



Community Education Council District 20

December Calendar Meeting

Date: 12/11/24

Meeting Start Time: 6:00 PM

Present: Steve Stowe, Yanqing Chen, Meifang Chen, Tamara Stern, John Ricottone, Wenming Chen, Kevin Zhao, Fabiola Mendieta-Cuapio, Sabrina Mcnamara, Elizabeth Chan

Excused:

Unexcused: Ryan Li, Maya Rozenblat, Fabiola Mendieta-Cuapio

I. Meeting Called to Order: Stephen Stowe, President

II. Roll Call: Stephen Stowe, President

III. New Business

a. Public Speaking Session

Community members addressed their concerns with student engagement, HMH curriculum, and novel reading. A representative from the office of Council Member Alexa Aviles announced new office hours and provided contact information for the community. A representative from the office of Susan Zhuang announced an upcoming funding allocation for schools on January 17th and an upcoming rally (12/12/24) regarding the SHSAT vote by PEP. Assemblymember Lester Chang shared information regarding his office events including a toy drive, infosession with the Department of Sanitation, and infosession with the Metropolitan Transportation Authority. Newly elected State Senator Steven Chan introduced himself to the community and shared his commitment to improving education in the community.

b. Presentation from Office of Language Access

External Outreach Specialist William Roberts provided an overview of the Office of Language Access including services provided, a guide on how to request these services, means to raise awareness in the community, and their commitment to NYCPS families. Mr. Williams' presentation included a guide to parents and school faculty of the NYCPS Translation Services. With over 180 languages spoken in NYCPS, the OLA is dedicated to supporting staff and families with effective communication. Top languages in District 20, (aside from English) include Chinese, Spanish, Mandarin, Russian, and Arabic. The OLA also provides interpretation through sign language. The OLA consistently attempts to raise awareness through advertisements in schools, grocery stores, laundromats, robocalls, emails and postcards. Council members asked questions including the most common feedback that arises, turnaround time for document translations, process for adding languages for interpretation, and the use of AI in interpretation/translation services.

c. Presentation from Alliance for Quality Education

Brittany Kaiser, NYC Community Organizer for AQE, provided an overview of their campaigns, which focuses on addressing the state foundation aid formula and providing universal childcare. Schools across the country have been underfunded for years, especially for minorities and low-income communities. The Foundation Aid formula is used to determine the amount of funding schools are given. The current formula is obsolete and does not fully capture the true costs of education and can incorrectly justify cuts. AQE suggests that the formula add a weight for students in temporary housing and students in foster care, reexamine the poverty weight, differentiate and increase weights for students with disabilities and ELLs, and include funding for class size. The AQE advocates that all families, regardless of income, immigration status, and disability should have access to affordable, high quality childcare. The council engaged in dialogue including the similarities between the Fair Student Funding Formula and The Foundation Aid Formula, minimum and maximum threshold to be eligible for childcare, state funding vs city funding for universal childcare, percentage of funding from NYS and NYC, and best means to vocalize these demands

d. Report of Superintendent

Superintendent Pretto provided an update on their Family Support Mondays program with the next program being Kindergarten Admissions and Child Mind Institute (12/16/24). Superintendent Pretto also provided an overview of their D20 Fall Newsletter which included updates on MLL/ELL Teachers, Superintendent Program, D20 Assistant Principal Institutes, and NYC READS Learning Labs. An update was given on District 20's progress with the Save for College Program, over 1 millions dollars have been deposited into accounts for D20 students. Dr. Pretto and CEC 20 engaged in extensive dialogue regarding the implementation of the NYC Reads Program and the guidance given by Chancellor Avila-Ramos which included flexibility, pacing, assessments, duplicative tasks, and professional development. As teachers enter into Year 2 of the curriculum, they are able to better implement the new curriculum. This includes structuring time to include reading and writing in the curriculum. Dialogue included the results following Year 1 of the new curriculum, how it compares to other districts, monitoring progress for certain students, differing results between assessments taken on computer vs traditional in-person and how to address it, alternative options for HMH books, access to technology for students in needs, and the addition of geometry in the Superintendent Program.

e. Report from Council President

President Stowe provides recognition and appreciation to Superintendent Pretto and his office for addressing bullying in District 20. Reminder of rally (12/12/24) asking the Panel for Education Policy to vote to approve the Pearson contract to administer the Specialized High School Admission Test. Reminder to principals to submit School Construction Authority Requests. Council Member Tamara Stern announced that [BP Reso A Funding Applications](#) open January 1st, 2025 and ends on February 20th, 2025.

IV. Old Business - Approval of the November 2024 Calendar Minutes

Calendar Meeting Minutes Approved

V. Adjourn

a. Motion to adjourn - Elizabeth Chan, Second: John Ricottone

I. All in favor

b. Meeting adjourned at 8:42 PM

The full meeting recording is available here: [YouTube](#)

The Complete written Transcript is available here: [Transcript](#)

Submitted by Kevin Vizhnay, Administrative Assistant