

September 1, 2022
Dennis M. Walcott, Chair
New York City Districting Commission
253 Broadway, 4th Floor, NY, NY 10007

Re: Redistricting Preliminary Plan #1 for District 15 in the Bronx

Dear Chair Walcott:

My name is Mariam Jalloh, and I am a parent of a student at PS 28 located at the Council District 15 in the Bronx.

Neighborhoods East of Grand Concourse, on 173rd Street, should be returned to District 15
Neighborhoods East of Grand Concourse should be returned to District 15, due to continuity and because it is a community of common interests. As a parent at P.S.28x, located in this region, I have worked with the president of PTA at P.S 28x to resolve challenges affecting the school and especially the surrounding community. Many of the challenges -including quality of life, housing, transportation, and economic opportunity- related to needs and common interests that are specifically present on the Eastern side of the Concourse. This community should not be divided, and Grand Concourse should be the dividing line for the region between 173rd Street and 182nd Street, as it is for the remainder of the district.

And the PTA president, has worked so hard to build relationships with fellow parents at my school who live locally in the surrounding neighborhoods. I, along with the PTA, have built long-lasting ties with local leaders who have been crucial in securing resources for our children's school and addressing systemic issues in the area. The new district lines will interrupt the work we have been dedicated to for so long by creating a noncontiguous district that would stall the progress we have made.

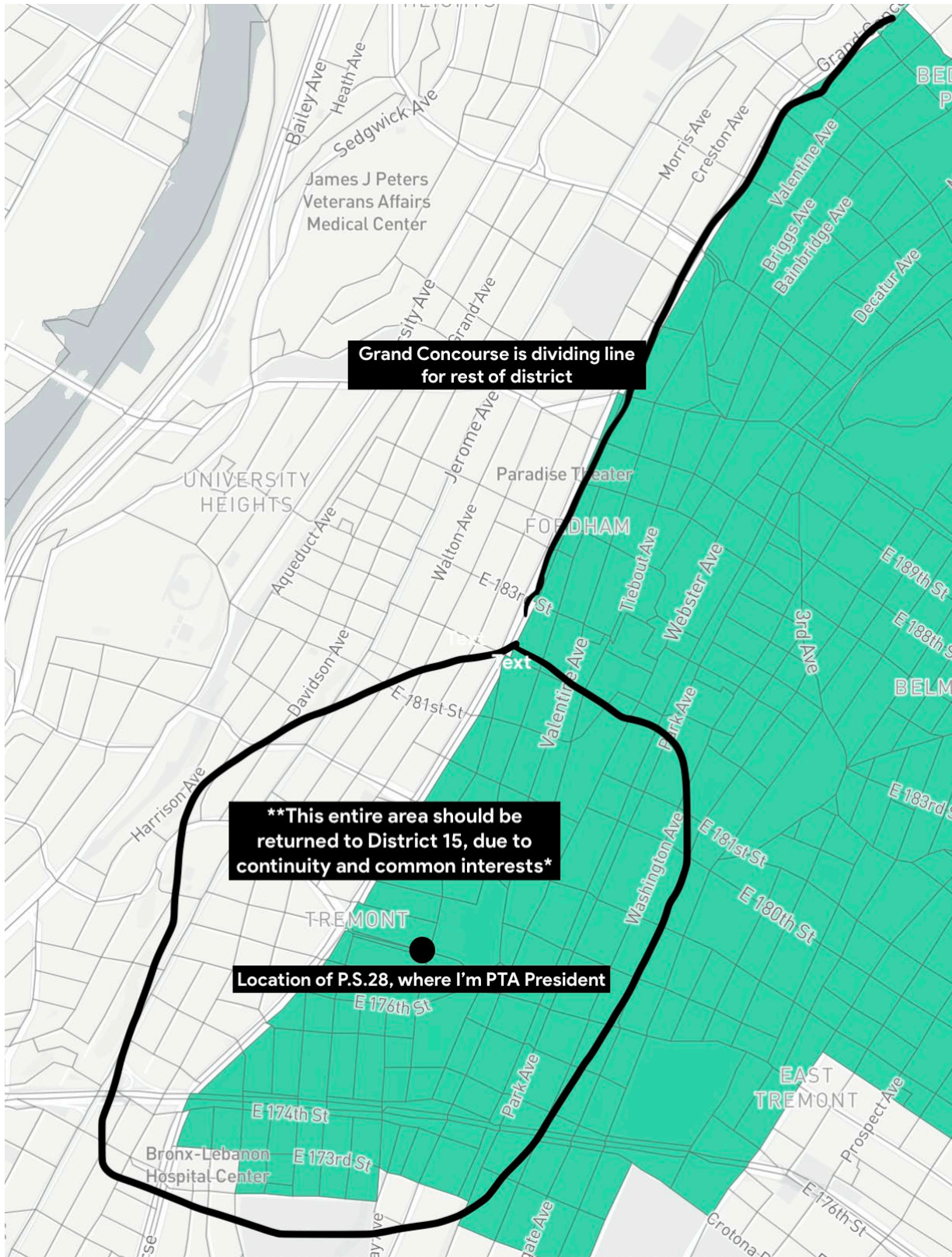
Bringing our neglected public schools up to standards that our children deserve takes many years of ongoing commitment and work we have already put in. As such, returning the 173rd to 182nd Street area to Council District 15 is vital to maintaining the common interest in my community.

Sincerely,

MJ

Mariam Jalloh
Parent Teacher Association for PS28x

**See second page for map of the region being discussed



Grand Concourse is dividing line for rest of district

****This entire area should be returned to District 15, due to continuity and common interests***

Location of P.S.28, where I'm PTA President

09/12/22- TESTIMONY TO THE NEW YORK CITY DISTRICTING COMMISSION;
RE: The redrawing of NYC Council District 13.

Dear Chair Walcott and Members Of The Commission:

My name is John Doyle, I'm a lifelong resident of District 13, and the Democratic District Leader for the 82nd District- Part B. Over the last fifteen years, I have worked full time in the New York State Senate and for NYC Health + Hospitals System with a particular focus in this region. Thus, I write today concerning proposed district maps for this area as released in the Committee's Preliminary Plan #1, the Unity Plan, and [my own proposal](#).

Preliminary Plan #1:

Preliminary Plan #1 makes several modifications to the existing district. Some are good, some I believe are ill advised. It's important to note that for decades, Community Districts 10 and 11 have been recognized as communities of shared interest. Beyond being contiguous neighborhoods, we also use the same institutions, be it educational, healthcare, transportation, or public parks and infrastructure. Our areas share similar demographics, land use designations, and –as we have shared political representation at the Congressional, State Senate, and City Council levels for decades- we have relationships with established ties of common interest, associations, and history of joint advocacy that have served our region well. When the trees along Pelham Parkway were threatened with removal a decade ago, residents from Throggs Neck and Pelham Bay took interest. After Hurricane Sandy hit our eastern coastal communities, restaurants in Morris Park cooked meals for the victims in Country Club, City Island, and Edgewater Park. Finally, as the controversy with the Bruckner Sites Rezoning has played out, many members of Community Board 11 have taken interest, as their land use designations are similar to those in Community Board 10.

It is vitally important that this redistricting process keeps as many neighborhoods whole as humanly possible. Thus, I do appreciate the steps the Commission took to incorporate Van Nest into District 13 as it has long been divided between Districts 13 and 15, yet shares many land-use characteristics with eastern Bronx communities and is more intuitively tied to District 13.

Westchester Square is also closely tied to the East Bronx, as it is part of Bronx Community Board 10, but it also has a growing South Asian community that is demonstrated by the most recent U.S. Census (Which measures this group as 28.1% of the neighborhood's population)¹. In order to allow this growing community more political power, it is understandable why it has been drawn entirely into District 18 as opposed to it currently being split between the 13th and 18th Districts.

¹ NYC Planning, [Population FactFinder](#), 5 Tracts | Bronx: 206.01, 204, 96, 200, 202

In line with the concept of keeping whole communities together, I believe the Commission should reconsider splitting Pelham Parkway between Districts 13 and 15. Historically, the 13th District has included nearly all of Pelham Parkway, while keeping a portion of the Bronx Park East community tied to CD15. Pelham Parkway is significant to Community Board 11, and the Parkway itself is the major thoroughfare for the area. Furthermore, the inclusion of Pelham Parkway Houses allows for NYCHA residents to build political power with residents of the Throggs Neck Houses and Middletown Road Senior Houses for a constituency that is almost 8% of the district. By doing so, residents of both NYCHA complexes will be able to elevate issues with the Authority within the district overall.

Finally, I question why portions of current Council District 12 and Community Board 12 were drawn into the proposed 13th District. First, adding a third community board to a single council district seems to contradict the purpose of keeping these districts compact. Secondly, what we are accomplishing is in effect dividing the communities of Baychester and Olinville, that have historically been unified within one district and splitting them within two, potentially disenfranchising these residents and the issues they have. I have read reports that residents of these communities are not pleased about the proposed divisions and an emergency meeting was held at Community Board 12 in the past two months. Additionally, such divisions would also require the current District Office for Council District 12 on East Gun Hill Road to be unnecessarily relocated, adding taxpayers costs, and confusion for residents of the area. For these reasons, I do not believe dividing these communities is a wise approach.

I respectfully urge the Commission to reexamine the Preliminary Plan and address the concerns I have raised in consultation with the residents of these communities.

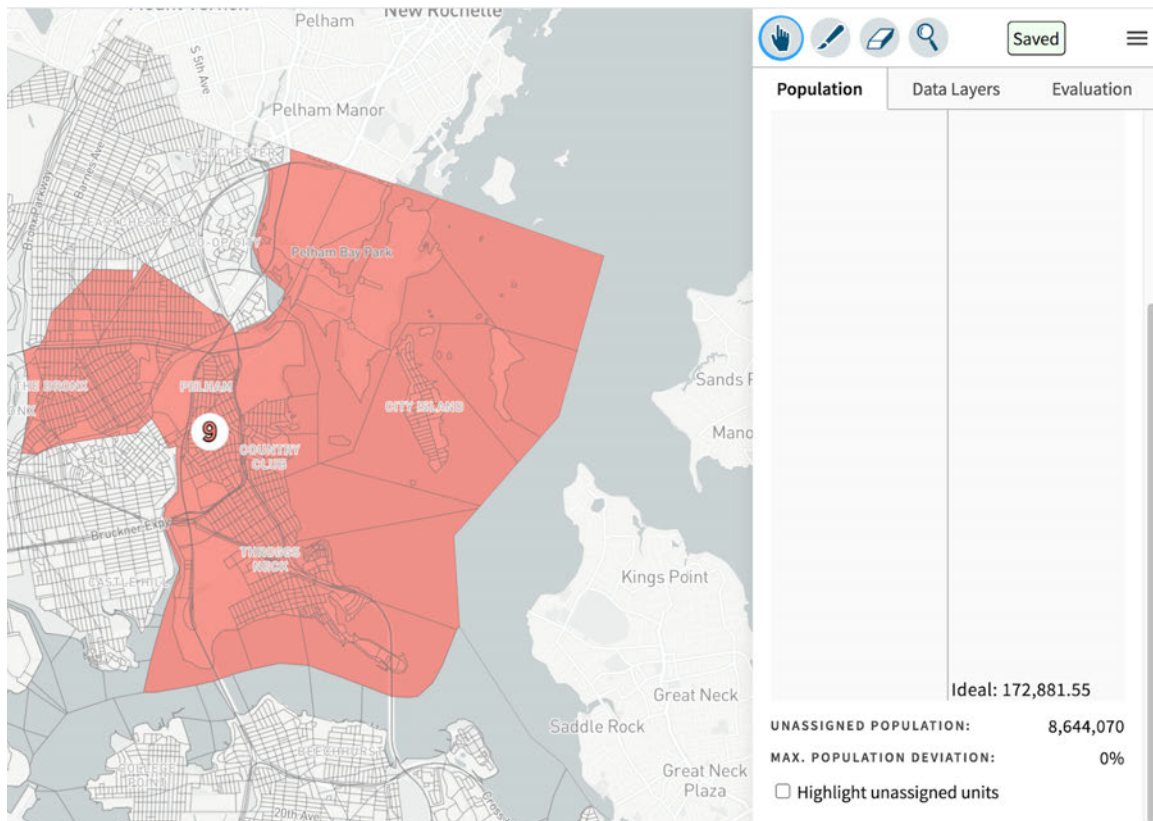
Unity Map:

I have reviewed the proposed [“Unity Map”](#) that was submitted by various civil rights groups in New York City. While it is not perfect and does not address every concern I outlined, it does keep Pelham Parkway within District 13, as well as allows for many communities to remain whole. I would, however, caution that the population deviation would be higher than most Bronx districts and should be reexamined to allow for a more balanced population per district. In summary, it is more preferable than “Proposed Plan #1.”

My Personal Proposal:

As I have previously stated, in an effort to be constructive and thanks to the data tools and resources your Commission has provided, I have [proposed another solution](#) that I believe is fair to the residents of the Bronx. It is a proposal that has Van Nest and Pelham Parkway in CD13, Westchester Square in CD18 and consolidates any portion of Community Board 12 into CD12. Furthermore, it has a population deviance of 0% and is within 7.4 residents of the ideal population goal.

This proposal would also allow for a wide swath of the Olinville and Bronx Park East communities to be drawn either into D12 or D15 based on the preference of the area's residents. **Based on the above, I strongly urge you to consider adopting this proposal.**



Thank you for your consideration of my request. I realize no redistricting will ever achieve 100 percent citywide satisfaction and I hope my comments serve to help you find a constructive final proposal. Should you need to contact me, my email address is

[REDACTED]