

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

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### **MINUTES OF THE BUSINESS/PUBLIC MEETING**

**Date:** Thursday, December 20, 2007

**Time:** – 7:00 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 and chaired by Rob Caloras, President at 7:05 p.m.

Attendees: Rob Caloras, Dr. Lana Zinger, Marie Pollicino, Irene Fennell & Irene Cheung & Patrick McShane

Excused - Minkyung Lee & Jeannette Segal

Present – Anita Saunders, Community Superintendent

Vacation - Lori Butera – District Family Advocate

#### **Secretary's Report – Patrick McShane**

1. Patrick asked if everyone had a chance to read the October 25<sup>th</sup> & November 29<sup>th</sup> minutes or make corrections. Rob made a motion to adopt the minutes as is and Patrick seconded. Members voted unanimously to accept the minutes.

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

- Rob spoke on purchasing a refrigerator/freezer for the MS 67 location.
- Informed the attendees that the copier has been received and can now be used to make copies if wanted.
- Informed the attendees that Anita Saunders will speak on the lock down situation at the Glen Oaks High School on Dec. 13<sup>th</sup> (hoax-letter received threatening seven students with death found in the Asst. Principal's mailbox which triggered a lock down). Rob informed the attendees that he received a phone call from Assemblyman Lancman, Nolan & Weprin are sponsoring legislation that will address the notification of how schools will notify parents in case of emergencies.  
Per Anita – every parent was called at PS 266 & per Mary Vaccaro, UFT Rep.; every child was given back pack notification.  
Rob stated that the legislation is looking to put a policy in place that will be uniform for all schools. There have been follow up meetings taking place regarding this incident. Rob stated that the Mayor and the Chancellor will review the cell phone policy again.
- Scholarship Committee meeting on December 3<sup>rd</sup> at MS 67 where Mary Vaccaro, Rob & Kathy Cahn and some teachers attended regarding the Scholarship Dinner Dance. On May 8<sup>th</sup> there will be 2<sup>nd</sup> Dinner Dance a collaboration with the UFT, CDEC & President's Council and any other organization or parent that would like to join. Last year, eight awards were given out. This year there will be an essay & drawing for different grades. The topic is "If you could design your own education, what would it be like"?

**District 26 Scholarship Application**  
**Grades K-2**

Why do you love school?

Or

What is special about your school?

Illustrate on 8 ½ X 11 paper with a caption.

**Grades 3-5**

If you could change anything in your school, what would it be?

500-1000 Words—Handwritten

**Middle School**

If you could change education in the City of New York, what would you do?

1000-2000 Words—Typed, double spaced

**High School**

If you could create an educational (school) system what would it look like?

2000 Word minimum—Typed, double spaced

**Application Guidelines and Rules**

- All applicants attend a District 26 Public School. High School applicants must reside within District 26. District 75 students attending a District 26 school are also eligible.
- All students must have passing grades, Level 3 or better.
- All students must have satisfactory behavior.
- All students should be active in their school/community, and/or involved in extra-curricular activities.
- Students should have no more than 10 lateness's and/or absences for the current school year.
- Students may only submit one application.
- All students should be aware that classroom teachers will be contacted, regarding attendance, behavior and academic achievement.
- Each student submission must have student's name, school and contact information attached.
- One child on each level will be presented with a bond and honored on Thursday, May 8, 2008 at the scholarship dinner dance.

Deadline – February 25, 2008

The next meeting is in March to review the paperwork for the Scholarship Dinner.

- Spoke about Martine's response to the Guidance Counselor resolution:

Thank you for the resolution the council voted on November 29, 2007 concerning support for the legislation introduced by Assemblyman Felix Ortiz and State Senator Frank Padavan regarding school guidance counselors. Your resolution has been reviewed and taken under advisement.

Your point is well-taken that effective early interventions for students whether academic or social-emotional help to improve student outcomes within the context of a well-considered and implemented plan to support the student development. It is the belief of the Department of Education that the school leadership team is the vehicle for the discussion of the particular needs within each school. This year more support and training is being offered to school leadership teams in order to enable each to have substantive conversations about student achievement and student support needs. Decisions regarding the support for the needs of students are best made at the school level through the school leadership team.

This year as school leadership teams are strengthened through higher parent participation rates and more training, the NYC DOE Office of Intergovernmental Affairs which works closely with elected officials on legislation that affects the City school system will monitor the progress of the proposed legislation. It is important to note that during the 2008 State Legislative Session this bill will go through the committee process again for consideration. Between the action of the legislature and the work of school leadership teams we believe schools will make the right decisions about supporting the needs of students.

I'll keep you apprised of the progress of the legislation.

Best,  
Martine Guerrier  
Chief Family Engagement Officer

Rob informed the attendees that the SLT's have a lot of power and are suppose to be involved in aligning the curriculum with the budget and finding out what are the priorities in each school. Under the new regulations, the Principal only has to consult with the SLT.

- PS 162 (electrical) – Rob informed the council that an e-mail was sent to Mary Leas, SCA. After sending second reminder, Rob spoke to Mary Leas, SCA and she would contact the custodian plus make a visit to the school and investigate the needs. Ms. Leas will work with the principal regarding their needs. Mary Leas will check and see if City Council money is available. Also Ms. Leas will be coming to the CDEC January meeting to discuss the Capital Plan Amendments.  
Rob explained that the Chancellor is giving the CDEC's more of a role in working with the SCA that they are the community representatives whenever any work is getting done. The SCA & DOE would like to have input before starting a project.
- Rob informed the attendees that he was not able to attend the President's Council meeting on December 18<sup>th</sup>.
- Articles – Rob stated that the last CDEC meeting was reported in the Times Ledger. Teachers are leaving schools even though the school received an "A" due to lots of violence. Charter schools will also get progress reports.
- Voting on prospective candidates – Erik DePaula & Michael Kaleda.  
Votes taken for Erik DePaula – 6 YES – 0 NO – welcomed Erik to CDEC.  
Votes taken for Michael Kaleda – 6 YES – 0 NO- candidate not present.

Rob welcomed Erik DePaula to the council - resolution read:

**VACANCY RESOLUTION – 12-20-07**

**Resolution** - To fill a vacancy on CDEC 26 this occurred on **12-20-07**

**WHEREAS**, Community District Education Council members are representatives of the parents and community-at-large; and

**WHEREAS**, a vacancy has occurred on Community District Education Council 26 (CDEC 26) effective **7-1-07**; and,

**WHEREAS**, Department of Education rules and Chancellor's Regulation A-140 state that when a vacancy occurs on a CDEC, the CDEC shall fill the vacancy at a public meeting, after consultation with Presidents' Council and other education groups; and

**WHEREAS**, CDEC 26 has followed the regulations regarding filling of the vacancy; and

**WHEREAS**, CDEC 26 has selected a the best qualified person to fill that vacancy; now therefore,

**BE IT RESOLVED**, that in accordance with Department of Education procedures, Community District Education Council 26 hereby appoints Erik DePaula & Michael Kaleda to fill the vacancies as Council Members of CDEC 26, effective immediately.

**APPROVED** unanimously by vote: 6 – 0 ( 6 Yes; 0 No)

**PASSED and ADOPTED** this **20 Day of December 2007**.

Rob announced that Erick DePaula & Michael Kaleda are now members of the CDEC 26 council.

Informed council members that another prospective candidate's application was in their folder for review.

Marian informed council members that their activity sheets for December are needed and any expenses should be put through for signature.

**Treasurers Report – Irene Cheung – read the balance of each account**

Date	Vendor Name	General Supplies	Local Travel/Food	Stipend Reimbursements	Telephone Svcs	Maintenance Equip.	
		Code – <b>198</b>	Code - <b>451</b>	Code - <b>496</b>	Code - <b>402</b>	Code - <b>612</b>	Code 315
<b>09/07</b>		<b>11,000</b>	<b>1,900</b>	<b>2,000</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>4,000</b>	
AS OF	12-19-07 approx.	9905	1265	1690	100	1600	33
	12-19-07	9631	1265	1690	100	1600	33

**Superintendent’s Report – Anita Saunders**

Anita welcomed the two new CDEC council members (Irene Fennel & Erik DePaula).

- Gifted & Talented Applications Grades K-3 for 2008 due January 3<sup>rd</sup> to home school.
- Gold Medal Citywide Ballroom Competition at Columbia University – December 17, 2007 – PS 41.  
(Students will go to grand finale at the Winter Garden on June 21<sup>st</sup>)  
Rob announced that the CDEC will invite the winning schools to perform at the April CDEC meeting.
- Grant – Feinstein Foundation 1,000 and 600 to PS 41 – money to be used for charitable purposes (Donating decorated bears, books and student hand-made jewelry to hospitals and organizations).
- No Child Left Behind Blue Ribbon Award – Washington D.C. – PS 41, 162.
- MS 216 – First Place in the Robotics Queens Tournament – Category = Robot Design – will attend NYC tournament in Manhattan end of January (Teachers, Mr. Xanthus and Ms. O’Sullivan).
- Senior Achievement Facilitators (SAF) have been working on setting up training in D26 on the new computerized systems such as Acuity, IBM, McGraw Hill & etc.

Every Community Superintendent is now a SAF in which they oversee other schools out of their district and look at students who are on the low performing end. Their progress will be reviewed and studied to determine common weaknesses. Additionally, their achievement will be monitored especially in light of the strategies used to increase their performance. Anita also informed the attendees that she would be having hip surgery on Jan. 4<sup>th</sup> and would be out for awhile.

**Wishing everyone a wonderful Holiday and a  
New Year of good health, happiness, success and peace.**

**School Visits**

Lana attended the PTA meeting at PS 159 and stated that the attendance was low.

Irene Fennell spoke about publications that were sitting around in the school “How to be a better citizen”.

Irene Cheung inquired about class size. Anita will get information and give to us. She stated that MS 216 received money to reduce class size. Rob informed the attendees that it’s on the website.

Rob attended the Glen Oaks High School and toured the building. Rob checked their progress reports and the school is very big on collaborative teaching.

Rob also attended the PTA meeting at PS 186 – well attended. Rob gave an overview of the CDEC. Petition signed by over 200 people regarding the progress report and getting it changed.

Mary Vaccaro informed attendees that a child being hit because a crossing guard is needed at Commonwealth. Mary urging parents to drop off students on the same side of the school not on the other side of a busy street.

Rob stated that last year a meeting was held with the leaders the DOE, DOT, community board representatives & police department. Crossing guard is a police department issue and parents should be going there complaining. There is a shortage in trying to get people to fill this position.

Rob made a motion to adjourn the Business meeting and Patrick seconded. Council unanimously voted to adjourn.

**Business meeting ended at 8:30 p.m.**

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## PUBLIC FORUM MEETING

Forum called to order at 8:45 by Rob Caloras, President, CDEC.

Rob Caloras welcomed everyone to the CDEC 26 Public meeting & introduced the CDEC members, Patrick McShane, Erik DePaula (new member), Lana Zinger, Irene Cheung, Marie Pollicino and Irene Fennell.

Rob introduced Dave Palmer, Staff Attorney from the New York Lawyers for the Public Interest, Inc. to speak on the topic of leasing schools for the DOE. Mr. Palmer works solely on contaminated areas in the clean up.

- Work on existing facilities that the DOE will lease from private owners and turn into schools.
- Lack of available clean land – overcrowding of schools
- New schools being built on contaminated land which caused those schools to be closed down and more testing was needed to ensure that the site was truly.
- Leasing issues – state law which governs the citing of schools
  - a. notification to the community, school board & community board
  - b. NYC Council in which they will vote (2/3 vote needed)
  - c. Must go through State & Environmental quality review

- Legislation passed by Nolan requiring collaboration over leased school properties-mandating environmental reviews and a public process. Senator Padavan held talks between environmental advocates and the city.
- Informed attendees that two new schools (Mott Haven & Gateway HS) were put on contaminated sites. Later, cleanups were done at both sites.
- Mr. Palmer spoke about a resolution “A.8838” being passed:

Resolution calling upon the State Senate to amend the Public Authorities Law in relation to citing requirements for the New York City School Construction Authority’s Leasing Program by passing a “same as” bill to A.8838.

Whereas, The New York City School Construction Authority (“SCA”) is the entity responsible for building new public schools and managing the design, construction and renovation of capital projects within the New York City public school system; and

Whereas, In order to alleviate overcrowding and to replace old facilities, the Department of Education’s (“DOE”) five year capital plan includes proposals to lease over 30 existing buildings across the City and use them for school buildings; and

Whereas, our Community District Education Council has concerns regarding the approval and oversight process of leasing such buildings, including appropriate community participation and political and environmental review processes; and

Whereas, According to news reports, the SCA interprets the Appellate Division’s decision in Park South-Tenants Corp. v. Board of Education of the City of New York, 208 A.D.2d 394 (1994), to mean that their leasing program is exempt from the section of the State Public Authorities Law which requires public notice of site plans for planned educational facilities, submission of site plans to local community boards (including school boards – now replaced by community education councils), and the City Council, and public hearings; and

Whereas, Community and Council oversight affords the opportunity for stakeholders – including key stakeholders, such as parent members of local community education councils – and other members of the public to share important information about proposed sites, including environmental concerns; and

Whereas, the diagnosis of several pediatric illnesses with suspected links to the environment are on the rise for example, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has reported that asthma rates for children under the age of 17 nearly doubled between 1980 and 2001; and

Whereas, In New York City, according to the New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, asthma is the most common disease among children, a primary cause of missed school and the most common cause of hospitalization for children under the age of 14; and

Whereas, The SCA has leased environmentally-problematic facilities in the past, such as P.S. 141 in Harlem, where after spending millions in 1997 to turn this leased dry cleaning plant into a school, the City was forced to close it down after it was found that students were being exposed to chemical fumes; and

Whereas, The SCA has also leased environmentally-problematic facilities in the past in Queens, such as P.S. 65 in Ozone Park, a former airplane factory, and Information Technology High School in Long Island City, a former metal-plating factory; and

Whereas, The DOE and SCA should provide new school seats and support safe new capacity projects, and a process should be in place to allow for sufficient community notice, City Council scrutiny and a thorough environmental review; and

Whereas, State legislation is needed to amend sections 1731 and 1732 of the Public Authorities Law to clarify that leased facilities are subject to the same community participation and political review process applied to new school construction; and

Whereas, New York State Assembly has unanimously passed legislation (A.8838 – Nolan), which would amend such sections of the Public Authorities Law to allow for community and Council oversight regarding planned educational facilities in leased space; and

Whereas, The New York City Council has unanimously passed a resolution in support of A.8838; now, therefore, be it

Mr. Palmer spoke about doing a public review of whatever cleanup plan is adopted such as checking the ground work, soil, air and look into the history of the property. The Senator wants to involve the CEC/CDEC in a hearing regarding the cleanups but he stated that he's not sure if the CEC/CDEC's have the authority, they don't put together the plans, the CDEC's don't have the authority to change them and they can't be sued if they don't come to the hearings.

Rob made a motion to pass the resolution and Patrick seconded. Leasing resolution passed unanimously by all.  
Resolution will be sent to the elected officials.

Meeting adjourned 9:10 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by Marian Mason, Administrative Assistant, CDEC