



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Daniel L. Squadron

Senator Squadron, Borough President Stringer, Other Electeds and Parents Announce 3-Point Plan to Prevent School Overcrowding

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New Legislation Would Help Communities Prevent

Crises Like Lower Manhattan Space Crunch

New York, NY--State Senator Daniel Squadron, Manhattan Borough President Scott Stringer, Assemblymember Brian Kavanagh, other elected officials and public school parents

announced legislation today that would help prevent school overcrowding and improve long-term planning for New York City schools. Senator Squadron's bill, based on recommendations from a report by Borough President Stringer, will include mechanisms for more accurate student population projections, more transparency and feedback in planning and a stronger voice for parents and the public.

The bill will include:

- More accurate projections: DOE will be required to consider birth-rate projections from the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene and population projections from the Department of City Planning when drawing school districts and zoning lines and when constructing its five-year capital plan.
- Transparency in planning: school siting plans will have to make public the data used to project student populations, and DOE must address how each siting plan responds to projected population changes.
- A stronger voice for the public: DOE must make public all comments it receives in response to its school siting plans and five-year capital plan, and must respond to those comments.

State Senator Daniel Squadron said, "When planning is off, communities suffer -- that's why we need better data, more transparency and a stronger voice for the community in school-seat planning. These changes would offer more tools to prevent overcrowding and improve long-term planning for our schools. I would like to thank Borough President Scott Stringer for his powerful report on our school overcrowding problems and his recommendations for how to address them."

"My office has released three reports revealing the ways DOE fails to alleviate school overcrowding and plan for the future," said Manhattan Borough President Scott M. Stringer. "Tens of thousands of Manhattan students will be without school seats by 2016 unless we do something. Having neighborhood schools with enough space for their young children is often the determining factor in the decision families make to stay in our city. I applaud Senator Squadron for introducing legislation that will bring school planning back to reality."

"Kindergarteners weren't born yesterday, so by the time they're old enough to go to school, there ought to be enough time to plan adequate space in our schools to educate them," said Assemblymember Brian Kavanagh. "The legislation proposed today recognizes that planning ahead and involving public school families and the public in the process, are the surest ways to alleviate the overcrowding that makes it harder for our children to learn in many schools throughout the city."

"School overcrowding is an inexcusable offense, especially in a city as resourceful as ours," said Tricia Joyce, a parent of two students in public school. "Packing 30+ children into a room with one teacher, lunch at 10 am or 2pm, one or no weekly gym periods, in a building never meant to be a school is not the way to support our children or the teachers that have devoted their lives to teaching them. It's time to reverse this course and re-establish our priorities so our children can not only survive, but thrive into our leaders of tomorrow."

Senator Squadron will introduce the bill in Albany tomorrow.