



Legislation Text

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Res. No. 1420

Resolution calling upon the Bloomberg Administration to place a moratorium on the implementation of the Project Full Enrollment Initiative.

By Council Members Reyna, James, Brewer, Mark-Viverito, Vann, Gonzalez, Barron, Gentile, Comrie, Foster, Palma, Jackson and Katz

Whereas, The Administration for Children's Services (ACS) is charged with the responsibility of determining eligibility for and providing subsidized child care services to qualified families in New York City; and

Whereas, Families whose incomes are between 200% and 275% of the federal poverty level, depending on family size, are eligible for subsidized child care services; and

Whereas, Low income families often rely on child care services to enable the adults to participate in the workforce, and limiting the availability of child care may limit the economic self sufficiency of these families; and

Whereas, Recent research demonstrates that full-time child care is necessary for many working parents of young children, and that high-quality care can decrease stress, improve productivity, and encourage greater labor force participation of parents; and

Whereas, Preliminary findings from the most recent Community Needs Assessment conducted by ACS indicate that 350,000 children in New York City are eligible for subsidized childcare while only 93,000 are actually using subsidized child care; and

Whereas, Given the proven benefits of child care centers, ACS must examine why there is such a gap between those receiving services and those eligible to be served by subsidized child care centers; and

Whereas, Announced on February 4, 2008 with an effective date of September 2008, Project Full Enrollment (PFE) will change the reimbursement structure to ACS funded child care centers throughout the City from a budgeted system to a system based on monthly enrollment and attendance; and

Whereas, ACS claims that it paid out \$40 million in vacant slots during Fiscal Year 2007 and that the PFE initiative will allow ACS to save money on unused slots and incentivize enrollment for centers; and

Whereas, The proposed reimbursement structure will be unmanageable for ACS, however, because of its antiquated and fragmented systems for tracking enrollment and eligibility, which ACS has acknowledged both in testimony to the Council and in the 2005 strategic plan on “Rethinking Child Care,” where it stated that it has “fragmented record keeping”; and

Whereas, Child care center directors will be nonetheless held accountable for ACS’s inability to accurately track enrollment and capacity numbers; and

Whereas, Using an inaccurate data system to fund centers will establish a system that is likely to fail citywide; and

Whereas, ACS should therefore adopt a classroom based approach to funding centers similar to the manner in which universal pre-kindergarten programs are funded; and

Whereas, Because there are natural fluctuations in center enrollment throughout the year, a classroom based approach will alleviate the PFE related concerns that center directors have raised about having to lay off teachers and cut back on cook and custodial hours on a monthly basis; and

Whereas, A key feature of the PFE initiative is a web based enrollment initiative which would give ACS, centers, and parents access to current eligibility and enrollment status; and

Whereas, The web based enrollment pilot program, which was set to begin on April 1, 2008 in 17 centers throughout Brooklyn, has not yet been implemented by ACS, which raises the level of concern that ACS’s projected timelines may not accurately reflect its progress and its ability to meet its specified goals; and

Whereas, Evaluating the web based enrollment pilot program in the 17 centers and working to correct

problematic variables in the pilot phase of the web based enrollment program before implementing the program citywide would be a more methodical, thorough, and logical approach; and

Whereas, Until the proper assessment and implementation of the web based enrollment initiative is conducted ACS should not move to implement the PFE initiative; and

Whereas, The PFE initiative in its current proposed form will be detrimental to child care centers across the City; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Council of the City of New York calls upon the Bloomberg Administration to place a moratorium on the implementation of the Project Full Enrollment Initiative.

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