

## **Community District Education Council District 26**

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### **MINUTES OF BUSINESS & CALENDAR PUBLIC MEETINGS**

**Date:** Thursday, June 29, 2006

**Time:** Calender Meeting, 7:00 P.M.; Business Meeting, 8:00 P.M.

**Location:** MS 74, 61-15 Oceania Street, Bayside, NY 11364-Auditorium

The meeting of the Community District Education Council of District 26 (CDEC26) was called to order and chaired by Rob Caloras, President at 7:10 p.m. in the Conference Room 128.

Roll Call by Carol: Rob Caloras, Carol Gomez, Melissa Dorfman, Dr. Lana Zinger, Susan Shiroma, Jodi Nath & Edward Fallacaro

Unexcused-Yen Shia Chou; Excused-Rich Olson & Jackie Montgomery; Late- Bona Sun & Adam Amit

Also in attendance was Anita Saunders, Community Superintendent, Walter O'Brien, Local Instructional Superintendent & Lori Stein Butera, Parent Coordinator.

#### ***Business Meeting***

##### ***Secretary's Report***

Carol – passed a draft of the Business Card to be printed around to all the members for their comments and changes.

Reviewing of May 25<sup>th</sup> minutes were reviewed for corrections, changes or additions. Rob made a motion to accept the May 25<sup>th</sup> minutes and Melissa seconded. Council voted unanimously to accept the minutes. Anita clarified the Gifted Program in detail page 2, section 2 in more detail.

##### ***President's Report – Robert Caloras***

Rob informed everyone that Walter O'Brien will be retiring as of September 1st and stated that he will be missed and enjoyed working with him. Walter commented that it's been 37 years and he will be moving on but it's been a pleasure working with everyone. Anita stated that "it was a pleasure having Walter as a partner and they worked very hard in keeping District 26 #1. They also developed a special relationship, trust and admiration for each other. Walter will be missed."

##### **1. Correspondence**

- a. Articles
- b. Thanks to the Times Ledger for covering the May 25<sup>th</sup> meeting with Randi Weingarten to help with class size reduction.
- c. E-mail of resolution sent to Mary Vaccaro, UFT President who in turn sent it to Randi Weingarten & it was discussed at a Citywide UFT Delegate meeting.
- d. Thanked Queens Chronicle & Times Ledger for publishing a personal letter from Rob pertaining to the appointment of Brian Ellner.

- e. Article pertaining to giving principals more control of funds (Empowerment Program). This will free them from the bureaucracy of the city's reorganized school system. There were no District 26 schools that applied/accepted into this program.
- f. Press Release from Chancellor Klein regarding his disappointment that the assembly did not act upon his request to lessen the burden pertaining to the Financial Disclosure Form. The assembly is still in committee and no one has voted on it. Rob will send a letter to Assemblywoman Catherine Nolan asking for her help.
- g. UFT dinner – parents & teachers – constructive dialogue – PTA & CDEC members attended also.
- h. Business Meeting – parent told that this meeting was closed to the public by a Parent Coordinator. Parent informed that this meeting is open to the public and invited to the next meeting. Parent Coordinators are sent the agenda of our meetings. Will have to utilize the PTA's and other sources to make them aware of our meetings.
- i. President's Council Gala – Rob invited but asked Marsha Tom to next time send invitations to all CDEC members.
- j. President's Council Dinner District 26– CDEC members attended.
- k. Pete Maddaloni (Custodian) any questions regarding SCA repairs that he will be a resource for the CDEC.
- l. School Visits – try to contact the custodians along with the PTA's.
- m. PS 115 – Rob informed the members that he spoke at their graduation. Lori Butera was also in attendance.
- n. Class Size Referendum – will not be on the ballot.
- o. Resolutions – Cell Phone & NCLB will be discussed as new business.
- p. CDEC Dist. 26 Dinner held at the Douglaston Manor. Event put together by Jackie Montgomery.
- q. No official meeting with Anita or Walter for June.

Rob reiterated that the year is over and thanked everyone for all their work. Stated the CDEC has moved in a positive direction.

Will be voting for new positions in July.

Rob mentioned that draft business cards were made up for review.

Rob thanked Adam Amit for coming to all the meeting and wishes him luck in his new endeavors. Susan made a speech to Adam and stated that his parents must be very proud of him and presented him with a paper weight made up by Elizabeth Shay who is a PTA President at PS 178 & a former PTA President of 216. "The NYC Dept. of Education Joel I. Klein, Chancellor presented to Adam Amit in grateful appreciation for your pioneering spirit as the first student representative of the Community District Education Council District 26 presented on behalf of the school District 26, Region 3 on June 29, 2006."

***Treasurer's Report – Ed***

1. zeroed out accounts
2. speak about budget in July - look at training and its scope of spending

### ***Committee Reports (Zoning & Outreach)***

1. marketing of CDEC
2. newsletter drafted
3. website review
4. school visit modification
5. Principals being acknowledged in September
6. Re-confirm meetings so that they don't conflict with other committees (Pres. Council & PTA's)

### **School Visits**

***Carol Gomez*** – PS 213 met with Principal, Mr. Baranoff and went around the school.

***Lana Zinger*** – PS 205- The principal (Ms. Sherer) is very nurturing & mothering. School has 2 classes per grade. There is a population concern, since it is very low. Library is very impressive. Rob stated that most of the teachers and principals live in the neighborhood (District 26).

Anita Saunders stated that PS 213 received the Empire State Grant several times.

1. Rob spoke about getting Parent Coordinators to help with grants
2. Anita stated that she would get Marsha Tom to come in and do training regarding Grant Writing and make it available to the public.
3. Jodi spoke about Grant Writing seminars
4. Susan spoke about working with Beacon Programs
5. Lana touched on Art & Health Nutrition Grants
6. Lori stated that the parent coordinators need direction in writing grants

Anita emphasized that parent & teachers are afraid to complete these applications because of the number of papers to be completed. Anita stated that they must be able to follow the instructions exactly. They can talk with their principals & superintendents to get ideas.

Jodi spoke about setting up a committee for grant writing.

A committee was set up called "Grants Information Committee".

1. Co-Chairs - Jodi Nath & Susan. CDEC council members agreed unanimously.
2. Will meet with parent coordinators to help gather information in applying
3. Anita stated that there is information on the DOE website regarding grants

Rob spoke about PS 205 – NCLB

1. Transfers are being used as a dumping mechanism in regard to Level 1's.
2. Federal issue – not much can be done on a state & city level. Parents should be aware.
3. money needed

### ***Superintendent's Report*** – Anita Saunders

Anita thanked Ed for the name tags that were made up & thanked the CDEC for sharing the funding in their budget with the other schools.

- Welcome
- Regional Attendance Teacher of the Year Award - Ken Lowenstein

- **SPYFSS (Students Placement Youth Family Support Services)**– Borough-wide Center – September, 2006  
Director Ginay Marks will be retiring as of July 31<sup>st</sup> – reorganization will take place – there will no longer be a Region 3 or 4. It will be one Borough-wide Division.  
There will only be 10 LIS (Local Instructional Superintendents) & one will be assigned to District 26.
- **Budget Cuts – transfer of \$2.5 Million to Empowerment Schools in Region 3 (Teaching & Learning)**  
(LISs Retirements – 3 – Angela Monda, Leslie Sussman, July 1, 2006; Walter O’Brien – Sept. 1, 2006)  
20 schools have been accepted into the Empowerment Zone in Region 3, no schools in District 26 applied.  
Region 9 – 60 or more schools accepted into the Empowerment Zone  
Operations will also have a budget cut. There will be a Network Team Leader for every 20 schools and there will be 4 people under them (budget analyst-personnel person & instructor). Walter O’Brien will be retiring as of September 1<sup>st</sup>.
- **Summer School – Staff Development – June 29 & 30 (Glen Oaks Campus)**  
Summer School Sites – PS 46 (3-5 grades; MS 74 (6, 7 & 8<sup>th</sup> graders)  
Due to budget constraints, only those mandated will be able to attend summer school. Last year enrollment was extended to none mandated children as well.
- **Self-Sustaining Summer Program**  
Hawthorne Youth Enrichment Program – PS 26 – K-8  
Lori outlined that it is a ½ day program (4 days/wk) for children who don’t need help in remedial work. Parents do pay for this program.
- **Summer Day Camps – PS 46, 173, 203, 213, 221 for K-5 grades**
- **Beacon Program – MS 158, MS 172, MS 216**
- **Letters received from parents praising the teachers for what they have done.**

**Best Wishes for a Happy and Healthy Summer!**

***Old Business - none***

***New Business***

1. Dr. Lana Zinger gave a summary of the Parent Advisory Board Meeting (May 24, 2006)
  - Michael Flowers, the Borough President’s appointee to the Panel of Education Policy, moderated a panel discussion about the “Status of Education in Queens.”
  - The panel was compromised of the Borough President’s appointees to the Queens CDEC’s.

- Ms Ellen Raider made a presentation about her task force- Independent Commission on Public Education (ICOPE). They are comprised of parents/ educators/ students who volunteer their time to seek a human rights framework for NYC public school children.
- ICOPE seeks 12-15 individuals from each borough of NYC to participate in redesigning the NYC public school system. If anyone is interested, or knows of others interested- I have an application.
- We might want to invite Ms Raider to speak- she is very passionate and truly committed to changing the problems in public education and the **bizarre** politics of our current administration
- Each representative of the CDEC had to present what was wrong/ problematic in their communities.

**Summary from the CDEC representatives at the meeting:**

- The major theme was: *CDEC has NO decision making powers.*
- Superintendent does NOT take CDEC seriously.
- Disconnect between parent community leaders.
- Public hearings are a formality- but not productive.
- Parent coordinators should not be reporting to the principals but instead should report to parent advocacy groups.
- Few parents attend CDEC meetings and PTA- how do we increase participation?
- “Crisis” in district 27- some schools are so overcrowded that there are NO empty spaces, demanded that every child is placed in a comfortable environment.
- District 75 said district 26 does not involve them in decisions and they feel we leave them out and they are very uncomfortable with that.
- Lack of participation among immigrant parents- is there any way to integrate these families? UFT conducts workshops in different languages- contact them if your community needs this service. (Lori Butera also informed the attendees that there is an interpretation service available).
- A question was presented to Mr. Flowers- DO you attend the CDEC meetings? Suggested to host 1 monthly meeting at the Board of Education so each CDEC can have the opportunity to be heard at a central location.

Roseanne Darsch told us that they are allocating money for construction of 2 new building in our district (26), but it should be our responsibility to educate the parents as to WHERE to build these 2 new schools.

2. Resolutions

a. Cell Phone Ban – copy sent to all members for review – Ed made a motion to adopt and seconded by Melissa. Voted unanimously to accept by the other members. Rob read the resolution aloud to the public. (See attachment)

b. NCLB – copy sent to all members – Melissa made a motion to adopt and seconded by Ed & Carol. Voted unanimously to accept by the other members. Rob read the resolution aloud to the public. (See attachment)

Rob made a motion to adjourn and Ed seconded, council agreed unanimously.

Meeting adjourned at 9 p.m. and went directly into the Public Meeting

## ***PUBLIC MEETING***

Public meeting started at 9:05

Rob asked were there any speakers.

- a. Margaret thanked the CDEC for their supplies received.

Rob mentioned that there is now a vacancy on the CDEC as of July 1<sup>st</sup>, Rich Olson has resigned to be on the President's Council as the Co-President for MS 172. Notifications will be sent out and applications can be picked up. CDEC given 60 days to fill position or the Chancellor has the option to appoint an individual. Applications are due back July 26.

Recommendations will come from principals to fill the student vacancy position into the Superintendent's office. Rob thanked Adam Amit for being part of the CDEC.

Rob informed everyone that the next meeting would be July 27<sup>th</sup> to elect officers. Anita stated that she would be on vacation.

Rob made a motion to adjourn and Ed seconded to adjourn and the members unanimously agreed.

***Public meeting ended at 9:30 p.m.***

Respectfully submitted by Marian Mason, Administrative Assistant, CDEC 26.

## **CDEC 26 RESOLUTION ON CELL PHONE BAN**

Pursuant to New York State Education Law Section 2590-e subsection 14, Community District Education Council 26 holds public meetings every month during which the public may speak so that parents and the community have a voice and public forum to air their concerns. Pursuant to New York State Education Law Section 2590-e subsection 18, Community District Education Council 26 is empowered to provide input, as it deems necessary, to the Chancellor and the City Board on matter of concern to the district. Under this authority, Community District Education Council 26 sets forth the following:

**Whereas**, the safety of all children is a civil right;

**Whereas**, the safety of children living in District 26 and attending District 26 and other public schools is an important concern and priority of all members of the District 26 community;

**Whereas**, it is necessary to provide safety to children while they travel to and from school;

**Whereas**, providing safety to the community's children requires effective communication;

**Whereas**, cellular telephones have been used to promote such effective communication and their use has led to increased safety for the community's children;

**Whereas**, the Department of Education has banned the possession of cellular telephones at New York City Schools;

**Whereas**, Department of Education officials have confiscated cellular telephones from students that were not being used or displayed;

**Whereas**, this policy was instituted without any meaningful involvement by parents and others who will suffer diminished security for their children;

**Whereas**, this policy has been opposed by members of the District 26 Education community;

**Whereas**, this policy has resulted in children not having access to a reliable communication device that provides speedy and ready contact with parents, guardians and other safety providers.

### **Be it resolved;**

We, the members of the Community District Education Council 26 declare the ban on cell phones to be against the best interests of the children and students of District 26, and do appeal to the Chancellor to repeal this ban and replace it with a policy that allows students to possess cell phones in schools and prohibits their use or display on any school property.

**DATED: JUNE 29, 2006**

## **COMMUNITY DISTRICT EDUCATION COUNCIL 26**

### **Resolution**

**Whereas, the No Child Left Behind Law** is a reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, and holds all public schools accountable for raising all students to academic proficiency by 2013-14. Its provisions require New York State and New York City to test students in reading and mathematics annually in grades 3-8 and at least once during high school, beginning this school year.

**Whereas**, under the law, schools and districts must meet annual performance targets, based primarily on test scores. These targets apply to the student populations as a whole and to subgroups of students who are poor, speak limited English, have disabilities, or are members of racial or ethnic minorities.

**Whereas**, Schools and Districts receiving Federal Title 1 money for disadvantaged students are subject to increasingly serious sanctions if they miss the targets for two or more years.

**Whereas**, sanctions include permitting students to transfer to a higher-performing public school, then offering eligible students free tutoring from a public or private provider, and eventually, school closure.

**Whereas**, under this Law, students have transferred to District 26 schools to receive a "better" education.

**Whereas**, no District 26 school receives Federal Title 1 money and District 26 schools primarily rely upon standard tax levy money per student for funding.

**Whereas**, existing funding in District 26 schools has been found by the Court of Appeals of New York State to not adequately provide students with a sound basic education.

**Whereas**, District 26 resources in funding and staffing have been fully maximized in efforts to maintain its demanding education standards.

**Whereas**, repeated efforts to have additional funding provided have failed and the current funding is inadequate to properly provide No Child Left Behind transfer students with necessary teachers and supplies.

**Whereas**, those schools identified for improvement and have had students transferred to District 26 schools receive more funding under the federal Title 1 Program and New York State programs than District 26 schools.

**Whereas**, District 26 schools receiving transfer students must divert funding from existing students and existing programs to provide needed services for transfer students.

**Whereas**, the Federal government has approved letting several districts reverse the order in which public school choice and tutoring are offered to students in schools identified for improvement.



**Be it resolved** that sufficient funding be provided for each NCLB transfer student to provide an opportunity to achieve academic success. Sufficient funding being deemed more than the current provision of tax levy money.

**Be it resolved** that until such funding is provided, the education offered existing and transfer students shall suffer.

**Be it resolved** that until such funding is provided, there should be a cessation of transfers. Instead, tutoring is offered to students in schools identified for improvement prior to giving a transfer, even if the school has been identified for improvement.

**DATED: JUNE 29, 2006**