



**Testimony to be delivered to the New York City Council Committee on Education
On Special Education Reform**

June 12, 2012

By the ARISE Coalition

Good afternoon. I am Maggie Moroff, the Special Education Policy Coordinator of Advocates for Children and the Coordinator of the ARISE Coalition. I have come before you today to speak for ARISE and I thank you for this opportunity.

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To be effective, reform of special education here in NYC must do far more than assure that students can attend their community schools. That is a huge start, but it is not everything. Real reform must assure that all students, including students with disabilities, receive effective instruction and all necessary supports and services to make that instruction successful wherever they are seated. Reform must actually make a difference in the daily experiences of the affected students and provide all that is necessary to raise graduation and college and career readiness rates for those students.

Since the DOE announced their plans to reform, the ARISE Coalition and its members have had multiple conversations with critical personnel at the DOE – including Chancellors Walcott and Black, Deputy

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Dangerously close in time to the reform's full roll out in September some of our most pressing concerns remain unanswered despite all our efforts to the contrary. We are here today to say that the DOE must work through and resolve these issues for their reform efforts to succeed and to avoid a backlash in community schools. We hope that the City Council will add its voice and weight to calling on the DOE to address these concerns immediately before it is too late.

First, the DOE must provide on-going, intensive at-the-elbow support for school level staff to support the additional needs of increasing numbers of students with disabilities in their schools. This must include professional development regarding the delivery of effective instruction using research-based strategies to address the needs of students with learning and behavioral challenges. We urge the City

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