

Community District Education Council District 26

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MINUTES OF BUSINESS & CALENDAR PUBLIC MEETINGS

Date: Thursday, May 31, 2007

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

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

The meeting of the Community District Education Council of District 26 (CDEC26) was called to order and chaired by Susan Shiroma, Vice President at 7:10 pm in the Conference Room 128.

Roll Call: Dr. Lana Zinger, Susan Shiroma, Carol Gomez, Jackie Montgomery, & Marian Mason, Administrative Assistant

Excused: Rob Caloras, Jodi Nath & Debra Strassberg

Unexcused: Melissa Dorfman, Yen Shia Chou & Bona Sun,

Also in attendance was Anita Saunders, Community Superintendent & Lori Butera, Parent Coordinator.

Business Meeting

Secretary's Report – Carol Gomez

1. No quorum to approve minutes.
2. Letter from the Borough President's office advising the council of the new borough's appointee who is Irene Cheung who will be replacing Yen Shia Chou.
3. Informed the attendees of the date change from June 28th to June 21st. Voting was approved by e-mail unanimously.
4. Ms. Kathleen Grimm had requested that the CDEC review the FY2008 School Budget Allocation Formulae and if the CDEC had any input to send in. The CDEC sent this correspondence to Ms. Grimm:

In regards to the preliminary budget for 2007-2008, Community District Education Council has consulted with Principals, Administrators, and Department of Education personnel and has the following comments:

1. All schools in our District have received more in their preliminary budget this year. This is a result of the additional funding under the Children First program, which might not be available again.
2. Twenty two of our schools receive less money under the new budget formula ("FSF") than under the old approach. If it was not for the "Hold Harmless" funding, these schools would be receiving from \$14,218 to \$651,893, less money this year.
3. This reduction in funding under the new formula is primarily due to the charging of schools for the average teacher salary.
4. It is not fair to charge a school for the teacher's salary, as one Principal explained, the contract with teachers was not negotiated with any Principal present, it is thus wrong to saddle the Principal with paying the salary. Also, as a general matter, there is nothing unfair or inequitable in a system that provides for the funding of all teachers salaries without any school based

budget consequences. CDEC 26 has expressed its negative views on this formula in other forums and it is not necessary to go into further detail.

5. However, since the formula is being used, we ask that the hold harmless money be extended beyond two years. Based on the budget figures, our schools would face dramatic cuts if teacher salaries are not in some way subsidized or passed through to the Department of Education.
6. Four schools receive more funding under the new approach than under the old approach. Three schools will receive less than \$50,000 more and one will receive about \$140,000 more. While this additional money is appreciated, it is not justified given the potential upheaval in our other 22 schools.
7. The weighted formula should provide more money to enrich our academically successful students.
8. The weighted formula should provide designated money for providing art, music, and physical education programs.
9. For the last 3 years the DOE has been paying for the maintenance of copy machines at schools. This allowed schools and PTA/PA to allocate the large sum of money in more educational ways. Under the new budget system, schools will again be responsible for paying for the maintenance of copy machines. We believe this is not appropriate and the budget should continue to provide additional and designated funding to enable schools to pay for copy machine service contracts.

Thank you for providing us with the opportunity to comment on this year's preliminary budget. We look forward to an ongoing process that will provide our children in District 26 and the entire City with the funding necessary for a sound education.

Ms. Grimm responded to the CDEC's letter saying that she appreciated the time and effort devoted to this work & be assured that this is just the beginning of this process and she looks forward to a continuing dialogue.

Treasurer's Report – Marian Mason informed the council that all of the general supply funds were exhausted and remaining is the stipend/local travel & foods funds and all members should get expenses in to me as soon as possible for reimbursement.

President's Report – given by Vice President Susan Shiroma – gives apologies from Rob for not being able to attend the meeting.

1. Meeting attended May 14th at TWEED – monthly parents meeting in which an invitation was extended to the CDEC & CPAC members. Stated that Lindsey Matthews who works with the Chancellor's office on Fair Student Funding came to present. Ms. Lindsey gave a 2007 update on FSF to the parent leaders. Susan shared some of the themes that was presented to the parent leaders where they were asked to view it in four ways: (a) new money that will increase the equity gradually for all schools in terms of the budget; (b) the city wants more unrestricted money; (c) school budgets will be based on students needs; (d) principals are responsible for teacher's salary.

Anita stated that it is based on the average teacher's salary.

- a. Principals are responsible for the cost of new hires. Schools must plan for the cost of teachers.
- b. FTS team visited most of the CDEC's and received input causing changes to be made in the budget.
- c. Image – example 2 schools – different in funding between the two. In 2008-9 they will bring all schools up to speed.

- d. A lot of time was not spent on the weights. – This will be discussed at a later time,
 - e. More meetings will be held next year to discuss the budget updates which will be done frequently.
 - f. Susan stated that schools will be held “harmless”.
2. Correspondence received from Brian Ellner regarding Tom Huser, Education Council, who will be stepping down as of June 1st and will become the new Director of Strategic Communication for the Division of Teaching & Learning and no replacement as of yet but that all Education Councils as of July 1st will be reporting to the Office of Family Engagement headed by Chief Family Engagement Officer, Martine Guerrier.
 3. Susan stated that Rob was invited to a Education Council President’s meeting on May 22nd at TWEED where the CDEC Presidents’ sent in recommendations to the Chancellor:

Recommendations of Education Council Presidents

During the tenure of the current Education Councils Presidents, there has been ample opportunity to observe and work with the support currently provided to the Councils by the DOE and the current structures established to provide parent input and consultation through the Education Councils. Based on that experience, the Council Presidents are recommending that the following changes be made in both of these areas effective with the new Council term. The Council Presidents look forward to an opportunity to discuss these recommendations with the Chancellor at the meeting with him on May 22.

Training

1. A panel consisting of Education Council members should be created to advise the DOE on the content of the training program for Council members.
2. There should be training in each mandated function of the Councils at least annually.
3. A specific training and support program should be developed for new members who fill vacancies during the term of the Councils.
4. Differentiated training should be developed for more experienced members and to reflect that different Councils and Council members have different interests and priorities.
5. The DOE should make better use of current members in order to share best practices among Councils and to assist in the training of new Council members.

Support

1. The DOE should provide more intense mediation/support services to those Councils experiencing internal divisions or in need of organizational assistance.
2. The Human Resources Department of the DOE should assist the Councils in identifying qualified applicants for the Administrative Assistant positions.
3. The DOE should provide regular training and support for the Administrative Assistants.

Outreach

1. The DOE should provide training/information on the organization and functioning of the Councils to all DOE employees who have direct roles with regard to the Councils.
2. The DOE should undertake outreach to all principals to better inform them on the nature

- of the Councils, their functions, their role in the district and the identity of the members.
3. The DOE needs to provide the Councils with a better means of communicating directly with the parents in their jurisdictions. If current law prevents the DOE from providing the Councils with specific parent contact information, then a third party, either inside or outside of the DOE, should forward Education Council communications to parents in its jurisdiction.

Consultation

1. Any committee or task force set up by the DOE to develop policy or examine an issue should include parent members.
2. The DOE should organize monthly meetings of Council presidents at which senior DOE staff consult on new initiatives and changes and listen to parent concerns and questions.
3. Before any school is opened, closed or sited, the Council within whose jurisdiction this change would occur must be consulted.
4. The DOE and the School Construction Authority should develop a mechanism for linking Council school visits with SCA school visits and for the Councils to exchange information with the SCA throughout the school year.
5. It should be DOE policy that, in developing new or modified policies, the DOE will consult in a meaningful way with the Education Councils, including the sharing of necessary information, far enough in advance of a final decision. This must include a commitment from the DOE to respond to the recommendations or comments provided by the Councils. Such response should include an explanation any time the recommendations of a Council are not adopted.

Resources

The DOE needs to commit sufficient resources to effectively support these recommendations. Susan informed the attendees that Rob will update council members in June.

Susan acknowledged Mary Vaccaro, UFT Representative and stated that on May 3 the UFT, District 26 Parent Teacher Alliance had a Scholarship Dinner Dance attended by many. The scholarships were awarded to the children and everyone had a lovely evening.

Treasury Report – Marian Mason, Administrative Assistant asked that everyone submit all expenses for reimbursement.

Committee Reports – Zoning & Outreach – none; **Curriculum** – none;

Grants Information- Susan distributed an Application for a UFT Teacher Center Mini-Grant which provides up to \$2500 for services to students or professional development for educators. All NYC, elementary and secondary teachers, paraprofessionals, guidance counselors, school/social psychologists, social workers, lab technicians and secretaries. Individuals or groups may apply also. In the fall the UFT will get this information out to all districts. Susan spoke about setting up workshops with parents and teachers to show them how to complete an application and do a walk through. The application explains in detailed what is needed and what is allowable. Susan will be working on this project with Mary Vaccaro, the UFT representative Jackie Montgomery feels that the grants applications should be pushed through now since the schools will be given a certain amount of money to work with.

Susan spoke about a book called “Beyond the Bake Sale”-The Ultimate School Fund Raising Book by Ms. Jean Joachim in which it gives an overview of fund raising. It shows parents how to turn some holidays into moneymaking opportunities, sell school supplies, candy & etc and taking a percentage of the proceeds for their school. It tells them how to organize a flea market, street fair, have dances and other entertainments to benefit parents associations and utilize student power in the community by painting, handing out flyers, washing cars and more.

Susan stated that she was able to get three parent coordinators to set up a panel discussion to talk about grants.

Lori Butera stated that we must work together and stay focused.

Susan asked Anita how long with the Board of Ed and Anita said “30 years”. Susan spoke about Anita’s values and years and her recognition in the community and how she has and will make it better. Jackie presented her with flowers from the CDEC and thanked her for her involvement and help in working with the CDEC. Anita thanked the members and stated “she enjoyed working with the D26 CDEC members & that they were wonderful people and she will hold them close to her heart”. Anita proceeded to outline how she got started working with the Board of Education and how she moved up the ladder. It was very much informative.

Superintendent’s Report – Anita Saunders

- NYS ELA Scores – District 26 increased its ELA achievement of students in Levels 3 & 4 by 2.7% (2006 – 80%; 2007 – 82.7%).
- New Principal PS/IS 266 as of July 23, 2007 – Ms. Nicole Scott
- Special Awards
 - Bruce Baronoff, Principal, PS 213
 - Molly Wang, Principal, PS 173
 - They have received the St. John’s University “Outstanding Cooperating Principals Award” at the Dean’s Convocation Ceremony

The New York State Education Department has recognized the following schools as “High Performing/Gap Closing” public schools:

PS 18, PS 26, PS 31, PS 41, PS 46, PS 94, PS 98
PS 115, PS 133, PS 159, PS 162, PS 173, PS 178
PS 186, PS 188, PS 191, PS 203, PS 205, PS 213,
PS 221, MS 74, MS 158, PS/IS 266

Middle School 216 has received a grant from the United States Tennis Association for a special Tennis Academic Program at St. John’s University for at-risk students during the summer of 2007. Approximately 80 students will participate in learning to play tennis, receive health/nutrition classes and at-risk services.

PS/MS 178 has been chosen to pilot a Computer Initiative.

MS 158 has received the Silver Award for Middle Schools Symphonic Band Level II from the NYS School Music Association.

MS 158 – four students, Emily Chow, 7th Grade, Sol Lee, 8th Grade, Willie Pan, 7th Grade, Catherine Yang, 6th Grade, won the Port Authority of NY

and NJ first air train JFK Poster Contest, “What I Like About New York.” Each student received a \$50 gift certificate for the purchase of art supplies and their teacher Mr. Mario Asoro received a \$200 gift certificate for classroom supplies. The posters are being displayed on the trains.

PS 186 and PS 188 have participated in a New York City Taxi Cab Art Project. Their drawings are appearing on Yellow Cabs in NYC.

- Superintendent Anita Saunders was selected to represent the 1960’s decade at part of the Queens College Graduation Ceremony and 70th Anniversary Celebration. They had the class of 1947 which included about 50 people.
- District 26 Presidents’ Council – A Day at the Queens Zoo – Thursday, June 7, 2007 – 12:00 – 5:00 P.M.
- D.O.E. – New Student-Tailored Assessment Tools – Customizable No-Stakes Assessments to Give Teachers, Principals, and Parents Timely Feedback on Student Progress.

Anita stated that not enough teachers & parents were not returning the surveys even though it’s voluntary. On the Progress Reports 15% is school’s Environment which includes surveys of Middle school students, teachers and parents, 30% student performance and 55% student progress. The deadline had been extended past June 1st. Some middle school students completed their surveys in the schools per Lori. Lori feels that the surveys came in big green envelopes and maybe the parents thought it was junk mail. These surveys came in different languages also.

Lori Buteri – Parent Coordinator –

1. Distributed some summer program information. There will be four (4) camps operating this summer (PS 46, 173, 213, 221 & 203). The Youth Enrichment Program will be operating out of MS 74 (July 9th-August 9th). Hopefully there will be a nice turn out.
2. The last parent workshop will be held June 1st for parents & children called “Can you Dig It”. Where parents and child get to learn together.
3. Bus trip to the Science Museum and actually dig for real dinosaur bones. Stones were brought in from the west (Montana) and they have been in the lab sitting there. There will be excavating also. Children will go out on the sand and create a grid like the paleontologist. Bones are planted for the children to find and make note where. The children are marked present for this day due to an enrichment program.
4. Attended meeting this morning with the new Chief Family Engagement Officer, Martine Guerrier and she is committed to do whatever it takes to hear from parents. Ms. Guerrier will be taking the ideas from parents and trying to implement some of their ideas.

New Business – Jackie suggested doing a Farewell cocktail party and inviting the past, present & new members that were involved with the CDEC. Informed that the final list has not been published just yet due to some considering the PTA's. The last official meeting is June 21st for the year and July starts the new council year and its members.

Old Business - none

Meeting adjourned at 8:25 p.m. and proceeded into the Public Meeting.

PUBLIC MEETING

Susan asked if there were any speakers. No one signed the speakers list.

Mary Vaccaro, UFT Representative asked how many children were going to the Science Museum because they will be contributing 300 hats. Lori informed the attendees that the schools were given 48 free tickets which include 1 parent & 1 child.

Lori stated that Ms. Martine Guerrier has a vision of having a District Day with parents.

Anita outlined that there use to be a parent/child workshop dissecting insects and it was enjoyable. Mary Vaccaro of the UFT would be willing to sponsor something like this as long as the parents would be willing to come with the children. Must have the parent support. Mary would be willing to work with the Superintendent on a project of this sought.

Susan Shiroma spoke about capturing the history of District 26, Lori also mentioned capturing the history on Self Sustaining Programs and **Rudy Galjeono**.

Carol Gomez informed the attendees that she had been voted in as PTA President to MS 172 so she will not be returning to the CDEC and enjoyed working with the CDEC.

Jackie Montgomery also mentioned that she had been voted in as PTA President to PS 98 and will not be returning to the CDEC.

Carol asked about the VH1 Grants and how do you obtain a music teacher. Anita stated that you must have money. Some schools have an Art teacher or drama teacher or one teacher who is involved with both. Parents can supplement by getting involved, making costumes, scenery & etc. The principal have to make a choice depending on their budget. Carol informed the attendees that one school contracted a music teacher but the lessons were very expensive and the parents were not happy about that.

Speaker - Bernie informed the attendees that the ELA test scores for the 8th graders had gone up significantly.

Meeting ended at 9 p.m.

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

