



Community District Education Council 26

New York City Department of Education

Address: 61-15 Oceania Street, Bayside, NY 11364 Phone: (718) 631-6927 Fax: (718) 631-1347 E-mail: CEC26@schools.nyc.gov

Albert Suhu <i>President of the Council</i>	Cassandra Louie <i>First Vice- President</i>	Sae-Jung Lee <i>Second Vice President</i>	Dennis Chan <i>Recording Secretary</i>	Hsuante (Louis) Tsai <i>Treasurer</i>
Council Members: Ribhi Alam Joanna Edwards Sherry Gonzalez	Sulinda Hong Da Lin Gilberto Mejia Raymond Torres	Student Members: TBD TBD	District 26 Community Superintendent (Interim Acting): Anthony Inzerillo	

Resolution on Improving School Governance of New York City Public Schools

WHEREAS, in 1970, the state legislature ended mayoral control following civil rights protests in the 1960’s over de facto school segregation and the inequity faced by black and Hispanic childrenⁱ; and

WHEREAS, decentralization of the New York City school system into 32 community school districts, with a citywide school board consisting of two mayoral appointees and one appointee from each of the borough presidents from 1970 to 2002, led to dysfunction, lack of accountability, and rampant corruption, e.g. –

- *Jobs to be sold*
- *For people to hold jobs they didn’t show up to for years on end*
- *Money to be stolen directly from schools*
- *Board members openly admitting they would never send their children to schools in the districts they represented*
- *Hiring of drug dealers and gang members, including as school safety officersⁱⁱ; and*

WHEREAS, the current system of mayoral control was extended for two years on Jun 30, 2022 but will revert to the aforementioned decentralized system unless mayoral control is extended or replaced with a new governance systemⁱⁱⁱ; and

WHEREAS, state legislators have yet to identify a viable alternative to mayoral control (e.g. - democratically elected school boards are subject to tyranny of the majority, described by John Stuart Mill and Tocqueville), and implementation of any such alternative would require a phase-in period lasting several years to avoid undue disruption to schools; and

WHEREAS, the current makeup of the citywide school board (aka the Panel for Education Policy) and the district Community Education Councils (CEC) includes a number of borough president appointees, such that:

- The Panel for Education Policy (PEP) consists of 13 mayoral appointees, 5 appointees of the borough presidents, and 5 elected parent members who represent only 22% of the voting body^{iv}, and
- CECs consist of 10 elected members and two borough president appointees, resulting in an even number of 12 members and therefore increases the difficulty to satisfy quorum requirements^v; and

WHEREAS, the appointees of the borough presidents are but a vestige of the prior governance system, dilute elected representation of the parent community, and are:

- Entirely redundant on the PEP because CECs elect a representative from each borough, and
- Difficult to seat on CECs because few candidates apply, leaving vacancies that impede CEC business; and

WHEREAS, the PEP lacks elected parent representation from the citywide councils: Citywide Council on High Schools (CCHS), Citywide Council on Special Education (CCSE), Citywide Council on English Language Learners (CELL), and Citywide Council for District 75 (CCD75); and

WHEREAS, state education law provides a measure of accountability for each of the 32 community school district superintendents by requiring a community-based process for the annual evaluation of the district superintendent, yet no similar evaluation process exists for the Chancellor^{vi}; and

WHEREAS, state education law requires the NYS Commissioner of Education to hold hearings on the overall effectiveness of the NYC school governance system prior to expiration of mayoral control, in which the act of holding such public hearings itself serves as a mechanism to increase accountability in mayoral control^{vii}; and

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, Community Education Council 26 urges the state legislature to consider the following amendments to state education law:

- Extend mayoral control through the full term of office; and
- Reform the structure of the PEP to increase parent representation by:
 - Eliminating the 5 borough president appointees on the PEP and replacing with one member appointed by each of the citywide councils (CCHS, CCSE, CCELL, and CCD75), and
 - Reducing the number of mayoral appointees to 12, thereby increasing elected parent representation on the PEP to 43% of the 21 voting members, and
 - Eliminating the requirement for the three mayoral appointees to represent underserved groups, so long as parent-elected members of the citywide councils are permitted to serve on the PEP, and
 - Requiring at least half of the mayoral appointees on the PEP to be parents of public school students, e.g. – 6 of 12 appointees, thereby increasing total parent representation on the PEP to at least 71% of the voting body; and
- Reform the structure of CECs to strengthen parent representation and facilitate the meeting of quorum requirements by authorizing only one borough president appointee for each CEC instead of two, thereby reducing the total number of members to 11; and
- Require a process for the 36 Community and Citywide Education Councils (CCECs) to submit an evaluation of the Chancellor’s performance (focusing on engagement and responsiveness to communities) to be considered an input to mayoral control hearings.

During the CEC26 meeting held on December 14, 2023 , the resolution was reviewed and unanimously approved by all members in attendance.

ⁱ <https://www.nytimes.com/2002/06/07/nyregion/consensus-city-schools-history-growing-outrage-leads-back-centralized-leadership.html>

ⁱⁱ <https://www.nytimes.com/1999/12/13/nyregion/for-school-districts-sullied-by-corrupt-past-new-doubt.html>

ⁱⁱⁱ <https://www.chalkbeat.org/newyork/2022/7/1/23191277/hochul-signs-nyc-mayoral-control-bill-into-law-with-a-tweak/>

^{iv} <https://www.schools.nyc.gov/get-involved/families/panel-for-education-policy>

^v <https://www.schools.nyc.gov/docs/default-source/default-document-library/d-140-process-for-the-nomination-and-selection-of-members-of-the-community-education-councils-including-filling-vacancies>

^{vi} <https://www.nysenate.gov/legislation/laws/EDN/2590-D>

^{vii} <https://www.nysenate.gov/legislation/bills/2021/S9459>