



COMMUNITY EDUCATION COUNCIL DISTRICT 3

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November 21, 2018

Chancellor Richard A Carranza
New York City Department of Education
Tweed Courthouse
52 Chambers Street
New York, N.Y. 10007

Dear Chancellor Carranza,

On behalf of all of the parents and stakeholders in District 3, we would like to thank you for joining us on Wednesday, September 26th at PS163. As parent leaders we take great pride in serving as liaisons between the parents in our community and the DOE. We thank you for your willingness to hear the concerns of District 3 stakeholders and for your ongoing commitment to developing thoughtful solutions. We commend the work in which you and your team have been engaged, and we appreciate that you delineated the four main areas of focus for your first year in the position:

1. Accelerating learning and teaching and the creation of Chief Academic Officer
2. Engaging and empowering of all parent communities
3. Investing in the capacity of all DOE staff to do their jobs better
4. Focusing on equity at all levels of DOE operations and policy making

The District 3 Town Hall was extremely informative for the community, and we look forward to taking next steps this school year on the following community areas of focus:

Middle School Diversity Initiative Resources

The CEC3 letter to you dated May 14 requested funding allocations that will contribute to the successful implementation of the D3 Middle School Diversity Initiative. As you know, outside consultants were not hired to assist with community engagement, collateral materials, meetings, and other elements of our lengthy process. The move to enact the change was a grassroots effort, but our large community remains at risk of worsening circumstances at certain middle schools if the implementation phases are not adequately funded. We were pleased that you recognized that significant funding is being made available to other districts pursuing diversity initiatives going forward and that some of that funding could be made available to D3. To date, however, this funding has not been outlined to our council or to individual schools.

Preservation of PS87 Dual Language program and build out of other ways to incorporate language learning in D3.

Thank you for your support and enthusiasm of language learning throughout District 3. The commitment that you offered to the parents at PS87 and other advocates for language learning support was very much appreciated. Funding issues and optimal approaches for language learning remain a critical concern for families in District 3.

Examining alternatives to District 2 High School priority and how it has gravely impacted D3 8th graders.

The proposal to phase out the SHSAT and increase access to Specialized High Schools across all of NYC's middle schools is a laudable goal for our expansive community. However, as one of our community questions put it, aren't there other ways to help our city's 8th graders gain access to high schools that do not require state legislation? District priority is an issue that adversely affects D3 families. We were delighted to hear that you do not agree with the notion that some districts should have "priority" high schools with the city-wide admissions process, and we eagerly await the next steps on this issue.

Enhancing public school facilities and marketing capabilities of schools in D3 so hard hit by charter schools.

Public schools in Harlem are struggling to stay afloat and retain students as we continue to be "out-hustled" by charter schools. We are calling for a comprehensive equity survey for all the charter schools and public schools in our district. This survey will be used to identify areas of need and help us determine the proper resources needed to help each school thrive. Furthermore, we request that each school submit a brochure to the DOE on annual basis to ensure that every school has comparable marketing materials available for student recruitment.

Carter Cases and Special Education

We were heartened to hear you speak about the potential you see for new programming for students with disabilities here within New York City. As you shared, many students are traveling long distances at great expense personally and financially for programs that could and should be available here. In District 3 in our ASD Nest Program, we have seen first-hand the amazing results that can be achieved when significant investment is made in programming, curriculum, and support staff, and local expertise is leveraged. We look forward to seeing similar-caliber programs in development for all students with IEPs.

Parent Empowerment in Harlem

Parental engagement and parent empowerment - parents need to be educated to be empowered. What should my child be able to know and do at every single grade level? DOE is planning to attend engagement activities in communities like churches, community centers and other places where parents might gather. While the Harlem El Barrio project seems to be on the radar, when can we expect a broader timeline and scope for this project?

Diversity in Teaching Staff

Initiatives to build a local workforce from within our own student body and others, such as *Black Men Teach*, are valuable in providing our students with teachers who reflect the diversity of our city. We are hopeful that these initiatives meet the need for a more diverse teaching staff however we are concerned that these forward-thinking solutions cannot answer the immediate challenges for students in the school system today. We hope that along with these efforts there are also initiatives to meet the immediate imbalances in today's classrooms.

Once again thank you for your visionary leadership, we look forward to partnering with you to improve outcomes for the families of District 3.

Community Education Council

CC:

DOE District 3 Superintendent Ilene Altschul
DOE Executive Superintendent, Manhattan, Marisol Rosales
DOE Office of Student Enrollment, Sarah Kleinhandler
Manhattan Borough President Gale Brewer
NYSED Commissioner MaryEllen Elia
Board of Regents Chancellor Betty A Rosa
NYC Public Advocate Letitia James

NYC Comptroller Scott Stringer
NYS Regents Member, 1st District, Nan Eileen Mead
Panel for Educational Policy Member, Michael Kraft
City Council Member Helen Rosenthal
City Council Member Bill Perkins
City Council Member Mark Levine
State Assembly Member Linda Rosenthal
State Assembly Member Daniel J. O'Donnell
State Assembly Member Inez Dickens
State Assembly Member Richard N. Gottfried
State Assembly Member Robert J. Rodriguez
State Senator Brian Benjamin
State Senator Marisol Alcantara
State Senator Brad Hoylman
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Community Board 7 Chair Roberta Semer
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