boy was placed on the wrong bus and was dropped off at a busy intersection in Queens without a designated adult; and

Whereas, On May 14, 2009, the Daily News reported that a five year old girl wandered around for blocks after a bus driver dropped her off at in Queens without a designated adult; and

Whereas, These reported incidents show that the responsibility should be placed on the bus driver or escort and not on the child to determine whether the appropriately designated adult is present to receive the child; and

Whereas, It is the responsibility of the DOE to ensure the safety of New York City school children who are bused under the auspices of the DOE; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the New York City Council calls upon the Department of Education to change the policy that places responsibility on the child to notify the bus driver or escort when the adult who is designated to pick them up from the bus stop is not present

6/16/09
11:30am