

Community District Education Council District 26

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MINUTES OF BUSINESS & CALENDAR PUBLIC MEETINGS

Date: Thursday, September 30, 2010

Time: Calender Meeting, 7:00 P.M.; Business 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 7:05 pm.

Roll Call: Marie Pollicino, Pia Alexander, Ismael Fuentes, Rob Caloras, Jeannette Segal, Irene Fennell, Dina Quondamatteo, Ricky Chan, Irene Cheung & Susan Shiroma

Absent – Esther Jung

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

Business Meeting

1. Minutes – motion to accept the minutes (July & August) as is. Council unanimously agreed.

2. President's Report

a. Attended the PTA meeting at MS 67. Ms. McGrath spoke to Rob in regard to the leaking in the loge. Rob contacted Ms. Leas, SCA, Queens Coordinator, and was informed that the project to fix the leak in the Loge area is currently an ongoing project. While the initial project to address the problem was cancelled, it has been re-instated and the SCA has "scoped" the problem and determined a fix is needed. They are currently designing a solution. Ms. Leas mentioned that a temporary fix is being prepared-this temporary fix might end up being a permanent solution. Ms. Leas also informed Rob that the fixing of the leak is deemed an emergency project and funding is available to address the leak. Anything other than fixing the leak would not be considered an emergency and a different funding source (i.e. Capital Budget) would need to be found. As a follow-up, Rob spoke with Mary Leas again and she assured him that any fixing of the problem will include removing any mold that has grown in the affected areas. Monica Gutierrez, SCA & Dennis Walcott, Deputy Mayor were also informed of this problem.

b. Articles – spoke about the article on "City reports Five Fold increase in Students Repeating a Grade". Rob discussed this magazine article and the re-calibrating of test scores and articles about pay incentives. He brought up the issue of the grade changes making many children who were eligible to move up a grade under last year's system, no longer being eligible for promotion under this new system and how unfair that is to parents.

3. Budget

Ricky read the budget sheet and indicated no new changes to the budget at this time. Ricky attended the budget meeting at Tweed and discussed the new SGO's. Topics discussed there were procurement cards etc. Nothing was discussed in regards to how Senior Grants Officers helps CDEC's and schools to get grants. Rob suggested that Ricky call the new SGO and ask for a more detailed breakdown of what her role and responsibilities are to report at next meeting.

4. Bylaws

Motion to approve changes to Bylaws, Section 6 regarding absences with one change on page 3, third paragraph changing CEC to CDEC. Council voted unanimously.

5. Meeting Dates

Motion was made to move next meeting to Wednesday October 27th, and Thursday, November 17th. Motion passed unanimously. Dina and Marie asked that on future CDEC calendars, both the meeting date and DAY of the week can be included.

Pia stated that there will be two separate sign in sheets (business & public meetings).

6. School Liaisons

Pia Alexander ~ PS 133 – PS 213 – MS 74 – PS/IS 266

Robert Caloras ~ PS 18 - PS 205 – PS 221 – MS 172

Ricky Chan ~PS 188 – PS 203

Irene Cheung ~PS 162 – PS 173

Irene Fennell ~ PS 31 – PS 41 – MS 158

Ismael Fuentes ~ PS 186 - PS 191 – PS 213

Marie Pollicino ~ PS 98 – PS 186 – MS 67

Dina Quondamatteo ~ PS 46 – PS 115 – MS 74

Jeannette Segal ~ PS 94 – PS 98 – MS 67

Susan Shiroma ~PS 26 – PS 159 – PS/IS 178 – MS 216

Rob requested that a list of the new liaisons be sent to PTA's, PC's and President's Council. Rob asked for the approval from the council to include our email addresses. Council agreed unanimously to add e-mail addresses to the liaison listing. Marie wanted to note that her email has changed and will contact Marian with the proper address.

New Business - none

Rob made motion to adjourn the business meeting, Irene Fennell seconded & council unanimously agreed.

PUBLIC MEETING

Rob expressed that Shael Suransky, Deputy Chancellor for Performance and Accountability was to be at the meeting and was cancelled due to the fact that he was going to make a presentation also along with Anita Saunders. Anita Saunders explained that she was going to provide a PowerPoint presentation on Contracts for Excellence in addition to our guest speaker Donald Freeman (Time Out for Testing), who will give a presentation on this year's changes to the grading of standard tests in English and Math and the results of these changes.

Speakers:

1. Councilman Mark Weprin

Rob acknowledged Councilman Mark Weprin who is a member of the education committee who spoke briefly about test scores. Councilman Weprin stated that there was a hearing on test scores and saw the 45 minute presentation presented by Mr. Suransky. Councilman Weprin's feeling on testing when he heard that they were lower than they were was that it didn't bother him. Councilman Weprin informed the DOE that the problem is that they were testing teachers, principals, chancellors and mayors when they should just be testing students. Councilman feels that the over emphasis on test prep is a form of legalized cheating and feels test scoring has devalued the test score's meaning in context with schools. Councilman Weprin stated that teachers should not be judged by standard testing.

2. Peter Pollicino (parent) asked Councilman Weprin a question about testing and how to possibly fix the system as far as the criteria in closing schools? Councilman Weprin's response was that he once was in favor of Mayoral Control of the Schools but he is no longer a fan.

3. Pia Alexander - commented to Councilman Weprin that there should be a new study conducted on the impact of the emotional life, stress and anxiety of the children impacted by the testing and test prep.

4. Irene Fennell asked a question about the National Standards and how are they going to be incorporated? Anita addressed this by detailing the push of the NY State Phasing out the Regent exams by 2014 and moving towards nationwide testing.

Don Freeman jumped in to address Anita's comments about the emphasis on a "common core curriculum".

Guest Speaker – Don Freeman (time Out for Testing)

Mr. Freeman stated that the tests are going to be called "performance assessment". It will be a series of data banks and questions. Performance Assessments are going to become high stakes tests as long as the test is what's governing things, they will continue to teach the test no matter what they are calling it and it's going to drive the curriculum; principals are going to be pushing the teachers to get ready for the test with the same nonsense that's taking place now. Mr. Freeman also stated that he saw the 45 minute PowerPoint and that there is a basic problem with the PowerPoint and there's a reason why the State of NY hasn't produced a PowerPoint like it. The grades are inflated and if the grades are inflated you cannot compare, there is no reliability.

Mr. Freeman wants to make sure that people, who have misquoted him in the past, are clear that he and his organization are not against standardized testing. Standardized testing however was never

meant to be used as a fine measurement of what the child's grasp of the curriculum is. It was always meant to be a broad understanding to then be refined by further instruction. Test prep is not learning. You can't argue, as the Chancellor has in the past, that it's okay as long as the kids are learning the curriculum at the same time, they are not learning the curriculum during test prep. Mr. Freeman outlined and spoke about the five (5) test score inflation issues:

1. Questions on the test are much too predictable since they are similar to questions on previous tests.
2. Questions have become easier
3. The number of questions students need to get correct to reach a particular benchmark or to pass a test (reach a cut score) has decreased
4. Teachers are teaching to the test
5. Teachers are engaging students in excessive prep (drill and kill), pushing up scores at the expense of real learning.

Time Out for Testing put through six (6) demands:

1. End high-stakes testing policies
2. Use multiple measures to determine how a child is doing in school.
3. Change the conversation about education.
4. Launch an investigation with consequences into the events that led to the current state testing fiasco to find out who was responsible at the highest level for the decisions to lower the cut scores and use similar test questions year after year.
5. Create a watchdog group that will ensure our children are never again subject to his harmful cycle of testing, cut score manipulation and artificial test score gains.

Rob made a motion to put off the Contract for Excellence Presentation until next meeting; however motion did not pass due to the deadline for public comments. Anita asked that we refer directly to the printout of the PowerPoint and refer to her report so that we get the word out and share this information and prepare public comments by OCTOBER 8th. Anita did a quick overview of her information. Anita mentioned PS 186 got \$10K grant and letter is in folders in addition to CTT article.

Superintendent's Report - Thursday, September 30, 2010 - MS 67

- Welcome
- Grants
 - PS 186 - \$10,000 – NYS Education Department – Outstanding Inclusionary Practices; Mentor School for other schools Publication - “Collaborative Team Teaching” – Dolores Troy-Quinn, Principal and staff – Handout
 - MS 158 - \$10,000 worth of Musical Instruments – BING Campaign, “Our School Needs” – launching site with Josh Groban
- C-30 – PS 178 - Assistant Principal - Final Interviews, September 30, 2010
- Storm Problems – Electricity and Computers – MS 158, PS 162, PS 173 – all resolved
- Progress Reports – released today
- Quality Reviews – Begin week of October 18, 2010
 - Superintendent – 10 District Schools
- Race to the Top (RTTT) – NYC Allocation - \$256,000,000

- Contracts for Excellence Presentation – Superintendent Anita Saunders presented and pointed out allocations for District 26

Quote - *“To love what you do and feel that it matters ----how could anything be more fun?”*
Katherine Graham

Lori Butera distributed district wide events and workshop flyers.

Dina made a motion to get a digital recorder, Rob seconded to the motion. Council voted unanimously. If it is necessary, if not, it will be discussed at the next meeting.

Rob made a motion to adjourn and Jeannette seconded. Council voted unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 9:45 p.m.

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