



Community Education Council District 8

New York City Department of Education

PS 182, 601 Stickball Boulevard Rm 112, Bronx, NY 10473 | Telephone: (718) 239-5895 Fax: (718) 409-6967 |

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Council Members

Wanda Balines, D75 Seat, Cynthia Caldwell, Latoya Coleman IEP, Carmen Feliciano, Rosalia Fontanez, Elizabeth Garcia, Crystal Rodriguez, Aurora Ronda, Jasmine Ruiz, LaTicia Thompson

Resolution #11

Resolution in Support of Levi's Law for Classroom Cameras to Protect Students with Special Needs

Approved on _____, the following resolution offers CEC 8 for position that Levi's Law would help parents, caregivers, and advocates feel more confident about the safety and well-being of their children in school settings.

Background: Levi's Law is part of a growing movement advocating for the use of cameras in special education classrooms, particularly self-contained classrooms where students with severe disabilities may be unable to self-advocate or report mistreatment. This type of legislation began with laws in Texas and has since expanded to states like Georgia and West Virginia. Levi's Law aims to address a core concern: ensuring safety and accountability in classrooms where students may have limited communication abilities, making it challenging for them to report abuse or neglect.

Under these laws, parents or staff can request video and audio monitoring, which is then required to be implemented by the school. Recordings are only reviewed if there is an allegation of abuse, neglect, or assault. The main goals are to provide peace of mind to parents, safeguard vulnerable students, and protect educators from false accusations. This also allows schools to have evidence in cases of incidents, supporting better responses to challenging behaviors in a secure and documented environment. Legislators have pushed for such measures due to evidence showing that non-verbal students, or those with limited communication, are more vulnerable to abuse but less able to report it. Additionally, these laws aim to curb the higher suspension rates observed among students with disabilities, which are often not an appropriate response to behavioral challenges in such classrooms. Cameras in these settings are seen as a way to bolster transparency, foster improved classroom practices, and enhance training for staff on handling challenging behaviors effectively without punitive measures. As more states consider similar legislation, there is ongoing debate about the



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privacy implications, costs, and logistical challenges of implementing these systems widely across school districts.

WHEREAS, for the reasons set forth below, CEC 8 hereby resolves to

support amendment 4407-a to the New York State Law 2590 that mandates the installation of cameras in special education classrooms in order to prevent the abuse and neglect of vulnerable students who are often unable to effectively communicate and report such abuse.

WHEREAS children with special needs are a highly vulnerable population who may struggle with limited verbal communication, making it difficult for them to report mistreatment, abuse, or neglect that might occur in educational settings; and

WHEREAS children with disabilities, especially those with intellectual, behavioral, or developmental challenges, are at a significantly higher risk of abuse, with studies indicating that children with disabilities are 3-4 times more likely to experience abuse compared to their peers without disabilities; and

WHEREAS parents and caregivers of special needs children rely on the educational system to provide a safe, nurturing, and supportive environment, and any instances of mistreatment or negligence in these settings erode trust and jeopardize the welfare of the children involved;

WHEREAS Levi's Law seeks to mandate the installation of video cameras in self-contained special education classrooms across New York City, to provide a protective safeguard for vulnerable children who may be unable to communicate incidents of mistreatment to their parents or guardians; and

WHEREAS the presence of cameras in special education classrooms can serve as a deterrent to inappropriate or abusive behavior by caregivers, staff, or other students, thus promoting an environment of accountability and transparency in the treatment of students with disabilities; and

WHEREAS video footage from classroom cameras would allow for accurate documentation of events, facilitating investigations when incidents are reported, and helping to ensure that children's rights to safety, dignity, and appropriate care are upheld; and



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WHEREAS other states have implemented similar legislation to protect special needs children, with positive outcomes reported in both safeguarding student welfare and improving communication and trust between schools and families; and

WHEREAS Levi's Law has gained the support of various advocacy groups, educators, and parents who recognize the critical need to address safety and transparency concerns in the classroom settings designated for special needs students;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that CEC 8 supports the passage of Levi's Law, which would mandate the installation of cameras in special education classrooms within New York City, to promote safety, accountability, and a nurturing environment for all children with special needs.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the CEC 8 formally expresses its strong support for the passage and implementation of Levi's Law, mandating the installation of cameras in self-contained special education classrooms within New York City schools, as a vital measure to enhance the safety, well-being, and dignity of children with special needs.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that CEC 8 urges New York City and New York State legislators to take swift action in passing Levi's Law, thereby demonstrating a commitment to protecting vulnerable children from potential abuse, negligence, and mistreatment in educational settings.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the CEC 8 urges New York City and State officials to prioritize the implementation of Levi's Law as an essential measure to protect special needs children and to provide parents with transparency and peace of mind.

This Resolution was approved at CEC 8 Calendar Meeting held on

_____ by a vote of members present including: _____