

# ***COMMUNITY BOARD 11 QUEENS***

## **Minutes of the CB 11 Education Committee Meeting October 13, 2009**

On Tuesday October 13, 2009 the Education Committee met to discuss its agenda for 2009-2010. In attendance were Laura James and Roy Giusetti, Co-Chairs, George Karahalis, Mel Meer, Franklyn Lloyd, Ed Braunstein, Chris Scherer and Henry Euler.

The Committee decided to pursue four initiatives:

### **School Construction**

Recent articles in the press have addressed overcrowding in high schools in our area. Three of these schools currently have student numbers that are double the capacity for which they were designed: Francis Lewis High School (4562 students), Benjamin Cardozo High School (4055), and Bayside High School (3600). At the same time, other schools in the area are either underutilized or only slightly over their intended capacity. The situation demands a larger conversation about (1) making more efficient use of existing schools by improving the reputations of underutilized schools via new programs and other measures and (2) the process of assigning students which results in this overcrowding. However, the committee did recommend two actions that the Board can take immediately:

- Add an item for a new high school to the CB 11 budget request
- Send a resolution about overcrowding in neighborhood schools to the Mayor (attached)

### **School Zoning**

This is a recurring issue, particularly in the case of PS 130 in Auburndale. Although the school is located in District 26, it was at one time underutilized and subsequently assigned to District 25. As a result, children in District 26 who live in close proximity to the school are excluded from attending and are instead bused out of the area. The committee feels many residents are unaware that PS 130 is in their district and that it is time to raise this matter again in an effort to move it forward. The following actions will be taken:

- The committee will work with the Auburndale Civic Association to deliver a letter to all households in their coverage area informing them of the issue
- Once the neighborhood has been notified, we will begin a petition drive within the former boundaries of PS 130

### **Community Superintendents**

The Committee feels that it is imperative to have the district superintendents spend more time in their own districts and to restore their authority over the school principals. Action items are to be determined.

### **Gifted and Talented Programs**

Discussion on this item raised the following points: (1) district programs, which used to be more restrictive, have recently accepted students in the 90<sup>th</sup> percentile, the city-wide standard. This has diluted the D26 program that has been very successful. The opinion was expressed that regular classes in District 26 could accommodate all but the highest-scoring of these pupils,

(2) G&T class sizes are sometimes larger than regular classes and, (3) there are a limited number of "super-gifted" city-wide programs, possibly two in Manhattan and one in Queens, which accept only students who score in the 97<sup>th</sup> percentile and above. The committee will first gather additional information and then determine subsequent action once the data is obtained.

It is the committee's opinion that our discussions would be more productive if the membership were to include more teachers and/or parents of school-age children. We respectfully request that anyone interested contact Susan or one of the co-chairs.

Respectfully submitted,  
Laura James and Roy Giusetti  
Co-Chairs