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**June 16th, 2021**

**Model CEC3 Resolution on Civics Curriculum**

**WHEREAS** - The current Civics based curriculum that both New York City and New York State provides its educators is lacking in its ability to foster civic engagement and awareness amongst children and young adults. The curriculum does not focus enough on how our government works until students are at an older age, and by that point only a small and unique group of civics minded students are engaged in the topic.

**WHEREAS**, Schools tend to stray away from civics because of “partisan” issues and therefore are afraid to have these discussions in the classroom. Teachers also tend to “push” their own political agendas in the classroom, whether blatantly or subconsciously, and this increases the fear of having these political discussions.

**WHEREAS**, The entire “Civics/Government/Social Studies” curriculum needs to be revamped from a timing standpoint. In other words, when things are taught, how things are taught, and changes/modifications to the content that is taught.

**WHEREAS**, There needs to be more communication, instructional materials, and opportunities for collaboration by the local, state, and federal governments with schools.

**WHEREAS**, There is a lack of exposing younger students to more people of color and other “minority” groups that are in positions of power and government.

**WHEREAS**, There is still a lack of exposure and discussion to social justice topics and other associated issues in the classroom and in the school system as a whole.

**WHEREAS**, The City of New York’s “Civics Week” does not go far enough to promote the idea of Civics amongst the youth in our city. There is not enough time built into the beginning of the school year for government/civics vocab across the entire school, not just within social studies and government classes.

**WHEREAS**, Students are still not in tune enough with the members of their community, both at school and in their own neighborhoods. This is due to the amount of traveling that students do for schooling as a result of the middle and high school admissions process.

**WHEREAS**, There is not enough of a focus on student governments and student activism within the school community and the city overall, including groups like Model CEC. For example, **UCLA** - has an annual budget of **39 million** for **student governments**.

**LET IT BE RESOLVED,** That the current Civics Curriculum needs to be revamped in a variety of ways in order to foster a future of civics minded American citizens that are educated and informed on how their country operates and have a belief that democracy works. There are many ways to do this, including, but not limited to, increasing funding for civics based programs, increasing professional development opportunities for teachers to learn more ways to teach civics, and increasing communication between schools and government officials.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED,** teachers and staff should be given professional development opportunities to practice and learn how to teach civics and other political content objectively to encourage safe spaces for political discussions.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED,** the new Civics curriculum should have a particular focus on starting earlier in student careers on the elementary level. For example, the curriculum should start as early as 2nd Grade with the basics on how the government works and why it is important to know about civics. This will not happen overnight and will require a 2-3 year period of professional developments and curriculum development.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED,** That local, state, and federal governments should appoint “public school liaisons” that are responsible for reaching out to schools to provide instructional materials, set up visits with government officials, and overall be more active in the public school community. Schools and teachers have plenty going on and its time for government officials to take the lead in pushing civics in our schools, instead of “waiting” for schools to reach out to them.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED,** there should be lessons and opportunities at the younger grade levels, but not exclusively, that expose students of color to those same people that work in government or other public sector positions.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED,** That social justice topics should be taught throughout the year, and also be incorporated in all subject areas, at all different grade levels. This will include providing PD’s and curriculum planning time for teachers to implement these types of lessons.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED,** That Civics “week” should be transformed into “Civics Month”. That month should be October since it is the month before Election day every year. Finally, social studies should not be the only subject area to deliver civics minded lessons. Civics “month” should be a school-wide initiative encompassing all classes and grade levels.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED,** There should be a survey for each school (like the U.S. census) so that students can be exposed to the process of democracy, have a say in their school community, and have a better understanding of the members of their community.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED,** That the NYCDOE should allocate a certain amount of funds for the creation, monitoring, and promotion of student governments throughout the city, including groups like Model CEC. These organizations are VITAL to the success of civic education in our schools. This money should come from the Fair Student Funding allocated funds for classroom materials and resources.