



## Citywide Council on Special Education

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### 09/16/2009 CALENDAR MEETING MINUTES

The Calendar Meeting of the Citywide Council on Special Education was held on Wednesday, September 16, 2009 at 6:30 p.m. at Tweed Court House, 52 Chambers Street, New York , NY.

#### 1. Roll Call

Charlene Carroll-Hall	Present
John Englert	Present
Charles Henderson	Present
Diana Marenfeld	Present
Ellen McHugh	Present
Tom Ryan	Present
Able Alagbe	Present
Gloria Gonslves	Present

#### 2. Approval of Meeting Minutes Dated 8/19/09

Meeting Minutes approved with corrections: Ellen motioned to approve 8/19/09 Minutes, Tom 2<sup>nd</sup> and meeting minutes approved.

#### 3. Report of the President – John Englert

There were a few items in which John reported on. They were as follows:

- o The CCSE, as well as, other constituencies submitted feedback on the Special Education Recommendations prepared by Garth Harries in July. We're waiting to hear what changes, if any, will occur and have invited Laura Rodriguez and Dov Rokeach at our meeting next month in Staten Island.
- o There are 2 significant charges that effect parents of children with IEP's in the new Education Law.
  - a. The new law requires that the CCSE advocate for all children with IEP'S.
  - b. The new law requires CEC's to include one member who is a parent of a child with an IEP. In our estimation there are at least 50% of the CEC's which do not have a full complement

of members. We are urging the CEC's to outreach to parents of children with IEP's in their District to fill at least one of their vacancies.

- Sadly, just as occurred in FY09, District 75 is not slated to receive C4E funds in FY10. The two reasons which we were given that I hope Bonnie Brown can elaborate on are as follows:
  - a. D75 students are funded at a per capita level far greater than students in District 1-32. Base tax levy spending per student in D1-D32 is \$8,051 compared to D75 which is \$37,074.
  - b. D75 schools do not have comparable data for inclusion in the need index that SED uses to enforce the "75% of funds to the neediest 50% of schools" provision of the C4E regulation.
- We plan on filing a grievance and complaint just as we did last year and will keep you updated on our progress.

#### **4. Report of the Superintendent – Bonnie Brown**

- Bonnie Brown, Superintendent of District 75 informed the Council and attendees of the following.
- D75 placed a thousand new students entering into D75 schools/programs. Students who were recommended in a less restricted programs went into a community school were placed.
- Close to 200 new teachers were hired. The newly hired co-horts are affiliated with Pace University. Pace University is working with D75 is helping to develop a curriculum.
- Five of D75 schools were removed from the dangerous list (P169M,723X, 141K, 94M, 25R), 1 schools remains on the list (P12X) and 1 school was added (231K).
- There are new school openings in new school buildings that are fully equipped and D75 expanded a large number of their own programs (Get Ready To Learn and Smile Program) including programs serving children with autism. New incentive with alternate assessment will focus on technology using I-Pods, there is a new program A Day In the Life of a 12:1to4 Student.
- In September, D75 had their first administrators meeting the key note speaker was Dr. Ami Klin, of Yale University who has been working with children with autism for over 20 yrs. and currently runs the clinic at Yale. Dr. Klin and his team will be visiting D75 and will work with the administrators. D75 currently has over five thousand students with autism.
- The overhaul and development of the Office of Transition Services at D75, there is a new Director of Transition, Ewa (pronounced: Eva) Asterita. She was a guidance counselor with the transition center at D75 and her back ground is in vocational rehabilitation with I.R.F, I.C.D,

VESID and OMRDD. We started off doing an SPLM with transition that is now standardize in every school. She has worked with principal and they have asked for the curriculum for job training. There is culinary arts curriculum that will be standardized in all schools and they are in the process of writing a building maintenance curriculum. D75 developed a curriculum for all students that are in alternative classes that are 12:1 to 1 in line with NY State Standards. Students that are 12:1 to 4 D75 will develop a curriculum that is in line with the State standards on CDOS (career training).

- The Scott Program (pilot program started at D75) where D75 would send our team into Gen Ed schools to work with students at risk , D75 will be using some of the ARA Funding to expand the program.

## **5. Busing Update from the Office of Pupil Transportation (OPT)**

John Englert introduced Eric Goldstein, Chief Executive, Matt Berlin, Executive Director, and Richie Scarpa, Senior Advisor from OPT. Mr. Goldstein presented and general overview of the changes within OPT.

This year compared to last year in the beginning of the school year:

- OPT has an increase in busing routes (1.6 set) for Sp. Ed. 2008-09 there were 4, 439 bus routes for 2009-10 there are 4, 509 bus routes.
- Total numbers of students routed are down from last year: 2008-09 there were 59,980 for 2009-10 there are 56,250 numbers of students being routed down 6%.
- Number of Calls made to the Service Unit the first five days of school: 2008-09 total of calls made 58 thousand 2009-10 total of calls made 44 thousand, down 23%.
- Calls made to the unit the rate of answering the calls are 99.5 % of the time and the speed has increased from 6 seconds vs. 8 seconds in 2008-09.

Special Ed busing is difficult it is a customized service with particular needs, if the variables changes, i.e. address change, a new child is placed on/off the bus schedule, a change of school or information it can have a it can have a dis-appropriate disturbance effect on the bus routes.

As we start the first weeks of school we have a tremendous amount of students coming into our system instead of leaving. This year at OPT we had 700 new kids requesting busing on the first day of school and currently we are at 500 a day requesting busing. This year we have Jessica (no last name provided), located in the OPT Office; position is to work with Principals of D75 regarding busing issues. We are trying to get ahead of the problems.

Matt Berlin mentioned, We are working hard to fix the problems and would like

to hear from the parents: Parents voiced numerous concerns and issues with OPT: i.e. buses have not shown up, travel time line on the bus: constantly late (school to home - home to school) students arriving home at 7pm or later and some pick up times are 6 am instead the mandated time of 8 am, a disconnect with the District Office and ensuring, providing students (IEP) information is provided to OPT, kindergarten students place on buses with high school students, notification changes are provided to the parents after the fact, Parents reached out to OPT and left messages and have not received a call back. A parent wanted to know how to get an issue resolved with OPT after you have filed your complaint and there is no follow through? Mr. Goldstein, Mr. Berlin and Mr. Scarpa provided their email addresses for parents to reach out to them.

Parents provided their names and contact information to CCSE to forward to OPT, Richie Scarpa to resolve and follow thorough with their busing issues.

Meeting adjourned at 9pm