

CDEC26 RESOLUTION ON THE NEED FOR ONE FULL TIME GUIDANCE COUNSELOR IN EACH ELEMENTARY, INTERMEDIATE, AND MIDDLE SCHOOL

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 matters of concern to the district. At the September 27, 2007 Community District Education Council 26 monthly meeting, members of our education community formally discussed guidance counselors in our schools. Community District Education Council 26, under the above authority, sets forth the following:

Whereas, New York City school children in District 26 face numerous challenges both in and out of the classroom everyday that can prevent them from reaching their potential academically, socially and emotionally.

Whereas, elementary school is a time when students develop attitudes concerning school, self, peers, social groups, and family. It is a time when students develop decision-making, communication, and life training skills and character values necessary for them to become healthy productive adults.

Whereas, it is a sad reality that many children do not receive the early intervention needed to change self-destructive behavior, prevent long-term problems and are often unnecessarily and inappropriately referred to special education.

Whereas, early identification and intervention of children's problems are essential to address students' developmental needs to enable them to meet the challenging academic standards we've set for them.

Whereas, through comprehensive developmental guidance, school guidance counselors are prepared to intervene and assist students to address and combat these challenges in a successful and positive way by creating a caring atmosphere whereby children's needs are met through prevention and early identification, .

Whereas, within a comprehensive developmental guidance and counseling program, counselors work as a team with educators, parents, and community members that: provides individual and small group counseling and assessment of student's skills and abilities, and interpretation of standardized tests. Works with specialized populations and needs and helps develop students' lifelong process of forming basic values, attitudes, and interests. Coordinates school, community and business resources which promote students' personal growth and skill development. Provides consultation with teachers, administrators, school psychologists, school social workers, and outside agencies and social services concerning the welfare of the students.

Whereas, a comprehensive developmental guidance and counseling program is critical to children's successful development, identifying and helping elementary students at risk and is cost effective if all students are provided early intervention through classroom activities and individual and group counseling.

Whereas, early intervention has been shown to: Improve student attendance, which increases state aid to school districts. Reduce the need for remediation and academic intervention services. Improve student performance on academic assessments. Reduce discipline problems, resulting in fewer suspensions and the need for homebound instruction. Decrease the need for costly alternative education programs. Reduce the drop-out rate, which is costly to society-at-large. Improve the behavior of students at-risk for violent behavior, reducing costs from property damage, law suits, and rehabilitation. Assist students in meeting New York State's Learning Standards at all grades.

Whereas, New York City and New York State does not mandate or fund even one school guidance counselor in District 26 or any New York City School District for grades K-8, with the exception of guidance counselors mandated for special education.

Whereas, In order for schools to have an effective guidance program that meets the needs of their large, diverse student populations, each school must be adequately staffed by at least one certified or licensed school guidance counselor. Be it resolved;

We, the members of the Community District Education Council 26, declare our support for the efforts of Assemblyman Felix Ortiz and State Senator Frank Padavan who have recognized the positive effect school counselors have on the lives of all students. We support the legislation introduced in their respective houses mandating school counselors be employed in every public school in New York State.

We also appeal to the Chancellor to consider the employment of a school counselor in every public school as a necessary component of the school and provide for such in every school's budget under the Fair Funding formula.

Dated 11-29-07