



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

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## Klein/Nolan Legislation Protecting Existing School Playground Space Passes State Senate and Assembly

JEFFREY D. KLEIN June 18, 2014

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**ALBANY, NY** – Senate Co-Leader Jeff Klein (D-Bronx/Westchester) and Assemblywoman Catherine Nolan (D-Queens) celebrated passage of legislation that would protect existing school playground space in New York City from the long term displacement caused by ongoing construction or temporary classrooms. Sponsored by Senator Klein and Assemblywoman Nolan, this legislation (S. 2255/A. 151) would require schools that use their playground space for purposes other than for recreation or physical activity for more than a year, to develop an alternate venue for recreational play.

The State Assembly passed the legislation on June 10<sup>th</sup> and the State Senate passed it on June 16<sup>th</sup>. The legislation now awaits New York Governor Andrew Cuomo’s signature to become law.

**Senate Majority Coalition Leader Jeff Klein (D-Bronx/Westchester) said,** “For too many students in New York City, outdoor recreational space has been threatened by construction and temporary classrooms that impact the ability for students to stay active. That’s why Assemblywoman Nolan and I have teamed up to make sure that schools have a clear plan to provide alternate recreation space for any long term displacement of outdoor school playgrounds. While school is undoubtedly at the center of our academic studies, the best way for us to provide a well-rounded educational experience is by ensuring that our children have – and keep – their outdoor playground areas.”

“Physical activity and recreation are crucial to the health and well-being of students,” **said Assemblywoman Catherine Nolan.** “We must take steps to ensure that children do not lose playgrounds permanently. This

legislation gives the city some guidance as it expands many of its school building projects in order to avoid that situation. I want to thank Senator Klein for bringing this vital issue to the attention of the Legislature.”

At the Y, we know that access to playgrounds throughout our communities provide kids with the opportunity to be physically active, which is essential for their health and academic achievement," **stated Kyle Stewart, Executive Director of the Alliance of New York State YMCAs**, "We commend Senate Co-Leader Klein for his continued and progressive leadership to create strong communities by creating safe environments for kids to play outdoors, thereby leading toward a healthier New York."

"Access to playgrounds at school is a basic justice issue for all children," **said Healthy Schools Network Executive Director Claire Barnett**. "With this bill, the Senate and Assembly have taken an important step to benefit New York City students. We encourage all agencies, schools and elected officials to put children first in all their efforts."

**PS 14 Principal Ira Schulman said**, "Outdoor spaces are critical to the overall health and well-being of our students and at PS 14, we are committed to doing everything possible to support continuous access to playground space for the children of PS 14."

The original legislation was prompted by [a 2003 report by then Assemblyman Jeffrey Klein](#). This report revealed that the city was lacking in adequate playground space, that City officials must oversee play yards where temporary classrooms units are placed and that lack of adequate playground space negatively impacts children's health.