



CITYWIDE DISTRICT 75 COUNCIL

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CEC District 75
Special Education

CALENDAR MEETING MINUTES

The Calendar Meeting of the Citywide District 75 Council was held on Wednesday, **June 15, 2011** at 6:00 pm at 45-18 Court Square, Long Island City, NY 11101. The following people were in attendance.

1. Roll Call

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| ➤ Thomas F. Ryan, Jr., Co-President | Present |
| ➤ Charlene Carroll-Hall, Co-President | Excused |
| ➤ Able Alagbe, Vice President | Absent |
| ➤ Diana Marenfeld, Council Member | Excused |
| ➤ Gloria Smith, Council Member | Present |
| ➤ Berangere Pierre-Louis, Council Member | Excused |
| ➤ Joseph Williams, Public Advocate Appointee & Treasurer | Present |
| ➤ Dixon Deutsch, Public Advocate Appointee | Present |

2. Appointment of Time Keeper

Gloria Ann Smith, Council Member

3. Presidents Report: Tom Ryan, Jr.

Tom welcomed everyone to the meeting and announced this was the last meeting for the 2010-11 term for the Citywide District 75 Council. He reminded the audience that for the 2009-10 term-school years the council was the CCSE and became the CD75C to represent district 75. Recently there was an election for the CEC and the elected parent representatives are the following:

Returning members; Charlene Carroll-Hall Gloria Smith, Jackie Pierre-Louis Able Alagbe as well as Joseph Williams and Dixon Deutsch Public Advocate Appointees. Newly elected members are Maureen Dantzler, Allison Bridges-Matthews, Diamaris Magarin, Alicia Valeus and Ramona Bisnauth.

I wish to wish the newly elected council much success and the best of luck. A couple of dates to note are: the last day of school will; be June 28th it's a half day will an 11:30 am dismissal. The first day of summer school will be Wednesday, July 5th and the last day of school is august 15th and the 2011-12 school years will commence on Wednesday, September 7th. The Borough Presidents of City of New York are forming an education council task force. They're asking the CEC's to meet with them the first meeting will be held on Wednesday, June 22nd at 6 pm. There goal is to developed an substantial recommendation of improving the support and training of DOE and OFIA employees regarding the election process that is critical due to the vast problems during the election.

This election, there was too many mistakes. There is one member of this council who was not re-elected this year and it's beyond me as to how that happened. She has worked tirelessly as an advocate for the students within D75; she has picked up the ball for the council when I was unable to carry it. It's a travesty to me that she is not on this council and this council will be hurting without her-Diana Marenfeld. This is last year I will be serving on the council and decided not to run due to family obligations. I would like to say thank you to a lot of people. I want to say thank you to the parents who have given us the support of the years and the council will continue to the fight the good fight. I want thank the parents coordinators, Gary Hecht, Superintendent of D75, District 75 staff, previous council members, John Englert, Charles Henderson, Ellen McHugh, Diana Marenfeld, Charlene Carroll-Hall, as well as the current members; Jackie Pierre-Louis, Gloria Smith, Dixon Deutsch, Joe Williams for their hard work on the council. I encourage everyone to continue to fight the good fight and support the Citywide District 75 Council.

This concludes the Presidents Report for June.

4. Gary Hecht, Superintendent District 75

Mr. Hecht thanked Tom for years of service on the CEC for District 75 and reminisced over previous conversations and how they worked well together.

Mr. Hecht mentioned DOE will come out with a new focus this year called restructured expectations initiated by the Chancellor. District 75 will have the opportunity to participate in improving students instructional services as

well as to improve teaching services. District 75 will provide the professional development throughout the district and school level and the new initiative from the DOE will be implemented in September. The principals will be working on teacher ineffectiveness and how to improve student's progress. For the month of May we had a team of instructional staff going to schools and work with students that were going to take the standardize exams. We wanted to give them the students and staff support called the SWAT Team. Last month four principals submitted notification regarding their retirement. We will be focusing on process of placing principals for September within those schools. The district will be working on our goals-district goals for the next school year. It's hard to finalize those plans because of the cuts that are coming across the board. I want to thank the members of the CEC: Citywide District 75 Council for the work that they do for the parents, school community and children of District 75. They are volunteer parents who are elected to serve on the council and we are grateful for their service. We have put together a gift bag to say thank you and would like to present it to them with our gratitude.

5. Citywide District 75 Council End of the Year Report

End of Year Report

Citywide District 75 Council

June 15, 2011

This report provides a summary of the Citywide District 75 Council for activities pertaining to July 2010 - May 2011 council meetings.

Member Transitions

This past year saw the transition of the following individuals:

- John Englert
- Charles Henderson
- Ellen McHugh
- Jessica Santos
- Tywana B. Sharper

Attendance

The average council present attendance was 72%.

TOPIC SUMMARIES

The following list details out the topics that were covered extensively by the Citywide District 75 Council for the 2010-2011 school year:

Co-locations

Co-locations continue to be an issue that the Council frequently visits. Earlier this year there were concerns raised at several council meetings on the process of co-locations, parental voice, and the possible displacement of students in D75 program. The Council has held several meetings to discuss co-locations throughout the five boroughs. With regard to co-locations, the Council continues to voice its concern with shared space (gym, lunchroom, library, etc.). Through extensive collaboration with stock holders such as the public advocate's office, and the council has sought to more fully understand the impact of co-locations and ensure that the voices of D75 families are heard.

Several schools, public and charter, are at the center of the co-location issue. The Council has witnessed issues arise when classroom space is taken away from D75 schools and common spaces, such as the gym and cafeteria are not appropriately shared. Schools facing this issue include, but are not limited to:

- Girls Prep Charter School (D75 school – P94M)
- Explore Charter School (D75 school – PS 141)
- Community Roots Charter School (D75 school – PS 369K @P67K)

While co-locations continue to be at the heart of the education dialogue in New York City, the Council will be sure to express their opinion and guarantee that the voices of D75 families are included in discussions of co-locations. The Council has continuously encouraged parents to be vigilant about co-locations and to participate in the process of school closures.

Busing Issues

Several conversations have taken place with Matthew Berlin, Executive Director of OPT. He and representatives from his office have been extremely open to parent participation and feedback regarding OPT. The Council has observed the following issues and concerns with OPT:

- Buses not picking up students
- Travel time on the bus
- Buses not adhering to scheduled times (late or early)

- Mandated IEP requirements not being recognized by OPT
- Lack of communication between the schools, OPT and the parents
- Lack of accountability with OPT
- Adequate air conditioning on buses

For the first year, Council created a busing survey to capture the concerns most pressing for the parents of D75 students. The results of the busing survey, along with a graphic presentation, will be made public at the September 2011 calendar meeting.

Special Education Reform

Laura Rodriguez, Gary Hecht and Donna Dimino have visited several council meetings to explain the special education reform recommended by the Garth Harries' report to Joel Klein. A few keys to this reform include:

- Special education database and tracking reform (SEGIS)
- Putting the emphasis on the teaching and learning process
- Building capacity within school leadership teams
- Providing more inclusive education within the child's zoned school
- D75 school teams delivering S.T.O.P. and other professional development prior to referrals

Chancellor Changes

Within one school year the NYCDOE has gone through three different school chancellors. Effective January 1st, Chancellor Klein resigned and Cathie Black worked for the school system for several months. In mid-spring, Chancellor Black resigned and Deputy Mayor Dennis Walcott was appointed chancellor. The Council will continue to monitor the transition of the

Persistently Dangerous

During the 2009-2010 school year both 231K and 12K were on the Persistently Dangerous list. These schools successfully appealed this status in the spring of 2010. Despite their successful appeal the State Education Department changed its rules regarding Persistently Dangerous school status; all schools on the list in 2009-2010 were going to remain on the list in 2010-2011. This year, as a result of the systems and structures put in place at 231K and 12K both schools demonstrated a marked decrease in dangerous incidents in school and on the school buses. The two schools are appealing the PD status and expect to be removed from the Persistently Dangerous list this summer.

Budget Cuts

The Council has been informed that huge budget cuts are up for discussion this year. Superintendent Hecht foresees a 3% cut to D75's budget, however it is not expected that these cuts will trickle down to the schools. The Council will monitor this situation.

Council Development

The Council has hosted several individuals to better equip parents on special education matters. These individuals include:

- Laura Rodriguez – Updating parents on the special education updates
- Gary Hecht – Updating parents on D75 happenings and programs implemented by the District 75 office. Along with the Annual EPIC Fair held in May.
- Thomas F. Ryan, Jr. – Co-President of the Citywide District 75 Council, during the EPIC Fair; Keynote Speaker; presented the councils accomplishments throughout the year.
- Carmen Alvarez – Discussed raising the “Raising the Bar” campaign and the U.F.T.’s work within special education and parent advocacy
- Lori Podvesker – Updating parents on how Resources for Children with Special Needs can help parents
- Diana Marenfeld- Busing Chairperson and Joseph Williams, Busing Committee Member, for implementing the Busing Survey and the Parent Busing pamphlet with Office of Pupil Transportation. A special thank you to Dixon Deutsch, Gloria Smith and Jackie Pierre –Louis for helping tally the results.
- Joseph Williams- Public Advocate Appointee & Treasura of Citywide District 75 Council and Vice President of the District 75 President's Council brought together the entire District 75 family as a team to work collaboratively on various issues pertaining to District 75
- Autism Speaks Walk – Several council members participated in the Autism Speaks Walk. Special thanks go to: Jackie (Berrangere) Pierre-Louis for organizing the walk for the council, Gloria Smith, Joseph Williams, Charlene Carroll-Hall, Diana Marenfeld and Dixon Deutsch for participation in the walk.

Other

New York City Department of Education Proposed Five Year Capital Plan Amendment for the Fiscal Year 2010-14; December 1, 2010- The council received a list of concerns regarding repairs within the D75 sites (elevator, air

conditioning units repairs, etc). This information was passed along to the District 75 Office as well as the NYC DOE School Construction Authority

Resolutions Discussed

- Resolution 11 – Vacate Council Member Seat – (Tywana B. Shaper) - Approved
- Resolution 12 – Citywide District 75 Council 2010-2011 Fiscal Budget – Approved
- Resolution 13 – Filling a Vacancy (Gloria Smith) – Approved
- Resolution 14 - Citywide District 75 Council Filling a Vacancy (Jackie (Berrangere) Pierre-Louis) - Approved
- Resolution 15 - Citywide District 75 Council Filling a Vacancy (Jeffery T. Stimpson) - Approved
- Resolution 17 – Shared Space at PS369K@P67K (Protection of further expansion and shared space demands from Community Roots Charter School) - Approved
- Resolution 18 – Maintaining Current Teacher Staff (District 75 be protected from any further budget cuts resulting from teacher layoffs) – Approved
- Resolution 19 – Citywide District 75 Council 2010-2011 Fiscal Budget - Approved
- Resolution 20 – Revision of New York State Law to require Charter Schools Pay Fair Market Value Rent to the Department of Education for Utilization of Public Schools Facilities – Approved

6. Summer School Busing: Matt Berlin, Executive Director, OPT

Tom introduced matt Berlin and mentioned that Matt has worked diligently with the council in resolving busing problems and has also been involved (along with his team) in the councils format of the D75 Parents Busing Booklet. We are hoping to have the booklet ready for the September 2011 School year. Matt Berlin mentioned that the council is very great advocates for the families of D75 and he is glad to work with them. We are in the middle of getting ready for the summer busing as well as the fall. One of the issues we are focusing on is checking and testing to see if the buses have air conditioning. I know there are a lot of challenges regarding busing and we have been working on it. We want to know if there are any buses with out air conditioning. If you should come across any of the buses please call us or contact the council. Mr. Williams has brought to our attention a few parents complaints regarding the lack of a/c. In the fall we have all sorts of issues that are about to get changed around. A lot of that problem is because we get changes in student's information and we got sixty thousand children that are on buses and 20 thousand of those children change the bus route in September and it's a hard situation to manage. Were trying to find better ways to manage it and working during the summer to make sure we have correct information. This summer were going to advertise campaign informing the parents to contact OPT and provided updated/correct information. We will also reach out to the parents (information on file) to make sure the information is updated and correct. We will also have on our website a 24hour call center for parents to reach out to OPT. We're working very hard with the council on the parent busing guide so parents can have idea on how OPT works. We are working with Barbara and Gary at the district level to preplan that busing will be easier in September. Matt Berlin opened up his segment with a question and answer session.

Meeting Adjourned at 9:00 pm