

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

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### **MINUTES OF BUSINESS & CALENDAR PUBLIC MEETINGS**

**Date:** Thursday, March 24, 2011

**Time:** Business Meeting-7:00 P.M.; Public 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 7:10 pm.

Roll Call: Pia Alexander, Jeannette Segal, Rob Caloras, Ricky Chan, Susan Shiroma & Ismael Fuentes

Excused–Dina Quondamatteo, Irene Fennell & Xiao Mei Ge

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

#### **Public Meeting**

Rob Caloras gave the council an introduction stating that this is an open forum on the Safety of our schools because there have been a lot of requests from parents and principals to try and get what solutions are available and if problems are fixable.

Rob introduced the council members. Rob stated that PS 18 is going to be put on the list as a G&T school. Informed parents to apply to PS 18 for their children.

Rob informed attendees that it is CEC election time again and there was an article in the Daily News stated that the DOE hide where the applications are and it is on the [POWERTOTHEPARENTS.ORG](http://POWERTOTHEPARENTS.ORG) website. Rob stated that he would not be returning next year.

Rob brought up the resolution on “Maintaining Current Teacher Staff”. Asking the mayor not to cut teachers and look else where if he needs to save money. Jeannette made a motion to approve and Susan seconded. Council voted unanimously to accept.

Rob introduced the speakers:

Department of Transportation

Ms. Maura McCarthy-Queens Borough Commissioner

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Mr. Peter Goslett – Director –Community Relations

Ms. Kim Wiley-Schwartz, Asst. Commissioner for Education & Outreach

111 Precincts

Officer William – Community Affairs

Lieutenant Heffernan – Special Operations Lieutenant

Department of Education

Ms. Donna Brailsford – Director of Safety, Suspension & Youth Development

United Federation of Teachers

Ms. Linda Vila-Passione – Violence Prevention Coordinator of the Victim Support Program

***Guest Speakers:***

**Speaker #1** - Ms. Maura McCarthy-Queens Borough Commissioner

Ms. McCarthy stated that she want to make the streets safer, want the children to be safe, want motorists to be safe and bicyclists to be safe. The number one goal is safety. The number one complaint received from principals is double parking around the schools. Program started in Queens where flyers will be distributed at all schools. Flyer shows child running in between two double parked cars saying that you are endangering your own child “DO NOT DOUBLE PARK”. Warning flyers will be handed out to those not cooperating. All requests will be looked at. There is a list of priority schools (135 schools) on this list and D26 is not on the lists which consist of a lot accidents and injuries around those schools.

**Speaker 2** - Ms. Kim Wiley-Schwartz, Asst. Commissioner for Education & Outreach who handles the entire city. She handles training for children and bicyclists and teaches students how to walk by themselves & ride bicycles? Kim also spoke about seniors & cyclists in which they are taught rules of the road.

**Speaker 3** - Ms. Linda Vila-Passione – Violence Prevention Coordinator of the Victim Support Program-spoke about stop lights & speed bumps. Each school has a school safety committee/plan in line with the DOT and local precinct regulations. There is a need to get the parents on board with what is proper and not proper. UFT Rep Mary Vaccaro did a survey of all the schools in D26 and certain things kept coming up (double parking, U-turns, speed, speed bumps & crossing guards).

**Speaker 4** - Ms. Donna Brailsford – Director of Safety, Suspension & Youth Development-work with students to learn and design safe routes. The CFN (Children First Network), each network has a point person within the network assigned to safety. The network safety representative spoke in regards to the existence of the borough wide safety director and what that position means. There is a Borough-wide Safety Director for Queens North & Queens South who works directly with the police department.

**Speaker 5** - Lt. Heffernan from the 111th PCT spoke in regards to the police involvement and how they determine which schools they will focus on at a time. Traffic safety officers can also be requested to give tickets during drop off and pick up time. Lt. Heffernan also discussed graffiti surrounding the local schools and that if you are older than 7 years of age you will be expected to go to family court for graffiti. They consider graffiti a "gateway crime." In regards to bicycle safety, anyone over the age of 16 is not allowed on the sidewalks. This is reserved for younger children. In regards to crime prevention, he cautioned that the highest frequency of crime right now is electronic theft of cell phones, iPods etc.

Council member Ricky Chan asked a question regarding unsafe conditions due to yellow school buses blocking the crosswalks in front of schools. Lt. Heffernan answered that on a school by

school basis, Principals should be contacting the bus contractor directly to report this if crosswalk idling is happening frequently.

Parent Kitty Azhar asked about schools that have adjacent park properties attached having issues with loitering or people smoking in the park, after she asked a patrol unit passing by her school and was told that she needed to talk to the school safety agent instead. Lt. Heffernan answered that there are patrol units assigned to each school and separate units that supervise the school crossing guards, so if she calls into the local precinct someone should be able to address the issue. He gave the number for the 11th PCT (718) 279-5216. In addition, any consistent issue should be brought to the attention of the school safety committee at your individual school.

There will be a Town Hall style safety meeting in each school this spring, which has been mandated under the Chancellor's regulations this year. It is open to all parents and community members.

Parent asked a question regarding PS 18, located at 235th Court and Hillside Avenue area (105th Precinct) and that there is a NO LEFT TURN; however, people are ignoring the sign and turning into the path of the school buses.

Lt. Heffernan stated that the parent should call the 105th Pct, however, if there haven't been any accidents the issue might not be resolved as quickly as other areas where there are a higher incident of accidents and resources are needed to resolve those issues right away.

Council member Susan Shiroma asked how many Principals in the 35 schools surrounding the 111th precinct took advantage of the 6 school safety officers coming to spend a week at the school to observe traffic and safety issues.

Lt. Heffernan stated that 12 Principals had officers come to observe safety issues in the area. Susan also asked if language issues come into play during these safety meetings and if the census is used to determine what languages should be represented during the meetings. Lt. Heffernan answered that the census information has not been utilized yet, but language interpreters are available if requested.

Parent question regarding recent traffic issues and student disputes at the Arby's restaurant on the Horace Harding Expwy.

Lt. Heffernan answered that the issue is being addressed and clarified that the Arby's falls into the 107th PCT; however Francis Lewis HS is in the 111th Pct. Both precincts are aware and notified of ongoing issues in that location.

District 26 UFT Rep Mary Vaccaro brought up the traffic issue at Ryan Middle school, where school buses are being completely blocked by parent cars and not being able to leave the school in a timely fashion during school pick up time.

Council member Susan Shiroma asked if there is a law prohibiting students from walking around in school areas with iPod earphones on.

Lt. Heffernan answered that presently there isn't.

Council Vice President Jeannette Segal asked a question about school busing and why it isn't more inclusive when some children have aged out of the busing when they have younger siblings who are still using the bus, and parents have to then drive the other sibling to a location near to the same one that the bus is traveling with the other child. Jeannette asked about the traffic congestion this causes.

Kim Willey-Schwartz, Asst. Commissioner for Education Outreach, DOT answered that she doesn't see this issue being resolved right now, although it greatly affects many districts including D26 and D24.

Council Pres Rob Caloras asked about speed bumps, and how it is determined if a school will have one or not.

Maura McCarthy, Queens Borough Commissioner, DOT answered that on streets that have a truck route, bus route, or emergency route, they measure speed and determine whether a speed bump is appropriate, then go to the community board in that area to request it. If it is an area directly surrounding a school, the DOT can approve a speed bump after a traffic/speed study without community board approval.

A parent asked about the PS 162 incident at 53rd avenue, where a parent was killed last year. The school community heard last year from Councilman Weprin that they would be receiving a traffic light in that location, and so far it hasn't happened. She also commented that the fact that the person driving the vehicle that hit the parent, had a vision issue and should not have been driving, further illustrated the need for speed bumps in the area. Parents were told that 53rd avenue is too wide for speed bumps.

Maura McCarthy, Queens Borough Commissioner, DOT answered that speed bumps and stop signs are not installed based on whether or not there is a fatal traffic accident in the location. There are extensive studies done and a traffic signal has been approved in that location, as well as a 20MPH reduced speed zone and it is now a double point zone for breaking traffic regulations in the area. Kim Willey-Schwartz, Asst. Commissioner for Education Outreach, DOT added that there is a Pilot Project called the 20 MPH Pilot Project, and PS 162 will be the first of 75 schools to receive this reduced modified speed limit, traffic light and double point zone. In order to make the project effective, Ms. Schwartz notes that there needs to be the three E's, Engineering, Enforcement and Education. She talked about other speed reducing options like painting lines to make the road appear smaller etc. She also discussed the various advertising campaigns in NYC such as the "That's why it's 30" campaign.

Council member Ismael Fuentes brought up the issue of reduced transportation in our communities and asked about which other communities are as heavily dependent upon cars as District 26.

The response from Maura McCarthy was Rockaway, South Eastern Queens etc. Kim Willey-Schwartz, Asst. Commissioner for Education Outreach, DOT added that the Neighborhood Slow Zone is another program that is being shopped around and will hopefully be implemented widely.

Council member Ricky Chan brought up an issue of a recent item for a one way street nearing PS 203. Community Board 11 is still considering it and it has not been voted on yet.

Maura McCarthy stated that it would still be considered even if the local homeowners rejected it if the traffic studies indicate that it is necessary.

Council member Ismael Fuentes asked about any requests made on behalf of PS 186 and Maura McCarthy responded that she has received two requests from the school.

Council President Rob Caloras gave a list of additional schools that have traffic or safety issues that have asked to be included in a request for a traffic meeting or study with Maura McCarthy.

Council Recording Secretary Pia Alexander asked if PS/IS 178 have asked for an additional meeting regarding traffic.

Maura McCarthy responded that they have not.

Maura McCarthy and Peter Goslett can be reached at qbc@dot.nyc.gov.

Council Recording Secretary Pia Alexander asked if the safe neighborhoods program is determined by traffic studies. The response was no. Once the program has been successfully piloted, they will be relying on Community Boards to request that the DOT set up the program in their respective district.

District 26 UFT Rep Mary Vaccaro commented that most of the schools in District 26 are very concerned about traffic and safety and asked who should be leading these meetings.

Maura McCarthy responded that this is a school safety committee issue and that they should absolutely contact the DOE in regards to setting up a Town Hall style meeting in keeping with the Chancellor's regulations at their schools.

Kim Wiley-Schwartz, Asst. Commissioner for Education Outreach at the DOT reiterated that they have a full department of 30 educators that are able to do meetings in several languages available anytime upon request.

Public meeting adjourned at 8:20 p.m.

### **Business Meeting**

Rob called business meeting to order at 8:30 p.m.

Roll Call: Pia Alexander, Jeannette Segal, Rob Caloras, Ricky Chan, Susan Shiroma & Ismael Fuentes

Excused—Dina Quondamatteo, Irene Fennell & Xiao Mei Ge

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

Rob iterated that the May meeting will be with Amanda Cahn to discuss the G&T

1. February minutes approved unanimously
2. Budget approved unanimously

### **Superintendent's Report** **CDEC Meeting** **Thursday, March 24, 2011** **MS 67**

- Welcome
- Passing of Michael Mazun, former Principal, MS 74 (see attached)

- District Report Card 2009-2010 – [www.nystart.gov/publicweb/District26](http://www.nystart.gov/publicweb/District26)
- Lottery PS/IS 266 – Friday, March 25, 2011
- PS 18 – Gifted Magnet Program
- Retirement - Principal, Dena Poulos, PS 162, April 5, 2011  
C-30 Level I completed March 21, 2011
- Winners – Alley Pond Environmental Center (APEC)
  - Ginelle Medina – PS/IS 178 – Best in Show, Craft Category – 1<sup>st</sup> Place
  - Raya Kazdan – MS 67 – Best in Show, Literary Work
  - Eunice Kim – MS 67 – Art – 1<sup>st</sup> Place
  - Jonah Lee – MS 67 – Art – 2<sup>nd</sup> Place
  - Trixie Talistic – PS 173 – Morgan Library Bookmaking Award – One of Four Best Books
- Tenure Visits – PS/IS 178 – Jennifer Ambert  
PS 205 – Karen Scott Piazza
- Quality Reviews – March 28-29– MS 67  
April 6-7 – MS 158  
May 16-17 – PS 115  
June 1-2 – PS/IS 178
- Budget – No news as yet

Funeral arrangements for Michael Mazun were given to attendees.

Meeting adjourned 8:50 PM

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