



The City of New York

Queens Community Board 11

Serving the Communities of Auburndale, Bayside, Douglaston, Hollis Hills
Little Neck and Oakland Gardens

Michael Budabin, **Chair** / Joseph Marziliano, **District Manager**

TO: All Board Members
FROM: Justin Chew, Education Committee Chair
RE: Schools Opening September 2021
DATE: April 29, 2021

On April 28, 2021, the Education Committee held a Zoom teleconference meeting to discuss the opening of public schools in September 2021 and the construction at Cardozo HS.

Board Member's Present

Michael Budabin, Board Chair
Justin Chew, Committee Chair
Henry Euler, 3rd Vice Chair
Carin Bail
Jessica Burke
Jason Chen
Lourdes December, Committee Member
Albert Galatan, Committee Member
Jena Lanzetta
Yosef Lee, Committee Member
Stephen Popa, Committee Member
Christina Scherer, Committee Member

CB11 Staff

Joseph Marziliano, District Manager
Jane Bentivenga, Community Coordinator
Christina Coutinho, Community Associate

Guest Speakers

Mary Vaccaro, Vice President, UFT (United Federation of Teachers)
David Waltzer, UFT, Queens District 26 Representative

Mr. Marziliano called to meeting to order. Mr. Chew stated that this meeting is to discuss the opening of public schools in September 2021 and an update on the construction taking place at Cardozo HS.

Mary Vaccaro, UFT Vice President stated that they are anticipating a full opening come September 2021. She said currently, 35% of students are back in class. There will be 700

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schools open for summer school. The Dept. of Education is hoping that opening the schools for summer will help prepare the students for in-person learning in the fall. The UFT is in the process of training 80,000 teachers on a positive learning environment. This will help teachers identify and work with a student in crisis. The UFT will also open 12 teacher centers to help support teachers as they return to classrooms.

David Waltzer, District 26 Representative for Queens, spoke about the return of elementary and middle school students. Mr. Waltzer said that there are middle school students that graduated in 2019 and have not entered their HS in 2020. He said the UFT has put together a 5-point plan to help students and teachers. Mental health is top on the list; 1) there will be one-on-one sessions for students in need, 2) there will be academic sessions to help students, class size will be smaller, 3) teachers will be trained to identify their own stress and identify student stress, 4) there will be help for high school students with the transition to in-person learning and 5) a summer learning program to help students adjust for the fall semester. There was a question and answer period. Mr. Euler asked what will happen if the City was to go into lockdown again. Ms. Vaccaro said there are virtual contact specialists and they will help prepare teachers for remote learning. She said that the City is better prepared, but there are still areas that need improvement; some homeless shelters are still without WiFi. Mr. Budabin asked if there was a date for when school will start in the fall. Ms. Vaccaro said the calendar will be coming out at the end of the week. The UFT is working with the DOE on a plan for the reopening regarding social distancing and a workday schedule. Mr. Chew stated that 10% of Cardozo HS students are in person. Normally, Cardozo HS is at 200% capacity. Ms. Vaccaro said students are afraid to travel on public transportation. Carin Bail, special education teacher, asked if there will be an option for remote learning. Both Ms. Bail and Ms. Vaccaro agreed the best learning is in person. There is a therapist that will go to each school to make sure students are in a safe learning environment. The UFT has received grant funds for the hiring of guidance counselors to help high school students with the college process and help assist those students who do not want to go to college.

Mr. Chew said that today Mr. Budabin, Mr. Marziliano and himself visited the construction site of Cardozo HS. They toured the annex and athletic fields. The annex target date for completion is 2023. But they are hoping to complete by 2022 at its current pace of construction. There will be approximately 400 additional seats. This will help with the current overcrowding. Mr. Budabin said that the new fields are a great improvement for the school and community.

Mr. Chew said that Fair Student Funding will be at 100% for Cardozo HS. Discussion ensued regarding Fair Student Funding.

The meeting adjourned.