



Anthony Vitaliano
Chair

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**April 2, 2013 Joint Education & Culture and Youth Services Committee
Meeting Minutes**

PRESENT: Albert D'Angelo, Chair; Bernadette Ferrara; Denise Giocondo, Co-chair; Diane Norris, Co-chair; Tony Vitaliano, Ex-officio.

ABSENT: Ruth Burko, Linda White

EXCUSED: Blanche Comras-Rifkin, Shradhanand Pirtam, Joann Terrelonge; Chair, Janice Walcott

GUEST(S): Edith Blitzer, Mark Gjonaj, Michael Grubiak, Denise Lyles, Claudia Macek, Monica Major, Andrea Siegel, Sonny Vataj

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 PM.

Monica Major was invited by Al D'Angelo. The issue has been the overcrowding in PS 83 and the situation regarding the 6th grade transition students from PS 105 and PS 83.

There is a need within this community for additional middle school options so that the children from this community stay within this community. At present there are 4 schools with the population of students in grades K-5, this leaves a large population of students entering grade 6 in need of a school.

Catholic schools in the area are mandated by the Archdiocese as to how many additional students per class are needed before an additional class can be opened. Many parents cannot afford to send their children to Catholic schools. There exists a vacant lot where the ASPCA was housed in our community. Construction of a school at this location would alleviate the overcrowding conditions the schools which currently house students within District 11.

At present there exist 3 charter schools in our community. These charter schools do not serve the needs of our community as many times they relocate from other areas

to our community along with their student population. This is not an ideal situation as it does little to foster community spirit.

Mike from Senator Klein's office has stated that at this time of year the biggest complaint received is from parents frantic as to where their child will be going to school once they graduate. District 11 is an open zone according to Monica Majors. Parents can submit applications of choice for middle schools to P.S 498. The Bronxdale School however it seems that due to the screening process many of the students who request admission are screened out.

The no child left behind act allows parents whose school is not performing well to have their children relocated to a better performing school. This impacts the children within our neighborhood because when children are bused in from other areas and seats for neighborhood children cease to exist.

Al has reiterated that when PS 498 was proposed and being constructed parents were given assurances that students in our neighborhood would be given priority. This has not been the case and again the city has failed to list to the needs of the students within the neighborhood. Monica has acknowledged this does seem to be the case.

Once PS 105 is completed there should be room for PS 498 to accept more students however the concerning issue has been that once PS 105 is complete PS 498 will be at capacity and will not be available to accept additional students. The other issue that has been raised is that there is one floor dedicated to the district 75 (special education students). This is a lot of space to lose and perhaps a different solution could be reached for this mandated population.

PS 96 has students who will be relocated to our area as the portable units in the school are under construction. This adds to an already overcrowded population. Edith has raised the issue regarding bussing of students into our area which created overcrowding and leaves local area students without seats.

The new school being constructed on Barnes and Lydig will start as a K-2 program with phase in during subsequent years. The bottom line for the entire discussion is that we need more schools for the population.

Monica Majors has enlightened us to many issues:

Enrollment process has never been made transparent it is suggested that a reach out to the borough president be done to clarify the processes.

Pressure is placed on the Chancellor's office for transparency and that Robert Powell be contacted.

CB 11 should establish an ongoing relationship with DOE supervisor Elizabeth White.

Zoning of this area should be reviewed and clarified with CEC and if changes/ rezoning are deemed necessary it should be addressed. DOE can rezone a district. Monica Majors has suggested that board members apply to be part of the CEC. Monica will advise when CEC publishes the list and the application process. CEC has a good working relationship with Board 11. CEC meets 2nd and 3rd Tuesdays of each month at PS 121. Mark Gjonaj will attend

The school on Barnes & Lydig needs to be named. Suggestions are Robert & Dottie Abrams School, Dom Castore School or Elias Karman/Sholem Ruben School. CEC will meet April 4th on this issue.

The meeting adjourned at 8:30 PM.

Minutes taken by Denise Giocondo.