



# Manhattan Community Board 9

## Manhattan Community Board 9 - Youth, Education and Libraries Committee February 8, 2012 Meeting

### MINUTES

**CALL TO ORDER** – Meeting began at 6:45 p.m.

**ATTENDANCE - Committee Members:** Winston Majette (co-chair), Joe Rogers, Jr. (co-chair), Yvonne Stennett, Judith Insell, Tisha Jackson, Joe Rogers, Jr. (co-chair), Jen Silverman (Public Member). **Excused:** Dr. Vicky Gholson. **Other Board Members:** Brad Taylor.

**Public Attendees:** Miriam Aristy-Farer (P.S. 153), Charlie Winkler (Artistic Dreams), Vernon Ballard (Harlem 4 Community/Harlem 4 Kids)

**MINUTES** – Review of minutes from January 2012 meeting tabled to March 2012 meeting.

### PRESENTATIONS

Status of educational equity and the impact of budget cuts on CB9 schools  
(*Miriam Artistry-Farer, Parent and Advocate, P.S. 153/Member, School District 6*)

- Over three years, District 6 schools have collectively lost \$26 million (according to statistics from the Alliance for Quality Education).
- P.S. 187 – no state-funded art teacher or science teacher (parents pay for those; lost \$4 million in 4 years)
- P.S. 128 lost 10 school employees (school aides, security, etc.)
- P.S. 153 – no art teacher and over four years has lost almost \$5 million, without a drop in enrollment
- Class size K – 25, 28, 30; 1<sup>st</sup> – 30 kids; 3<sup>rd</sup> grade – some have 35
- Schools without strong Parent-Teach’s are struggling because they don’t have extra staff
- At the same time, a number of schools in District 6 have seen their Department of Education “Progress Report” grades drop a grade or two
- Restrooms divided with shower curtains (Miriam was unable to identify schools but can find that information if we need it.)
- District still has not seen money from the Campaign for Fiscal Equity lawsuit.
- Now, under Governor Cuomo’s plan, money for high-need schools will be distributed on a competitive basis, via grant instead of by need. Districts and schools without grant writers will be at a serious disadvantage.
- The United Federation of Teachers has conducted several workshops for parents this year, while the DOE has done very little.
- Miriam encouraged CB9’s YEL Committee to work more closely with parents, through the Community Education Councils, etc., and to help parents understand their educational rights within the public school system and what they can do to ensure that their rights are upheld.
- Brad Taylor noted that it seems like District 6 schools are having their budgets cut more drastically than in other communities. He asked what our elected officials are doing to fight these cuts and ensure our schools the resources they need.

Organizing and sharing education-related information across the community  
(*Vernon Ballard, Harlem 4 Community/Harlem 4 Kids*)

- Working with Harlem 4 Kids to launch a new online platform called Harlem 4 Community. The platform will give community members access to upcoming education-related events and meetings across Harlem, and document education-related happenings so those who are unable attend can stay abreast of what is happening in the community.
- Looking for online discussion moderators as well as volunteer writers to contribute content.

## REPORTS

- Update re: Teachers College Community School (School Leadership Team) – Joe
  - Monday, 2/13, 6:00 p.m. Public Hearing re: Relocation to St. Joseph’s Site; Grades 6-8
    - Joe to attend deliver brief remarks in support of the re-siting of the school to its permanent home at St. Joseph’s and its expansion, as called for in the West Harlem Community Benefits Agreement, to the middle-school grades. He encouraged other committee members and CB9 members to participate.

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

- Charlie Winkler of Artistic Dreams announced that his organization is expanding its recruitment efforts to engage more youth of Harlem and beyond in its international choir.
- Committee members advised him to work through the Board office about distributing updates via social media, etc. and to reach out to the Community Education Councils in the area.
- Charlie and his colleagues are already working closely with CB9’s Arts & Culture Committee.

## OLD BUSINESS

- TCCS Parent Info Sessions and Application Process
  - February 4<sup>th</sup> CB9-TCCS/TC Parent Info Session (Hamilton Grange Public Library) was fairly successful. Large turnout from parents, all of whom were actively engaged and most of whom had a lot of questions about the school. Joe delivered the welcome address on behalf of CB9 and explained how the school is intended to benefit the families of West Harlem under the West Harlem Community Benefits Agreement. Judith Insell, Alyson Gordon-Browner, and Dr. Vicky Gholson spoke as well.
  - The committee needs to expand its outreach efforts in order to ensure most of the kindergarten slots at TCCS are filled by CB9 families. Our goal is 90%.
- Scheduling Spring and Fall 2012 Youth Resources Expos
  - Discussed upcoming Expos.
    - Spring: late-April/early-May; Winston, the Board office, and all committee members are searching for an appropriate and free or low-cost venue.
    - Committee members agreed that the education committees of CB12, CB10, and CB11 should be approached about partnering in order to ensure a strong turnout of young people from their neighborhoods. We will also invite them to attend and, possibly, to have a more formal presence.
    - Fall: Sat., 9/29, 10AM-2PM, Riverbank State Park
- Inventory of Schools in Community Board 9 *[TABLED UNTIL MARCH 14 COMMITTEE MEETING]*

## NEW BUSINESS

- Wadleigh Secondary School for the Performing Arts
  - Committee members discussed how CB9 might respond to the NYC Department of Education’s proposed truncation of the middle school of Wadleigh Secondary School for the Performing Arts’, but no formal decisions were made.

**MEETING ADJOURNED AT 10:15 P.M.**