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I am the chair of the Students with Disabilities Committee.

We passed a resolution strongly demanding the reduction of class size and it was unanimous, and for those of you who know the CECD2, you know that a unanimous result is miraculous.

But I want to speak today on behalf of hundreds of parents whom I've met with students with disabilities and how this issue affects them. This is a population that from the start of their schooling, score at the very bottom of the rung in their grades and state tests scores, and they do not move, if you look at the stats for any other demographic group (race, socio economic status, gender, etc) only ELL is lower.

In order to have ANY chance of moving these outcomes, it is essential for them to have smaller class size. We must teach these students how to read and write using an explicit, systematic, structured approach in small class settings. While students with IEP's and dyslexia account for up to 20% of our population, the science of reading and the OG approach can be used to reach all our of our learners but it requires fidelity and small class size. We know his works, and if we do nothing about it, then we all on the hook. Parents are untied in this, but we must also unleash the voice of teachers around this issue as often many of them feel they cannot join the fight for small class size for fear that their pensions will be in jeopardy.

Lastly, but most importantly, I want to say the this is a CRITICAL equity issue. I phoned my cousin last night in Bedford NY, a wealthy, mostly white school system, and her kids have a 13:1 student/teacher ratio. Is there any mystery as to why their test scores are so good? The fact that our NYC children have a 25:1, 32:1 ratio can be boiled down to one word: RACISM. Over 60% of the prison population has dyslexia and cannot read. We know that there is a school to prison pipeline and we know how to end it. We must put money where it matters most: Class Size Matters.