

From: PS51Manhattan Elias Howe [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, August 22, 2022 10:12 PM
To: Public Testimony
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PS51 PTA Supports the Unity Map for Hell's Kitchen

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe. Forward suspect email to phish@oti.nyc.gov as an attachment (Click the More button, then forward as attachment).

Hello,

We are Kulani Jenkins and Katarina Cevallos, Co-Presidents of PS 51 Elias Howe Parent Teacher Association.

PS 51 is a Title I school in the heart of Hell's Kitchen, on 44th St between 10th and 11th Avenues. PS 51 serves a large population of families living in poverty, with many being housed in the numerous shelters that are located within Hell's Kitchen. We take seriously our role in bridging the gap for these families and are a shining example of the kind of true racial and economic integration that is possible for NYC public schools. We are asking you to please keep Hell's Kitchen whole.

The 2013 City Council map included most of the Hell's Kitchen neighborhood in City Council District 3, which allowed us to be represented by a single City Council member.

Hell's Kitchen, with a population of 74,621 people, is the largest neighborhood in the current City Council District-3, followed by Chelsea, with 63,039 individuals. Together, these two neighborhoods make up more than two-thirds of the current CD-3. They are also the most diverse neighborhoods in CD-3.

The Districting Commission's preliminary map keeps ALL of Chelsea in CD-3 but splits up Hell's Kitchen into three large chunks with two of those parts attached to two other majority-white City Council districts.

As a result of splitting up Hell's Kitchen in this way, the representation of Hispanic and Black populations in both Hell's Kitchen and Chelsea and the larger Asian population in Hell's Kitchen are significantly diluted.

Currently, according to the 2020 Census, Hispanics make up 18.2 % of both Chelsea and Hell's Kitchen, Asians make up 21.4 % of Hell's Kitchen and 13.0 % of Chelsea, Blacks make up 7.5 % of Hell's Kitchen and 6.6 % of Chelsea, Whites make up 48.1 % of Hell's Kitchen and 57.5% of Chelsea.

Meanwhile, the Commission's preliminary map would DECREASE the representation of Hispanics, Asians, and Blacks in the proposed City Council district 3 while INCREASING the proportion of whites in comparison to both the CURRENT City Council generally and Hell's Kitchen and Chelsea in particular.

As a school, we rely heavily on Hell's Kitchen's weight as the largest player in District Three to access our elected representative to help us with everything from moving long-stalled construction projects forward, to sponsoring school and community events. If Hell's Kitchen is broken up we will be forgotten amongst the wealth and power of the majority-white districts that we will be lumped into. In turn, our school would lose what little influence we have with our elected officials in fighting for some of the most vulnerable, low-resource children in our city.

Hell's Kitchen deals with issues that are completely unique to us. Within our boundaries are a disproportionate amount of shelters, Port Authority, Times Square, and 11th Avenue that is seeing booming and out-of-control

development. As well as unmanageable Lincoln tunnel congestion. Our neighborhood needs to be kept together so we can work hand in hand with elected officials who are on the ground and understand what is happening in our community. Splitting us up and lumping some of us into the wealthy Upper West and East Sides is not the answer.

Instead, please support the Unity map for CD-3 to keep our unique and vulnerable community together:

<https://districtr.org/edit/137926?event=nyc2022>

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

Kulani Jenkins and Katarina Cavellos

Co-Presidents

PS51 Elias Howe PTA

■ W 44th St