

Community District Education Council District 26

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MINUTES OF BUSINESS & CALENDAR PUBLIC MEETINGS

Date: Thursday, November 17, 2005

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

Location: MS 74, 61-15 Oceania Street, Bayside, NY 11364-Room 128

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.

Roll Call: Rob Caloras, Carol Gomez, Susan Shiroma, Jackie Montgomery, Melissa Dorfman, Shakira Gafar-Kirshnitz, Edward Fallacaro, Yen Shia Chou, Bona Sun & Adam Amit.

Excused: Mona Fabricant, Richard Olson & Lori Stein-Butera

Anita Saunders, Community Superintendent & Local Instructional Superintendent Walter O'Brien also attended.

Business Meeting

Rob started off by informing the council e-mails were sent out regarding the paper shortage at the schools. The suggestions to send all schools paper. The elementary schools will get 4 cases and the middle schools will get 6 cases, each case costing approximately \$26.37 totaling \$3217.14. Jackie made a motion to send the schools papers and Melissa seconded. The council voted unanimously to send paper to all schools in district 26.

Rob also brought up the same issue with the PTA's as well as having access to a copy machine. Rob proposed that the council give them access to the CDEC copy machine at MS 74 by appointment only due to the fact that they also send out the CDEC notices. Rob stated that through the CDEC representatives that the PTA's would be notified of the CDEC's generous offer and will communicate their acceptance and appointments will be made through Marian. A motion was made by Jackie to provide copy paper (colored paper) & give them access to the copy machine by appointment only and this was seconded by Melissa. The council voted unanimously to get copy paper and let the PTA have access to the copy machine by appointment only.

Public Meeting

Rob introduced Ms. Esther Friedman, PHD, Director of Secondary School Reform.

Speaker #1 – Ms. Esther Friedman, PhD, Director of Secondary School Reform informed the attendees that she has been in this position since August 1, 2005. Spoke on secondary & middle school reforms. There is a big biz around the world in regard to nurturing adolescents in a developmental appropriate way.

Ms. Friedman spoke about the Fifteen Recommendations Proposed by the Reading Next Report:

- | Instructional Improvements | Infrastructure Improvements |
|---|---|
| 1. Direct, explicit comprehension instruction | 10. Extended time literacy |
| 2. Effective embedded in content | 11. Professional development (testing) |
| 3. Motivation and self-directed learning | 12. Ongoing summative assessment of students and programs |
| 4. Text-based collaborative learning | 13. Teach teams |
| 5. Strategic tutoring | 14. Leadership |
| 6. Diverse texts | 15. A comprehensive & coordinated literacy program |
| 7. Intensive writing | |
| 8. A technology component | |
| 9. Ongoing formative assessment of students | |

Ms. Friedman also outlined the The Big Five and the focus would be on:

- Reading Next – A vision for action and research in middle & high school literacy.
- Targeted Intervention and enrichment.
- Enhanced use of academic advisory classes.
- Out-of-the-box scheduling (this would allow teacher to provide intervention and enrichment services before the school day officially starts and after it ends).
- Seventh grade promotional policy (must score Level 2 or higher on the ELA). Saturday Preparatory Academies, school-specific activities such as before and after school programs, specialized and targeted intervention programs.

Among the structure planned to support this work will be:

- Funding for intervention services in middle schools
- Monthly meetings for Regional representatives, conducted by Dr. Friedman. The Regional representatives will serve as point personnel supporting the middle school reform initiative, working directly with regional office staff and with liaisons from each middle school.
- Selection of several model sites in each Region to provide venues for intervisitation. These sites will also send reps to the monthly meetings. Model sites will be named by January 2006.
- Collaboration with parent coordinators in training parents to use strategies that support academic success in adolescents.
- Collaboration with university partners and other organizations to identify and promote best practices and to bring external resources to schools to support their work.
- Newsletter to share best practices and research-to-practice information.

- The development of a “best practices” manual that will include submissions from the field.

Ms. Friedman stated that a 19 million grant (federal) was just submitted and if awarded, only 8 schools will be awarded by January or February.

Ms. Anita Saunders stated that there are Level Libraries in all schools. She informed the attendees that there should be at least 1000 books per classroom and more books can be used. Anita stated that the higher the grade that more books is needed.

Ms. Friedman spoke on the structuring of middle schools (K-5). Will be eliminating 6-8 schools. Options will be K-8 schools. The goal is for families to have the option to choose. This gives the children less emotional stress in transitioning from elementary to middle school.

Speaker #2 - Rob announced Ms. Mary Vaccaro, the new UFT Representative for District 26, who replaced Danny Friedman. Ms. Vaccaro stated that they are preparing to work on the contract with Randi Weingarten & the Chancellor on November 29th. Rob asked about the issue regarding the extra hours. Ms Vaccaro stated that the days will be 10 minutes shorter. The 150 minutes will be used for tutorial sessions. There will be 10 children to every teacher in the after school program up through high school and 5 children for special education to every teacher. Teachers will be advised to return to school 2 days before Labor Day to set up class rooms and children will return the Tuesday after Labor Day. The new contract will be effective February 1, 2006. The contract states that all children will be dismissed at their regular time and then the teachers can request that 10 children return for tutoring. Tutoring will consist of 37 ½ minutes. One parent brought up the issue that come February her daughter already has her afternoon activities planned that has been paid for. The parent doesn't feel that the afternoon activity is more important than the education but children need their social & other programs in their lives which cannot be rescheduled.

Ms. Vaccaro informed the attendees that Randi Weingarten wants the UFT reps to bring any issues from the districts that might be of concern back to the union table to be discussed.

Public meeting ended at 8:25

Business Meeting (continued)

Meeting called to order by Rob Caloras at 8:35 p.m.

Roll call done by Carol Gomez.

Recording Secretary's Report – Carol Gomez

1. *Reviewing of previous month's minutes (October 27, 2005) – Carol asked if there were any corrections, changes, or additions. Rob made a motion to accept the minutes, Ed seconded and council members voted unanimously to accept.*
2. *Correspondence from the Boys Scouts of America inviting the CDEC to honor a young man who has achieved the highest rank in scouting (Daniel Zarchy).*

President's Report

1. Apologized – need to be more attentive to the schools scheduling of events.
2. Spoke about e-mails being sent out. Article on the Science Curriculum.

3. Reiterated about projects that are being done in Dist. 26. Received correspondence from the School Construction Authority (SCA).
4. Meeting with Councilman Weprin's Chief of Staff, Jack Friedman & Assemblyman Weprin's Chief of Staff, Ruth Wimphimer to go various issues in education such as a need for school postage and paper. They mentioned a change on the Q46 bus lines which will be announced. They also mentioned that they would like the support of the CDEC regarding the Variance Policy in order to disperse the student population. The Chancellor has changed his policy so as to allow a Sibling Variance who has older siblings can be accommodated.
Science Curriculum letter – District 26 doing very well. Thanked Ms. Saunders for her help in learning more about the science curriculum & will e-mail Walter and thank him.
5. Letter sent to Carmen Farina & the Chancellor and a response was received. Will copy Anita & Walter on this letter.
6. Crossing Guards – issue came up at a MS 67 meeting. They do not have a crossing guard and Rob spoke to the captain in the 111th Precinct. 2 crossing guards have been hired out of the 4 open positions.
7. Attended the Community Board 11 meeting & the board suggested changing a street to a one-way but that issue has been tabled. One of the community board members stated by making it a one-way would only make drivers drive faster. Rob informed the attendees that he has been in contact with the PTA of the school trying to help with the petition to the Community Board.
8. Rob did an overview of the November 10th meeting with the PTA Presidents and the CDEC. A suggestion was made to have more communication with the PTA members. The major issue was the teacher's contract that will have an effect on the students. Discussed a Grant Writing Workshop that Susan Shiroma would be organizing and it would be district wide.

9. The following is a list of issues that members of the CDEC have expressed concern. Ms. Anita Saunders has taken the time to respond:

1. Which District 26 elementary school has full-time school librarians who are in the school 5 days per week?
Regarding elementary schools, most have full time cluster teachers in the library (e.g. 18, 26, 31, 94, 159, 173, 178), one with a part time teacher ((186), two have a certified librarian (115 and 266), one has parent volunteers on certain days (205). All middle schools have a full time licensed librarian.
2. Is there any plan to end 9th grade classes at MS67? Any discussion? Any need?
At the present time the idea is being explored.
- 3a. Are there schools in our District that are in need of copy paper?
Yes.
- b. If so, is it true that this expense was not anticipated and not provided for in school budgets?
Yes.
- c. If so, is this shortage of paper and money due to the need to copy and distribute State tests that were downloaded?
In part yes. Many copies had to be made of the State Math Test and for the accompanying test manuals made available to schools as downloadable e-copies.

Many school staffers and Administrators spent significant time overseeing the downloads as well as making the copies.

d. If so, is there any DOE or region money to allay this unanticipated cost?

No. However, based on the complaints received, in particular from D26 Administrators, the Department of Education will be providing each school with a test package for each student taking the test and a manual for each test giver.

e. If there are insufficient funds and paper can the CDEC offer assistance to individual schools?

This unexpected expense makes it cost prohibitive for schools to run CDEC notices and information sheets, necessary for the CDEC. As such, individual schools need paper to run these items.

Other science programs – PS 94 is a mild program.

10. Discussed changing the December 29th CDEC meeting to December 20th at 7 p.m.

Treasurer's Report

1. Spoke about scanner information sent to Marian to look in to.
2. Forecasting – website costs would be \$109.

Committee Reports

Zoning & Outreach Review

Rob spoke about visiting MS 67 and the change in lunch protocol. Students will sit with their class at the tables while eating and when finished can move around.

Ed's highlights from the Parent Involvement Meeting at Tweed (Monday, November 14, 2005)

HIV/AIDS Curriculum

Carmen Farina spoke about the HIV/AIDS Curriculum:

- Will be distributed to schools on December 1st
- Curriculum covers Elementary, Middle and High Schools
- Ms. Farina advised she will have Jemina Bernard forward CDEC's links to the curriculum for download and review as soon as possible
- Betty Rothgarten can come out to CDEC meetings to speak of the new curriculum
- There are minimum required lessons for all, however the curriculum is age appropriate and parents can opt out (same as sex education)
- Curriculum developed and supervised with the Department of Health
- Every Region is receiving training
- Question was raised by CDEC member in Region 4 – Why was the curriculum not provided to CDEC prior to the finalization and release for December 1st? Answer was that the topic is very technical and should be reviewed with Betty Rothgarten; we will get the info as soon as possible via Jemina Bernard; also, the curriculum is being distributed to the Regions/Districts for "information and discussion"

UFT Contract

Carmen Farina mentioned the UFT contract to be in place by Feb 1:

- Briefly mentioned the extra 37.5 minutes added 4 days a week
- Hope is that the Teacher Administrative period will allow the flexibility for Arts enrichment

- Enables school based decision making
- No seniority transfers
- Circular 6 – principals discretion as to how it's carried out

Proposed Amendment to the Capital Plan

Carmen Farina mentioned the School Facilities and adjustments in relation to the proposed amendment to the Capital Plan:

- SCA will be available to attend CDEC meetings to discuss
- Info will be forwarded to CDEC's when finalized
- Held up by the mayor
- CEC members expressed concern as this would not allow ample time for response/comments

Special Education

Linda Wernikoff spoke on the New Initiatives in Special Education. Some highlights:

- Outside recommendations were discussed after a review (“Hehir Report” – Comprehensive Management Review and Evaluation of Special Education available online)
- Focus on instruction and implementing a successful model

Special Education (continued)

- Most referrals for services are due to inability to read (not struggling – non-readers)
- Wilson Reading Program – 2600 trained, and working on certifying Regional trainers
- Urban Schools Attuned utilized – teaches teachers on how kids learn; content area instruction focus as well (ex. Science)
- Major improvement is Principal responsibility/accountability for Special Ed children – old model was Special Ed Supervisor who parents needed to contact
- Tracking System lacking - \$30 million upgrade to avoid issues with tracking IEP, paper trails, etc.; this year Integrated Voice Response phone system utilized to track services provided to kids
- Increasing Autism programs – PS120, Regions 7,8,9 this yr – Regions 1,3,6 next year
- Mentioned Pre-School fairs for students requiring services
- Approximately 150,000 students in public special ed in NYC schools (20,000 District 75)
- OT/PT Scholarship available due to shortage of qualified individuals

Blueprint for Arts Education

Sharon Dunn spoke about the school system's Blueprint for Arts Education. Handouts will be left at CDEC 26 office for review, or can be downloaded at <http://www.nycenet.edu/projectarts>. The materials were developed by the Office of Arts and Special Projects in conjunction with the Arts community to help shape the school system's curriculum for Arts education. Some highlights:

- Funding/money is always an issue
- Ms. Farina expects to hear about Arts programs on her Middle School visits (currently underway)
- NYS Standards – All arts (art, music, dance, theater)
 - Pre-K through 2nd Grade -> 20%
 - 3rd through 5th -> 10%
 - Middle School -> 1 year each of two art forms

- High School -> Sequence in each art form
- Mentioned many involved in Arts careers in NYC come from outside
- Chancellor Klein asked for baseline for teaching and learning Arts Education
- Work performed with Dept of Cultural Affairs and NYC arts community
- Mentioned the need to communicate cultural resources – museums, plays, groups coming to school (ex. Fashion designer visit)
- Over 3000 teachers attended training so far
- Mentioned Summer Arts Institute for rising 8th graders to prep for Specialized HS admittance – January announcement
- Many CDEC members mentioned the cut of Arts time in class for test prep

Jackie stated she met with Ms. Goldberg, Principal of PS 46 and she stated that the school needs work to be done (windows-gym-roof & electrical). The biggest problem is getting Con Edison to come back and complete their job; it's been 6 months and no response. Need help in getting this matter taken care of. Walter O'Brien stated that the School Construction Authority (SCA) Larry Johnson would have to get involved in this matter. Walter will look into this problem. Jackie would like for a letter from the CDEC in support be sent to Con Edison. Jackie will draft a letter and the council will review before sending. Rob spoke about contacting Councilman Weprin and informing him of the situation to get his help.

Ed stated that an e-mail was sent to the council regarding the Outreach committees & that they should meet at least once a month to discuss on the presentation of presenting the CDEC at outside meetings. Suggested setting up a meeting for December 6th at 6:30. Council agreed unanimously.

Carol spoke about contact with the schools PTAs'. Sent e-mails but no responses received. Council members can go to the PTA meetings as parents only not to represent the CDEC unless invited to the meeting as a Council member.

Superintendent's Report – Anita Saunders

1. Chancellor's report - \$20 million dollar grants to Secondary HS
2. 5th Grade Social Studies Testing (emphasize reading)
3. ELA – Practice Test – principals had to download the test booklet (3 booklets per child) & copy (paper shortage).
Scoring & Instructional Implications – On November 8th, they were scored by the teachers & the importance of this scoring was primarily to analyze where the children are now & then develop an instructional plan.
4. New York Times Article regarding “Gifted and Talented” – a response was received from Anna Commatante of the Gifted & Talented program stated that many of the issues addressed in the NYT's were related to issues in District 3. Statements made that children would be guaranteed a seat, is not true.
5. Changes in citywide next year. Looking for a company to come up with a standard test for everyone.
6. Wished everyone a Happy & safe Thanksgiving. Walter said the same.

New Business

1. Rob stated that Marlene Siegel would be the guest speaker for the next meeting if she was available and asked that Marian contact her regarding her availability.

Old Business

Website – Ed stated that a draft of the website has been set up and for everyone to review for any changes, additions, corrections or etc then they will discuss at the December 6th meeting.

Rob made a motion to adjourn and Council members agreed unanimously.

Meeting adjourned at 9:25 p.m.

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