

Community District Education Council District 26

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MINUTES OF CALENDER/ PUBLIC & BUSINESS MEETINGS

Date: Thursday, January 26, 2012

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

Location: MS 67- 51-60 Marathon Pkwy, Little Neck, NY 11004-Room-B44A

The meeting of the Community District Education Council of District 26 (CDEC26) was called to order by Jeannette Segal, President at 7:05 p.m.

PUBLIC MEETING

Roll Call -

Present: Ricky Chan, Vijayalaxmi Hegde, Jeannette Segal, Susan Shiroma, Pankaj Kapur, Daniel O’Gallagher, Lucy Vieco & our student member Meghan Dinegar

Late- Michelle Fields; Unexcused – Hong Keng Tan

Also in attendance: Anita Saunders, Community Superintendent

Lori Butera Stein, District Family Advocate (vacation)

Superintendent’s Report

- Welcome – Meghan Dinegar, student on CDEC council
- New Assistant Principals
MS 67 – Henry Schandel; PS 133 – Laura Avakians
- School Visits – PS 31, 41, 115, 133, 203, 205, 221, 266, MS 67, 74, 216
- PPR – Mid-Year Summary due January 30, 2012
- SLT Training – Lori Butera presented
- Parent Workshops (for fathers only) – “How to Talk So Kids Will Listen”
- Karen Scott-Piazza – rushed in for emergency surgery (appendectomy) returned to school Wednesday
- Chancellor’s Town Hall Meeting – February 15, 2012 – 6:30 – 7:30 P.M., MS 74
Chancellor meeting with Anita Saunders on Feb. 14th to discuss issues before the meeting
- Winter Recess – February 20 – 26
- Spring Recess – April 6 – 15
- NYSED Tests
ELA – April 17 – 19, Grades 3-8; Math – April 25 – 27, Grades 3-8
- Quality Reviews – Two in District 29
- Review of Biennial Survey and DLT completion/submission

Quote: “Life’s challenges are not supposed to paralyze you; they’re supposed to help you discover who you are.”

Bernice Johnson Reagon, American singer, composer, scholar, social activist

Speakers List

1. Mary Vaccaro, UFT Rep stated that applications are available. UFT posted applications on their website and download it. Mary spoke about the UFT scholarship dinner and will be presenting a “Parent Leadership Award”.

Business Meeting Followed

Roll Call -

Present: Ricky Chan, Vijayalaxmi Hegde, Jeannette Segal, Susan Shiroma, Pankaj Kapur, Daniel O’Gallagher, Vieco Lucy, Michelle Fields & our student member Meghan Dinegar
Unexcused – Hong Keng Tan

1. Minutes

Jeannette asked the council had they had an opportunity to read/review the December 6, 2011 minutes. Michelle made a motion to accept the December 6th minutes and Vijay seconded. Council agreed unanimously to accept the minutes.

2. President’s Report – Jeannette Segal

a. Attended the Parent Advisory Meeting at the Queens Borough President’s office. The presentation was on the SCA Five Year Plan; presented information on the newly opened school; talked about the capacity and the overall Queens Priority listing. Discussion about the overcrowding of the high schools due to the need for land and the proximity of the school because of transportation. Information on the DOE & the SCA website.

b. Chancellor’s meeting – requested questions from President’s council. Questions to be reviewed with Ariel before the meeting.

c. Attended MS 67 PTA – presentation called “Parents as Literacy Partners” that their ELA coach (Mr. Sweeney) presented. Jeannette asked if the Mr. Sweeney (literacy coach) could present to the CDEC & if not, could he possibly give us the PowerPoint presentation.

Another topic brought up was the implementation of school uniforms. Parents taken by surprise. Jeannette stated that “dress codes cannot be enforced. Mary Vaccaro stated that MS 208 has uniforms.

d. Approached by parents from PS 94 (Northern & Marathon); PS 221 (Horace Harding & Marathon) & MS 266 (Commonwealth & Union Tpke) – crossing guards needed. Principal Slivko suggested having the DOT and precincts come and talk about safety. Jeannette that we had this meeting last year where we had the police dept., DOT, Community Affairs, DOE and a rep from the UFT. Mary Vaccaro suggests having the Commanders from the north and south come to a meeting. Will look into inviting them to the March meeting.

3. **Budget – no change**

4. Old Business

A. **Chancellor's questions presented by President's Council:**

1. In 2003 as part of Mayoral Control the city established the CEC and there have been a lot of passionate, intelligent and dedicated parent volunteers become discourage with the DOE's lack of engagement. Mr. Mojica has been appointed and his role has been revamped to have a vote can you please explain what his main objective is under this new structure and what are you doing to meet or engage the families in our district and city.
2. The Middle School Application was changed this year without any prior notification, leaving parents, uninformed, confused, and out of the loop. Couldn't the DOE have reached out to Community Education Councils, Presidents' Councils, or Parent Coordinators to avoid this disconnect, and what can we do to ensure more effective and coordinated communication going forward?
3. I want to start by saying that you are the third chancellor to be asked this question so we're hoping you can explain. Yellow school bus field trip service does not include destinations outside of NYC. So, even though many schools in District 26 are closer to Nassau County than to some parts of NYC, field trips on Long Island are often not viable because of transportation costs. If the school buses can be back in time to make their afternoon run, why can't we take our students to destinations outside of NYC?
4. There has been so much disorder over the past two years as the DOE has tried to figure out how to best engage and support parents. First, there was OFEA, then OFIA--we're hoping FACE is here to stay. At the same time, the role of the District Family Advocate has been restructured, offering less direct support to PTAs. Just like students, parent volunteers that make up our PTAs and CECs, work best in a stable environment. So, moving forward, what exactly is the DOE doing to ensure more constancy in the support offered to parents and parent councils throughout the city?
5. The biggest issue for our schools is the budgetary constraints. How will schools be funded to address the new CCS needs of teacher training and pupil materials?

Jeannette's questions – lack of engagement of the CDEC (no vote in policies) & teacher evaluation. Will research and finalize the questions.

Jeannette spoke about the goals set when applied to financial assistant in “The Race to the Top” program where we lost 60 million dollars.

Mary Vaccaro stated that the UFT is willing to sit with the DOE but the DOE walked away from the table and Mr. Mulgrew informed the UFT that the DOE refuses to sit. There are some issues that the union agrees with, that there needs to be a teacher's evaluation system but the union states that there must be a “checks and balance” and not a free for all where they can change in mid stream. The UFT has filed again and ask the DOE be told to come back to negotiate with the teacher's union on evaluations and they refuse.

Jeannette suggested an outsider come in and Mary stated that the UFT asked for binding arbitration on evaluations and the DOE has refused.

Principal Slivko of PS 172 made a statement stating that we are headed for per capita funding for SWD's rather than funding for classes. There are schools (such as mine,) that have more students than for one ICT class but not enough for two full classes. With per capita funding, we may be unable to provide ICT or 12:1 SC services for students if we do not have enough students to fund the teachers.

5. New Business

A. Ricky spoke out the NY State Contract Reporter (NYSCR) which spoke on "Curriculum Modules and Statewide Professional Development for NYS English Language Arts & Literacy and Mathematics. Ricky will keep the council abreast.

B. School Visits

- a. Vijay attended a PTA meeting at PS 188; attended President's Council meeting; school visit set up for PS 221 on January 31; school visit set up for PS 186 on March 3rd. Awaiting date for PS 18's school visit.
- b. Ms. Kapur - school visit done on Jan. 11th at PS 133 (issues: 3 classes combined into one; budget for ELA & traffic).
- c. Ricky – awaiting survey questionnaire from PS 203
Jeannette reiterated to the audience that questionnaires were created by the council to ask questions of the principals for data relating to their school.
- d. Lucy attended the PTA meeting at PS 188- test prep classes offered.
- e. Michelle PS 213 survey to be completed.

Jeannette spoke about the resolution that came from Queens Borough President's office (Dmytro Fedkowskyj, Queens Representative) on "Safety Hazard Variances". He wants the CDEC's to join them on this resolution:

Panel Recommendation to the Chancellor authorizing the Department of Education to create a "Safety Hazard Advisory Review Program (S.H.A.R.P.) committee to review hazard variance applications. – Dated February 9, 2012

Whereas, a joint NYC independent Budget Office and NYC Board of Education report stated "The proportion of general education pupils in public and private schools who currently ride yellow buses varies considerably across boroughs"; and

Whereas, the Department of Education (DOE) eliminated certain school bus variances in September 2010 which disproportionately affected students in specific areas within the New York City, particularly in Queens and Staten Island; and

Whereas, the DOE Office of Pupil Transportation (OPT) stated at that time that individual variance applications would be reviewed and granted where appropriate; and

Whereas, according to DOE hazard variance application and approval data covering the period from January 2010 through September 2011, 1,130 applications were submitted (881 by public schools and 249 by private schools) but only 177 were approved citywide (108 or 12% for public schools and 69 or 28% for private schools); and

Whereas, 1,028 of the variance applications submitted during this time period (468 or 42% from schools in Queens) and (560 or 50% from schools in Staten Island) – the 2 boroughs acknowledged to have the greatest need for yellow bus service in the IBO/BOE report; and

Whereas, Queens submitted 468 applications with only 42 approved (18 or 5% for public schools and 24 or 34% for private schools) while Staten Island submitted 560 hazard variance applications and only 123 were approved (82 or 20% for public schools and 41 or 27% for private schools);

Therefore be it RESOLVED, that the Panel for Educational Policy, within its power under State Education law, recommends that the Chancellor authorize the DOE's Office of Pupil Transportation to implement the following

Safety Hazard Advisory Review Program (S.H.A.R.P.) committee to establish a standard operating procedure for reviewing hazard variance applications, while providing transparency to the variance process:

Establish school district advisory committees by June 2012, based on a Community Education Council written request whose primary function will be to establish clear and concise criteria for granting hazard variances.

The criteria for granting hazard variance could be modeled after a NYS Education Law 3635 (b) which establishes Child Safety Zones:

- A list comprised of identifiable road hazards would be established.
- Each road hazard will be assigned a point value.
- Lack of adequate public transportation will also be allotted points.
- In order to grant a pupil transportation hazard variance, a clearly defined total score must be achieved.
- Each grade level will require a specific number of points to meet the eligibility requirements for a hazard variance.

Each school district wanting to create a S.H.A.R.P. committee would be comprised of nine (9) representatives; (3) Community Education Council members, (1) District Community Superintendent, (3) DOE representatives from the Office of Pupil Transportation, (1) Rep from the office of Family and Community Engagement and (1) respective Borough President designee.

Each S.H.A.R.P. committee will meet as needed and collectively analyze the conditions and grant hazard variances by majority consensus.

DOE, CEC's and individual schools will advertise the hazard variance application process in June of the preceding school year.

Jeannette asks that the council review and Michelle Fields will tweet and advise.

Jeannette asked who will attend the February 6th meeting at TWEED (discussing the 2011 process and gathering thoughts/recommendations). Time not shown on the flyer, Marian will check and inform the council of the time.

Guest Speaker

Jeannette introduced our guest speaker – Mr. David Kazansky, Director of School Safety & Victim Support Program (UFT)-Be Brave Against Bullying. David stated he was a teacher for 12 years and started the campaign against bullying in October starting with a hotline (2:30 pm-9:30 p.m. Mon-Friday). Children can call and talk to someone in giving the child coping skills, help them put together a plan to deal with the situation and reach back out to the people in the school community that they can turn to for help. It is not a recording hotline. BRAVE was set up for children in the strictest of confidence. The organization is there to provide that support structure.

Mr. Kazansky outlined the following:

1. Access to Resources – there are individuals in the school that don't know where to turn
 - a. Resources will show individuals with different resources and point you in the right direction (ex.: Cyber bullying)
 - b. Information & educational sessions for staff and parents throughout the five boroughs. In the education session they explain what bullying is because everyone has different idea. Will show them how to distinguish a problem with someone (one time issue) where as bullying is an ongoing/series of events (verbally, physically& internet). Try to teach children to be good citizens.
 - c. Imbalance of power (status)
 - d. Adults need to be advocates for their children to come to and talk. Adults need to take action and look at their school and community to see how they can make a positive difference.

e. Organization working with city council, DOE, attorneys, senators and assembly people trying to get the word out.

f. Teach children & adults to communicate better with each other. Children & adults need to become advocates and speak up when they see something.

The organization also has an after hours line (9:30 p.m. – 2:30 p.m.) “Lifenet” line for children if needed. The UFT is currently funding “BRAVE”. Starting in February there will be text access. Within the three months of setting up BRAVE there have been 300 calls. Translation is also available.

Mr. Kazansky informed the attendees about the March 1st Anti-Bullying Fair (2-6 p.m.) at the UFT Headquarters, 52 Broadway & the May 10th Conference Day (panel discussions, workshops) at the UFT Headquarters..

Michelle made a motion to adjourn and Vijay seconded, the members unanimously agreed to adjourn.

Meeting adjourned at 8:55 p.m.

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