

Citywide Council on Special Education

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09/16/2008 CALENDAR MEETING MINUTES

The Calendar Meeting Minutes of the Citywide Council on Special Education was held Wednesday, September 16, 2008 at 6:00pm located at P373R: The Robert Randall School, 91 Henderson Avenue, Staten Island, NY 10301. The following people were in attendance.

1. Roll Call

➤ Charlene Carroll-Hall	Present
➤ John Englert	Present
➤ Charles Henderson	Present
➤ Diana Marenfeld	Excused
➤ Ellen McHugh	Present
➤ Tom Ryan	Present
➤ Patricia Connelly	Excused
➤ Robin Murray	Absent

2. Secretary's Report- Approval of Meeting Minutes dated 08/13/08

No Quorum vote will take place for the meeting minutes at the next Calendar Meeting in October.

3. Report of the President- John Englert

1. Just a quick update on the Contract for Excellence. As you know, we had filed a formal grievance/complaint concerning the implementation of State funds. Yesterday, the State Ed reported that because of the DOE's sloppy reporting on the allocation of the funds, more detailed reporting will be required, as well as certified audits to show the C4E funds are being used appropriately and not being used to supplant city funds. Once again, we urge the State to review the distribution of the funds so that the funds would go towards the children with the greatest educational need and include children with special needs in District 75.
2. We along with other constituents of District 75 responded to the Council of Great City Schools Report. Copies of our letter are available tonight and should have been picked up at the table when you walked into the room. I

will deter and further comments on the report to our Superintendent, Bonnie Brown.

3. Lastly, it's no surprise that we chose Staten Island for our first meeting in the new school term. This year marks the beginning of a new Proposed Capital Budget 2010-2014. This budget is slated to be released in November. We need to urge the Mayor and the Chancellor to adopt **a better capital plan**- one that will meet the critical needs of D75 students and provide enough room for the population growth that is expected in many neighborhoods. As part of this campaign, a colleague of mine, Leonie Haimson of Class Size Matters has printed postcards to the Mayor with our agenda for "A Better Capital Plan". Please feel free to fill out these cards and give them back to us before the end of the evening. Please let me know if you need additional cards for your school.

4. Report of the Superintendent-Bonnie Brown

Bonnie Brown, Superintendent of District 75 during her report mentioned the she and her staff are working with pupil transportation to rectify the problems that have arisen, (i.e. para's not on the bus, arrival and drop off time and routes) with busing.

Space: after a year of meetings everything that was promised and committed too was approved and set in place. The challenge this year, is that in the past if a room needed to be divided for a class or PT school construction authority would provide petitioners at the end of the summer school. Construction authority came out with a new policy that they will no longer provided petitioners. With school starting, school facilities was going to have the where with all to put up the pre-standing room dividers for the time being, which is not sufficient for teaching. School construction authority will be working on completing the task of putting in place the petitioners where needed. Ms. Brown will be meeting with school construction authority to discuss the plans for the six new sites for D75 and to ensure that the children will have full access to the shared space.

Dist 75 response to the council's report we have mention strives that have been accomplished and mentioned there are some things that have to happen seismically before changes can be made. Many statements in the report were on target and that 90 percent were recommendations provide by d75. This year D75 challenge those in position to put in place policies and practices that will serve all children with special needs; Equal Access to new building Principal who work with our kids, parents and sanctions are consequences for those Principals who don't.

Ms. Brown mentioned pilot programs for D75: Get Ready to Smile: Service Providers will be placed into classrooms to work with the students, Second

Life: virtual reality website and Smile: writer's development –curriculum program. As well as the Middle School Grant (20 million dollar) to utilize for Saturday programs and parent trainings to name a few.

5. Opened Discussion

Pat Miller, Chairperson of the Parent Coalition to Support District 75 read from the following (see attachment).

Parents have brought up problems with OPT as to scheduling, students are not being picked up and dropped off on time (from home to school and back) and students are standing on the bus due to over crowding. Ms. Brown asked for the parent to send Gary Hetch, Deputy Superintendent and email with his concerns and they will respond.

Related Services Authorization letter (RSA) are pointless due to there are no providers to service students.

A parent stated that it was the first time he has heard about the CCSE and John informed him how the 32 CEC's, CCHS and CCSE came into existence in 2004 to 2005 (first term) and CCSE consist of nine parents who have children within D75 serving the five boroughs. Ellen mentioned the law will sunset in June of 2009 and will revert back to the community boards. John mentioned that there is a meeting Thursday night on the history of NYC Public School Governance in Manhattan, being held by The Parents Commission and Diana Ravitch, Author of the Great City School Wars will be in attendance.

Betsy Goutbaum, Public Advocate for the City of NY issued the Final Report of the Commission on School Governance. John introduced Joan McKeever-Thomas who was part of the commission. Ms. Thomas mentioned there were public hearings, referral hearings, the commission have founded that the CEC's should stay in place and provides the CEC's with more power.

Meeting Adjourned at 9:30pm