

Citywide Council on Special Education

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8/08/2007 Calendar Meeting Minutes

The regular monthly Calendar meeting of the Citywide Council on Special was held on Wednesday, July 8th, 2007 at 6:30pm at the District Office located at 400 First Avenue, NY, NY. The meeting was attended by the following members:

1. Roll Call

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

2. Secretary's Report - Approval of Minutes dated 07/11/2007

At this time a mention was made to incorporate the notes from the June Meeting into the record as the meeting was held without a quorum

3. President's Report - John Englert

John reported that within the next few months the Council would be in the planning stages for the new term and invited any suggestions that parents may have be brought to the attention of the Council.

4. Superintendent's Report- Bonnie Brown

The Superintendent's Report was provided by Gary Hecht, Deputy Superintendent of District 75. Gary spoke about the following items:

- a. Contracts for Excellence - \$258,000,000 will be given to New York. District 75 will be getting \$740,000 or approx. \$12,000/school.

- b. There are two (2) more days left in the Chapter 683 program (Summer School). Though the program was very successful, attendance is low ~10,000. The District needs to improve attendance.
- c. Dangerous Schools – It appears as though six (6) schools will be added on the most dangerous list. The District is speaking to the State about the specific school incidents and are concerned about the lack of guidelines and specialization on the team as it pertains to special education. The Safety Director of District 75 is meeting with the Executive Director of School Safety at Tweed and the State Student Support Services Team. The six (6) schools being added to the list are:
 - i. P75Q
 - ii. P169M
 - iii. P368K
 - iv. P231K
 - v. P36K
 - vi. P723X
- d. Space – There is still concern that there is not enough space for the children once school begins in September. The shortage appears to be in Queens and Bronx. A TCU trailer was delivered to PS 151Q. The District is looking at the square footage requirement based upon the State criteria. The Deputy Superintendent mentioned that there are approx. 1,700 children with no available seats.

5. Review of District Comprehensive Educational Plan (DCEP)

Lorraine Boyhan, Director of Curriculum/Accountability, presented efforts underway by D75 to focus on curricular enhancements for students subject both to standardized as well as alternate assessment, including additional training for teachers in Tweed mandated curriculum in ELA and Math, the Wilson Reading Program for the reading/writing disabled, ABA for students on the autistic spectrum, as well as other alternate assessment methods. However, she expressed concerns that the state does not seem willing to accept the district's efforts, especially with respect to its alternative assessment program. The concerns of D75 principals were also raised by Ellie Greenberg that there is a "pattern" to see special education (especially D75) as "too expensive", with too many funds being directed to non-education related services. For example, it was felt that critics unfairly focus on the \$11 million a year spent taking special ed kids off/on busses and monitoring them in lunch rooms before/after classes. What critics are missing is that such transitions are important opportunities in the lives of our students when learning can and does take place -- i.e., "teachable" moments.

Meeting adjourned at 8:00 pm