

# ***COMMUNITY BOARD 11 QUEENS***

## ***The City of New York***

### **CB 11 Education Committee Report – April 27, 2010**

The Community Board 11 Education Committee met on April 27, 2010. In attendance were: Laura James, Chair, Franklin Lloyd, George Karahalis, Frank Skala, Christine Scherer, Henry Euler, Edith Basom, Roy Giusetti, Ed Braunstein, Incha Kim and Susan Seinfeld, District Manager.

The primary topic of conversation was the ongoing situation of PS 130. This school is located within the boundaries of District 26, but for 20 years students in District 25 have been given admission preference. As a result, many District 26 students, who live as close as across the street from the school, are bused at considerable City expense to other schools. In late March, the Auburndale Improvement Association, where PS 130 is situated, passed a resolution supporting increased representation of District 26 students in the school. East Bayside Homeowners Association passed a resolution in support of Auburndale shortly afterward.

Sen. Frank Padavan wrote to Chancellor Klein, and sent Auburndale a copy of the response he received from Winifred Eisan, State Legislative Affairs Director, Office of Public Affairs of the NYC Department of Education. Ms. Eisan stated that the overcrowding in District 25, which led to the reassignment of PS 130, still existed. This was refuted by Henry Euler with current statistics from the Department of Education Blue Book, Enrollment, Capacity, and Utilization Report for 2008-2009. A further response from Ms. Eisan is awaited.

The Education Committee also prepared a resolution to be voted upon at the April 5 Community Board meeting, but this was tabled because of a full agenda. The Auburndale and Community Board resolutions are attached, as is the correspondence from Ms. Eisan, and we will vote on the Education Committee resolution tonight.

The committee also discussed how to effectively escalate this matter beyond a resolution circulated to elected officials. It was determined that parental involvement was necessary to gain increased visibility.

Several other matters were raised which do not require specific action at the present time. It was agreed that the Committee would monitor these issues and address them as the need arises:

- **Cuts in Middle School After-School Programs.** In CB11 two schools, MS 74 and IS 25 have the potential to be affected. Chris Scherer stated that the cuts, if voted in, would apply only to special programs run by independent, not-for-profit concerns and those students in Middle School who score below a certain level on evaluative tests would still receive an hour of after-school help, as they do today. Susan will contact Dan Halloran and David Weprin for their input.\*
- **Teachers Placed in “Rubber Rooms”.** Recent articles in the press have addressed this issue and both sides have declared victory. The net outcome is that efforts will be made to hear these cases more quickly to reduce the amount of time affected teachers spend in this situation.

Three new business items were raised by Frank Skala. The same watchfulness as above will apply:

- **Principals to Decide Curriculum for their Schools.** This has received recent attention in the press. As there are certain state requirements which are mandated it is difficult at this stage to determine the nature and scope of the impact principal decisions would have.
- **Charter Schools.** The committee was divided on the benefits of these schools, which many consider to be causing the effective privatization of public schools. They are not under the direct control of the Department of Education and have been accused of siphoning off the best students at the expense of the local public schools. Currently, there are no charter schools in District 26, but this bears watching as there is much support for increasing their number and it is coming up before the State legislature this year. The Committee will put a resolution on this matter before the Community Board at the June meeting.
- **Seniority in Excessing Teachers.** Chancellor Klein wishes to change the “last in, first” out” practice so that teachers can be fired regardless of seniority. Opinions were expressed that this would be a tough sell in Albany and to the unions.

The Committee agreed that it would meet in mid-May to prepare the Charter Schools resolution and address any other business which may arise.

Respectfully submitted,

Laura James  
Chair  
Education Committee

\*Susan Seinfeld contacted Council Member Mark Weprin. The after school programs in CB 11 slated for closing are at MS 74 and Is 25 both are run by the Child Guidance Center. There are four other programs in School District 26 (in CB 7 and CB 13). These cuts are due to the Mayor’s PEG, spending reduction to close the gap, and are scheduled to close at the end of the school year. This is in addition to possible cuts in the City budget for FY 2011. CM Mark Weprin joined other Council members requesting that the cuts be across the board for all after school programs and not only in areas the DOE has considered to be “low need”.