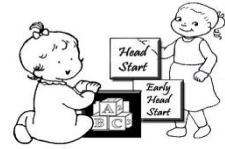


United Academy, Inc.

722 Wythe Avenue, Brooklyn, N.Y. 11249 - Tel. 718-935-9848 - Fax 718-935-1858



8/24/22

Districting Commission
253 Broadway, 3rd Floor
New York, NY 10007
Via Email: MediaRequest@redistricting.nyc.gov

Re: South Williamsburg and neighboring Community of Interest.

Greetings! I write in my capacity as the executive director of United Academy, serving hundreds of children with Early Head Start and Head Start and contracted childcare services. We are one of the largest Head Start providers for the Hasidic Jewish community of Williamsburg.

As a large institution assisting families and children, we see daily how our families and the community depends on strong advocacy and representation, particularly on the city level. It's with that in mind that I'm commenting today on the preliminary draft maps for the new city council district, that would divide our community and remove a large part of it from the current district 33.

Of the very important factors in redistricting is to keep communities of interest in-tact, for very good reason. Community of interests have their unique needs, and when they are divided up among districts, everybody loses out. Each district now has a smaller portion and less attention from a councilmember to focus and champion their unique issues. We are community of interest for so many reasons, including with the fact that our community was identified in ACS studies as being among having the highest unmet child care needs.

We all know the importance of early childhood programming for children's upbringing and progress. We depend on a councilmember to advocate and fight to sustain and expand those critical services to keep up with the community's growth.

In addition, we provide family services, and see the barriers families face in receiving government assistance to put food on their table, have a roof over their head, obtain early childhood and special ed services or emotional support for their families. Families face language and cultural barriers when navigating those programs, and depend on culturally competent and sensitive social services and health agencies to assist them with their needs. Those agencies in-turn, depend on the strong support of the councilmember to obtain funding and assistance to cut through red tape to be able to continue with their services. For them to succeed, we need our community in one district, which ensures that we are a significant part of the district so that our representative can focus on our need.

Thus, we appeal to you that the final map should keep South Williamsburg's Hasidic community united. This is achievable by putting South Williamsburg in one district, and keep the north side of Williamsburg – a community of interest on its own rights – together in their district. Hence, I support the plan, linked hereby <https://districtr.org/plan/138019>, that was put forth to keep each of these neighborhoods together in their respective district

Thank you for your efforts to draw these districts right, and I hope and pray that you shall do the right thing for Williamsburg.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "David Solomon".

David Solomon
Executive Director