

Community District Education Council District 26

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MINUTES OF BUSINESS & CALENDAR PUBLIC MEETINGS

Date: Tuesday, June 7, 2011

Time: Business Meeting-7:00 P.M.; Public Meeting-8:00 P.M.

Location: MS 67 – 51-60 Marathon Pkwy, Little Neck, NY -Room B44A

The meeting of the Community District Education Council of District 26 (CDEC26) was called to order by Rob Caloras, President at 7:20 pm.

Roll Call: Rob Caloras, Susan Shiroma, Pia Alexander, Xiao Mei Ge, Ismael Fuentes & Irene Fennell

Excused– Dina Quondamatteo - Jeannette Segal - Ricky Chan

Also in attendance were Anita Saunders, Community Superintendent & Lori Butera, and District Family Advocate

Business Meeting

1. Minutes – Rob asked the council had they had an opportunity to read/review the May 26, 2011 minutes. Ismael Fuentes made a motion to accept the May 26th minutes as is and Rob seconded. Council agreed unanimously to accept the minutes.

2. President's Report – Robert Caloras

a. 1st Day of Chinese Cow Test (3 day entry exam) that all students must take and the report stated that it basically a massive memorization test. Much of the education system in China relies upon standardize testing which also relies on students doing memorization. With memorizing it shows that Chinese students are the best in the world (Shanghai has the highest scores). Students has shown to have very poor analytical skills (which are the ability to analyze) that people like in those they hire. The gentleman who is the head of the business community in China stated that he cannot find native Chinese to satisfy their need to be analytical (analyze) and they are looking to bring people in. If they cannot improve this it could be that they might have to move their businesses out of China. Those in charge of the Chinese education system stated that they are looking to bring analytical skills into the curriculum.

b. Atlantic Magazine (June edition) – article “Scenes from the class struggle”, sub-title “Who better to lead an educational revolution than Joel Klein, ex-prosecutor who took on Microsoft”, but in eight years he learned painful lessons of his own-about feckless politicians, headstrong unions, teachers are mediocre and other enduring obstacles to creating the education reform that is needed. Article by Joel Klein. Rob stated that he did not mention one thing about what the parents wanted to do.

- c. NY Times Article (June 6th) – “Helping Teachers Help Themselves”-Montgomery, Maryland for the last eleven years has a program to evaluate teachers. The panel consists of 700 mentoring teachers to help mentor teachers through an evaluation system (Peer Assistance and Review (PAR). If the mentoring does not work, the PAR panel which consist of eight teachers and eight principals to can vote to fire the teacher. They do not use standardize testing. Senior staff members with the Dept. of Education have visited Maryland to study the program and Montgomery officials have gone to Washington to explain how it works. They use old fashion methods. They have fired 200 teachers and 300 have left rather than go through the PAR process. It took three to five years to build the trust to get PAR in place. Per the superintendent (Dr. Weast) he stated that Arne Duncan said “you are going where the country needs to go”. Maryland was granted “Race to the Top” funds however the program must meet certain criteria; such as; evaluating teachers, utilizing standardizing test but Dr. Weast (superintendent) did not accept the “Race to the Top” funds because he felt the grant required districts to include students’ state test results as a measure of teacher quality. He stated “he doesn’t believe the tests are reliable and you don’t want to turn your system into a test factory”. Rob stated that a system that is working does not receive “Race to the Top Funds” but a system that has never been utilized satisfies “Race to the Top” funds. Rob stated “use your analytical ability to figure out what is wrong with the education system in this country”.
- d. Rob informed the attendees that he will not be returning to the council next year and thanked everyone.

Old Business

A copy of the resolution concerning The Department of Education's Plan to Have Student's Take Additional Tests as Part of Teacher Evaluation was distributed. The resolution was passed and adopted on May 26, 2011. The council has been fighting this issue along with the UFT and Mark Weprin has been very vocal on this issue. Rob stated “it’s a losing battle”.

Rob stated that protests & boycotts are being held, petitions circulating & informational meetings are being held.

Budget – budget closed for the year-no change

New Business

Recording Secretary Pia Alexander asked a question posed to her from a parent at one of her liaison schools, as to whether or not positive reinforcement is part of the school curriculum or standards in D26. This question was posed by a parent who felt they had not received any positive feedback from the teacher during P/T conferences or any additional interaction informal or otherwise from the teacher and felt this contributed to their daughter feeling negative about her experience at school. District Superintendent Anita Saunders clarified that because of the brief nature of P/T conferences; teachers feel pressure to get the most pressing issues regarding areas where a particular student may need improvement first, before having any time to address things that the student is excelling in.

Rob discussed an MS 158 parent inquiring about whether it is essential for students to return to school after their 8th Grade graduation. Superintendent Saunders responded that the students are required to show up after graduation and return to school.

Rob spoke about a parent (Mel Meer) whose child is in the 8th grade and graduating, stated that after graduation children are told to return and sit in the auditorium. Anita spoke with Ms. Nappi and a letter was going out to parents informing them that their child is to return after graduation

Motion was made to adjourn business meeting at 7:45 PM, there was no break and public meeting started immediately.

Superintendent's Report

CDEC Meeting

June 7, 2011

MS 67

- Welcome
- Chancellor's Conferences – Brooklyn Tech
 - Principals/Superintendents – Saturday, June 4, 2011
 - Parent Coordinators/PTA Presidents – June 6, 2011
 - “Working to strengthen student work and teacher practice in our schools_ _ _ _ with the goal of ensuring that all NYC students are on track to graduating from high school ready for college and careers.”
 - Presenters:
 - Charlotte Danielson – “Enhancing Professional Practice: A Framework for Teaching”
 - David Coleman – Common Core Standards in Math & Literacy
- Summer School – Begins, July 5th – Math Test, August 8th; ELA Test, August 9, Make-up; August 10, 2011
- Hawthorne Program – July 5 – August 4, 2011
- Presentation of Appreciation

Have a Wonderful Summer!

Quote

“We are what we repeatedly do. Excellence, therefore, is not an act, but a habit.”

Aristotle, Greek Philosopher

Anita stated that she wanted to thank all the CDEC for all the wonderful work, dedication, for the time put in, coming to the meetings, trying hard to influence people in different places with certain ideas, being very open and honest in what you think, the caring for the children in your community. Superintendent Saunders ended the meeting with presenting Certificates of Appreciation to the council members who will not be returning to the council after the end of their 2 yr terms.

Meeting ended with cake and congratulations to all members for being dedicated to the students in District 26 during the time that they served on the council.

Meeting adjourned at 8:15 p.m.

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