



CITY OF NEW YORK

MANHATTAN COMMUNITY BOARD 10

215 West 125th Street, 4th Floor

New York, NY 10027

T: 212-749-3105 F: 212-662-4215

CICELY HARRIS
Chairperson

SHATIC MITCHELL
District Manager

EDUCATION YOUTH & LIBRARIES

Committee Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, October 19, 2021 - 6:30PM

Hon. Stephanie Palmer

Committee Members in Attendance: Milan Reed, Tamara Martin, Crystal McKay Verna Diggs, Genisha Metcalf, Marquis Harrison, Daniel Patterson Committee Members Excused: Stephanie Palmer Committee Members Absent: Jose Mendez, Africa Owes, Joshua Clennon Other Board Members Present: Donna Gill, Tefone Herring, Dana Points

Guest Presenters: Pamela Stewart- CEC5, Deirdre Garrett-Scott -CES3, Yael Leopold- Early Childhood Director and representative District 5

Meeting Overview:

The purpose of the meeting was to provide the committee members and community members with an understanding of the leadership and governance structure of the NYC public school system. Towards this end, representatives from Community Education Council (CEC) 5 and CEC 3, were invited to address the committee. In the absence of the committee chair, First Vice Chair of CB10, Marquis Harrison, who is also a member of the committee, chaired the meeting.

Agenda Item: Presentations

Key Discussion Points: Pamela Stewart, is President of CEC 5. Ms. Stewart shared that the goal of CEC5 is to work closely with partner organizations, such as businesses, and not for profit organizations, to build community in order to support children, youth and families in our community. Ms. Stewart thanked recent efforts by these groups, specifically, The New York City Urban League and the NAACP, that supplied backpacks and school supplies to families in the community. Ms. Stewart also shared that the Council was working on a resolution to provide parents with a choice to have their children participate in virtual learning as opposed to returning to the classroom.

Deidre Garrett-Scott, a current member of CEC3, shared that most Council members are new and that she is one of just four veteran members. MS. Garrett-Scott also shared that the major issues facing CEC 3 are, student enrollment, and its impact on the budget, supporting resolutions to provide remote options to parents, opposing the expansion of charter schools in the district and the need for more afterschool programs and increasing parent engagement. CEC 3 is more diverse than CEC 5. Issues such as the elimination of the Gifted and Talented program and technology issues are viewed differently depending on what part of the district children attend school. A Diversity and Equity Committee has been established to focus on the Harlem schools in the district.



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There was significant discussion about charter schools. The CEC's support focusing on community schools rather than expansion of charter schools in the district. The charter schools' need for space through co-location threatens established community schools. The question was raised as to why parents in the community are choosing charter schools. It was suggested that a survey could help to boost parent engagement and solicit more information about their decision to enroll their children in charter schools. Verna Diggs, a committee member, attended a hearing on Charter schools where it seemed that charters are a model that is being supported. The question was raised as to if there are lessons to be learned from charter schools that can benefit community schools. Are charter schools partnering with community schools to explore "Best Practices"? Are best practices able to be replicated, given the difference in rules and regulations governing the two models. Committee member Genesha Metcalf, a former CEC member, offered suggestions for addressing the need for CEC 3 and 5 to work together on joint projects and campaigns designed to improve outcomes for the children and youth in our community.

Participatory budgeting was offered as another opportunity for the two CEC's to collaborate. This year 400,000 dollars targeted to schools in the district is at risk because the city council could not establish a process to earmark these funds because of the council leadership transition.

Yael Leopold has served as the representative of District 5 most of last year and we are honored to have her presence on the committee again this year. It is especially important to have this continuity, because we have a new district superintendent, Ms. Robin Davson. Ms. Davson was present at the meeting and introduced herself to the committee and the community.

Ms. Leopold reported that the district was excited about creating a welcoming environment for HOMECOMING 2021. Ms. Leopold announced that we have three new principals in the district. There is also a new curriculum, the Mosaic Curriculum being introduced by the Department of Education. This curriculum features black and brown characters and authors that look like the students.

Ms. Leopold also made the committee members and the community aware of new COVID-19 protocols in the schools. Specifically, masking, the 6 ft. distancing requirement and testing and tracking has resulted in the need for less quarantining of students. However, the "Situation Room" is responsible for making all decisions regarding COVID-19 protocols, practices and policies in the schools.

Brilliant NYC is a new program designed to replace the controversial Gifted and Talented Program. This program will serve over 65,000 kindergarten children in our district.

District 5 is currently hiring staff, teachers, paraprofessionals and parent coordinators. All new hires must be vaccinated. If you know of anyone interested, please reach out to Yael Leopold.

Finally, parents who are keeping their children home from school, due to COVID-19 fears and concerns, must apply for home schooling through the district. Parents should call the District Superintendent's office for support.



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Action Items

- The committee should work with the CEC 3 & 5 to develop a survey to engage parents as to their decision to send their children to charter schools
- The committee should collaborate with the two CEC's to work together on joint projects such as participatory budgeting
- Committee member Genisha Metcalf volunteered to conduct fundraising workshops for schools in our district
- The committee should gather additional information on key issues facing the district, specifically, Student enrollment and charter schools
- The committee should make parents in our community aware of the need to apply for home schooling, if they are keeping their children home because of COVID-19 fears and concerns
- The School District is hiring teachers, paraprofessional and parent coordinators, interested individuals should reach out to Yael Leopold

Agenda Item: District Needs Statement Review

Key Discussion Points: The committee reviewed those issues identified through the District Needs Statement related to our committee. Those issues are, Workforce Development, Juvenile Justice and Afterschool Programs. The committee moved to include in the District Needs Statement, the need for water purification systems for schools in our district. Committee member and educator Marquis Harrison made the committee aware that children could not use the water fountains in some of their schools. Many of these schools do not have vending machines leaving few if any options.

The committee also moved to include in addition to afterschool programs, out of school program these programs are designed to engage older youth when they are not in school. Committee member Genesha Metcalf suggested some examples, such as "Saturday Nights Lights" a sports program funded through the asset forfeiture and the District Attorney's office. Also, Safety Zone programs spearheaded by The Harlem Children's Zone. Committee members and members of the community were invited to forward any additional needs to the committee Chair and/or the District Manager.

There was a robust discussion about the need for us to organize to make sure that Harlem is receiving its share of public resources. The question was raised as to how we as advocates can best support children, youth and families in our community.



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Action Items:

Include Water purification systems and out of school programs for older youth in our District Needs Statement

Committee members and members of the community forward district needs to the committee Chair and/or the District Manager

Agenda Item: November Meeting Agenda

Key Discussion Points: Committee Members and members of the community discuss the identification of agenda items for upcoming meetings. The Affirm Black Genius project was mentioned as well as fundraising for public schools and student enrollment.

Action Items:

Committee members and members of the community are invited to forward agenda items for upcoming meetings to the committee Chair and/or the District Manager

Agenda Item: Announcements

Key Discussion Points: Committee member Chrystal McKay announced that the NYPL has forgiven all fines for late returned books.

The Committee Chair asked that the “Harlem Holiday Toy Drive”, be announced and asked for participation by committee members

Agenda Item: Adjournment