

CB12M-Youth and Education Committee

Meeting Minutes

Monday June 8, 2015

Meeting #6

Location: 530 West 166th Street, 6th Floor, New York, NY 10032

Committee Members Present: Fe Florimón, Chair; Maria Luna; Ayisha Oglivie; Glenis Aquino; Prescilla Mota- Willis; Estevan Nembhard.

Committee Member (s) Absent: Manny De Los Santos: **Excused**; Alyce Smith, Assistant Chair

Board Member (s) Present: George Fernandez, Chairman of the Board; Richard Lewis, Chair of Housing and Human Services Committee

Community Member(s) and Guest (s): Al Kurland, PAL; Jennifer Araiyo, Rep. District Office; Jeff Morrison, Parent, YM/YWHA of Washington Heights/Inwood; Nuria Garcia, Resp. Fundacion Arte Cultural; Denise Hykes, Inwood Academy; Kyira A. Harris, Representative for Keys to Abundant Life, Inc.; Joel Yoffie; Ambar Paulino, Progran Assist.- CFE-Teacher College of CU; Roberto De La Rosa, Community Activist; Jazmin del Valle, Community Resident; Trevor Arnett, Rep for The University Settlement/The Red Door; Luis Perez, Rep. for Riverdale Education.; Robert Jackson, former NYC Council Member Dist 7th

Chair Fe Florimón opened the meeting at 7:17 p.m.

Members of the Committee and attendees were welcomed and asked to introduce themselves.

Discussion was conducted as indicated below:

- ✓ Chair Florimon officially acknowledged Committee's new members and asked them to share their thoughts about why they chose to join the Committee. The majority of them indicated that want to be involved in the community, especially in the area of education.
- ❖ The approval of the Minutes for the meeting of May 11th was adopted without amendment
- ✓ Ms. Florimon opened the discussion expressing concern to the high rate of obesity among students and the associated problems to the disease and the alarming news about lack of physical education in many public schools, especially in district 6. After her brief comment, the Chair introduced **Ms. Nina Saxon, Community Liaison –NYC Comptroller Office**, who appeared before the Committee to discuss the Comptroller's latest report about the "Disparities in Physical Education in New York City Schools. Initially, Ms. Saxon thanked the committee for inviting her to speak. She started her presentation by distributing copies of the Comptroller's report on physical education. According her initial statement, the Policy Unit of the Comptroller office, feels that the Department of Education has dropped the ball on one of the most important students' activities- "Physical Education (PE)." According to the Comptroller's report:

- ✓ 506 schools in the city of New York (over 32 percent) lack full-time, certified physical education teacher, including 59 percent of elementary schools (375), 17 percent of middle schools (49) and 8 percent of high schools (33). While some of these schools may have access to a part-time, certified PE teacher, the DOE, failed to provide data that would substantiate that possibility.
- ✓ 435 schools in New York City (28 percent) lack a dedicated “physical fitness space” - a problem that is most acute for high schools and middle schools: Over 41 percent of high schools and more than 35 percent of middle schools have no physical fitness space
- ✓ The committee also learned that out of the 435 schools with no space for PE, more than 75 percent of them are co-located. The conclusion of the findings states that: 230,000 students lack full-time, certified PE teacher; 153,000 students attend a school without a physical fitness space; and 91,000 students attend a school that does not have access to an outdoor school yard or nearby park. This information is attributed to the effort of the NYC Comptroller’s office report.
- ✓ Presenter spoke about the NYS Mandates that oversees NYC DOE and expressed concern for their failure to exercise them. Any school that deprives students from having space for their physical education is in violation of the law.
- ✓ Ms. Saxon also discussed the needs for adequate funding to address the problem of PE in many public schools and the importance of community involvement to address this matter. She suggested to the board, especially the Youth and Education Committee, to remain alert of, and support legislations that address physical education. Chair Florimon thanked Ms. Saxon for her suggestion and responded that the Y&EC has been already advocating for this matter and part of that effort was to invite her office to speak at the committee meeting. Additionally, the Y&EC has been advocating on behalf of several schools in district 6/CB-district 12M that have not gyms including I.S. 223-Mott Hall, I.S. 528-Bea Rogers, and for the P.S. 28-The Wright Brothers, their gym which has been waiting to be repaired for decades.
- ✓ Questions and comments pertaining to the subject of discussion were made by members of the Committee (***Maria Luna, Ayisha Oglivie, Prescilla Mota- Willis, and Estevan Nembhard***) the general public (***Al Kurland , Joel Yoffie, Denise Hykes, Jeff Morrison, Roberto De La Rosa***).
- ✓ When participants asked questions that the Presenter didn’t have an immediate answer, the Presenter gave them a sheet form, for them to put their questions in writing. Presenter also promised to answer their questions via email. She also shared with participants her office and her direct contact information in case of any questions.
- ✓ In her final statement Ms. Saxon spoke about her passion for education and thanked the committee for inviting her to the meeting. Chair reciprocate the appreciation and thanked Ms. Saxon for her presentation
- ✓ Chair Florimon briefly made acknowledge former Council Member Robert Jackson who came to the meeting.
- ✓ Moreover, member of the audience made comments on how some school Principals are using the Parent Association’s budget and the need for clarification on the matter.

- ✓ CB12M's **Chairman Fernandez** reported that he's concerned about the relationship between the Community Education Council District 6 (CEC6) and CB12M, especially with the Youth and Education Committee(Y&EC). According to the Chairman, CB12M has made several attempts to work with CEC 6, including the fact that he has (personally) attended some of their meetings in support of mutual relationship and hope to network on matters of education, capital budget and other related issues to the community. But so far, CEC 6 has made no effort to reciprocate the intention of the board.
- ✓ In his final comments, the Chairman also encouraged members of the Youth Committee to consider the possibility of supporting resolutions that addresses important matters for the community, especially matters affecting students' lives and their education (e.g. health, programs, and funding etc).
- ✓ Chair Florimon presented a motion in support of the increase of physical education fitness spaces and expand the school capital funds in school D6/CB-district 12M for FY 17. The motion was seconded by **member Precilla Mota- Willis**. The motion was unanimously approved by the committee as follow: **Committee Members** 6 yes, **Board Member** 1 yes, **Community members** 9 yes, and 1 no, Abstain 0 ,
- ❖ **Discussion under new/old business**
- ✓ Participants were encouraged to attend the event of "The Collective" - Benefit Concert to support youth at risk to be held at the United Palace- June 14th @ 5:00pm
- ✓ Ms. Florimon reported that the Y&EC's Saturday Meeting held June 6th was well attended by enthusiastic participants including students. Some of the participants include Mr. Al Kurland, and Roberto de la Rosa who were also present in both Committee's meeting June 6th and 8th. Both participants have reaffirmed the Chair's statement and agreed that on the successful outcome of the Y&EC meeting with the NYPD. The meeting was held in conjunction with the NYC Police Department (NYPD) and the objective of the meeting was to inform the community about the "Community Safety Program" – a new Pilot Program to be implemented by the NYPD in the community of Washington Heights/Inwood. Through this initiative it's also expected that the level of communication between community residents and Officers will improve.
The pilot program seeks to promote community safety by increasing the presence of Police Officers, Sergeants, and patrol vehicles in the community. Although both Precincts 34th and 33rd were invited, only members from Precincts 34th were present at the meeting.
- ✓ Resident of the community thanked Chair for facilitating the communication between the Police Officers and the Community. They thanked the Police Officers for attending the meeting and for their new initiative to make the community a safer place. The meeting was very informative, interesting and well captivated by all participants, including students who volunteered their comments and suggestions for the program. The meeting was

running out time and participants did not want to leave and they didn't hesitate to ask for the meeting to be extended for an additional 35, which was granted thanks to the willingness of the Officers to stay longer. The June 6th meeting was adjourned @1:24pm

- ✓ The Y&EC may have a final community event (combination of education, health and entertainment) at the GWEC on July 11th. However, still pending for final approval
- ✓ **Kyira A. Harris**, Representative for the "Keys to Abundant Life, Inc," appeared before the Committee to share the services provided by her organization. The program provides students with a unique and healthy experience including exposing them to a "Restaurant kitchen tours," all over the city and also exposes them to other interesting fun activities. Ms. Harris can be contact at: kyira@keystoabundantlife.com; (o) 800.790.8114, ext 8114
- ✓ Al Kurland provided a brief update about youth on community and the latest initiative.

- ✓ **Jeff Morrison**, a concerned Parent at the YM/YWHA program (A.K.A "Y") came to the meeting to share the collective concern of many families including his own, on the possible termination of the half- day U-PK program, which has been provided at the "Y" for over ten years in the community of Washington Heights and Inwood. Mr. Morrison asked for the Board's supports to help prevent the loss of their much needed program at the "Y". Committee suggested that unity of the parents and their collective statements in support of the program were important steps for advocacy purpose. The committee agreed to support the parents and look forward to get involved on the matter.
- ✓ **Member Maria Luna** invited all participants for the celebration of Native Indian American to be held on Sunday June 14th, location Inwood Park from 11:00am to 4:00pm

- ✓ Chair Florimon announced that in July and August the board will be on recess and the next committee meeting will be held in September 14th @ 7:00pm.

- ❖ Meeting adjourned @ 10:27pm