

President Steve Stowe
First Vice President Dina Guirguis
Second Vice President/ELL Rep Robert Aguilar
Recording Secretary Alice Licato
Treasurer/BBP Appointee Inga Smolyar



Council Members

Alan Aja - IEP Rep Vito LaBella
Mauricia Cadillo Simeon Stolzberg - BBP
Yi Fang Chen Appointee
Adele Doyle

Administrative Assistant: Natalia Mondesir

Community Education Council District 20 April Business Meeting Minutes

Date: Wednesday, April 14, 2021

Meeting ID: <https://nycdoe.zoom.us/j/87825483766?pwd=c1JVMC9YSzNQb3c0ZCt5Z2hWNElQT09>

Meeting Start Time: 6:07 PM

Present: Steve Stowe, Adele Doyle, Vito LaBella, Mauricia Cadillo, Yi Fang Chen, Simeon Stolzberg, Alice Licato, Dina Guirguis, Alan Aja, Robert Aguilar, Inga Smolyar

Guests: Dr. Joseph O'Brien, Deputy Superintendent; David Pretto, D20 Superintendent; Sylwia Jasinski, Family Support Coordinator; William Chin, Family Leadership Coordinator; Steven Wieser, FACE Representative; Dianne Gounardes, CSA Representative and Pre-K Director

- I. **Meeting called to Order:** Steve Stowe, President
 - a. **Roll Call:** Alice Licato

- II. **Old Business (00:06:02)**
 - a. Approval of March Business Meeting Minutes
 - i. Minutes unanimously approved
 - b. Approval of 3/19 Special Meeting Minutes (00:09:15)
 - i. Minutes unanimously approved
 - c. Approval of 3/24 Special Meeting Minutes (00:10:22)

- III. **New Business-Parent Survey (00:11:15)**
 - a. Steve Stowe gave an update on finding vendors for a parent survey and working out a distribution method
 - b. Deciding on which questions to ask is the next step (00:12:18)
 - i. 10 questions separated into retrospective (1-4) and forward thinking (5-10)
 - ii. Inga Smolyar mentioned that there are no questions asking parents to specify if students are remote, blended, or in person (00:13:35)
 - c. Vendors typically prepopulate their surveys with data provided from the school district (00:14:10)
 - i. One advantage is that information from the parent profile is automatically available to the vendor
 - ii. If the DOE cannot provide the information, for legal and privacy reasons there would need to be questions asking the parents to self-identify
 - iii. Alice Licato asked for clarification about the ease of providing information if Qualtrics is chosen as a vendor since they have a contract with the DOE (00:15:38)
 - d. Review of the questions (00:16:52)
 - i. Question 1:
 1. add a "Not Applicable" option; add "Technology" as an option; change "health & Safety Protocols" to "COVID & Safety Protocols"
 2. Technology refers to device and internet access
 3. Alice Licato stated that it should be its own question (00:21:15)
 - ii. Question 2:

1. Alan Aja is concerned with asking about the quantity of work assigned rather than the quality of work (00:18:46)
 2. Alice Licato mentioned that this question could be interpreted in different ways in regards to “work” and should be more specific whether it is school work or home work (00:23:48)
 3. Simeon Stolzberg suggested adding context which mentions that the district is also interested in this information (00:24:44)
 4. Adele Doyle noted that answers will be based on parent perception (00:27:05)
 5. Possibly change the question to ask how much school work and homework parents perceive their children receive (00:27:45)
- iii. Question 3:
1. Alan Aja seeks clarification as to what the “rigor” of the work means in this context (00:19:23)
 2. Simeon Stolzberg asked what the council is interested in the rigor of- instructional work or rigor of materials (00:30:00)
 3. Vito LaBella stated that many parents are unhappy with the amount of challenges that their children have been given (00:30:19)
 4. Robert Aguilar stated that children were challenged enough by having to learn through a pandemic (00:31:10)
 5. Adele Doyle stated that “productive struggle” (rigor) allows children to be comfortable with their learning, but rigor is different for each child (00:31:43); Suggested including an option “rigor was not a consideration” (00:36:22)
 6. Alice Licato stated that it is difficult to reconcile productive struggle in class with the past year since 78% of the district is economically disadvantaged and has been disproportionately affected (00:33:08)
 7. Yi Fang Chen stated that the Asian population has expressed that their children are not being challenged (00:34:38)
 8. Alice Licato made a motion to hold a special meeting in the following week to finalize and vote on the questions prior to entering into a contract with a vendor (00:37:18); Seconded by Alan Aja, motion tabled by Steven Stowe
- iv. Question 4: broad, social/emotional question (00:39:03)
- v. Question 5:
1. Vito LaBella suggested stating that the school will be fully staffed (00:40:13)
- vi. Question 6:
1. Alice Licato pointed out that the second option precludes anyone without the finances to send their children to private school (00:41:27)
 2. Adele Doyle stated that teachers need a touchstone to compare programming (00:42:26)
 3. Vito LaBella suggested that the schools need to hear that people will leave if they are not offered what they want (00:42:46)
 4. Simeon Stolzberg suggested changing the responses to “definitely, somewhat likely, somewhat unlikely, definitely not” (00:43:06)
 5. Alice Licato and Alan Aja feel that the question should be removed (00:43:21)
- vii. Question 7: To figure out what is a good mode of instruction
1. Simeon Stolzberg suggested adding Special Education and Multi-language Services as options (00:46:35)
 2. Adele Doyle suggested replacing “remedial” with a different phrase (00:47:57)
 3. Alice Licato suggested tabling the discussion for this question (00:48:21)
- viii. Question 8:
1. a Pass/Fail system is an example of a non-transparent grading system (00:48:56)

2. Simeon Stolzberg suggested just saying “grades” rather than “Transparent Grading System” (00:50:21)
 3. Alice Licato mentioned that the goal of the survey is to hear from communities whose voices are not heard, and having questions that are difficult to understand and are about private school and accelerated programs is off putting (00:50:45)
- ix. Question 9:
1. The A in “STEAM” is incorrectly labeled as “Architecture,” stands for Art (00:52:05)
 2. Inga Smolyar suggested language (00:52:18)
- x. Question 10:
1. Alice Licato suggested writing the full meaning of the acronym “CREW” (00:52:54) and suggested adding “restorative justice” (00:53:49)

IV. Adjourn (00:54:44)

- a. Motion to adjourn: Steve Stowe, All in favor
- b. Meeting adjourned at 7:01 pm

Submitted: Natalia Mondesir
April 29, 2021

President Steve Stowe
First Vice President Dina Guirguis
Second Vice President/ELL Rep Robert Aguilar
Recording Secretary Alice Licato
Treasurer/Borough Appointee Inga Smolyar



Council Members

Alan Aja - IEP Rep Vito LaBella
Mauricia Cadillo Simeon Stolzberg - Borough
Yi Fang Chen Appointee
Adele Doyle

Administrative Assistant: Natalia Mondesir

Community Education Council District 20 March Calendar Meeting Minutes

Date: Wednesday, April 14, 2021

Meeting ID: <https://nycdoe.zoom.us/j/87825483766?pwd=c1JVMC9YSzNQb3c0ZCt5Z2hWNExlQT09>

Meeting Start Time: 7:02 PM

Present: Steve Stowe, Adele Doyle, Vito LaBella, Alan Aja, Mauricia Cadillo, Yi Fang Chen, Simeon Stolzberg, Alice Licato, Inga Smolyar, Dina Guirguis, Robert Aguilar, Alan Aja

Guests: Dr. Joseph O'Brien, Deputy Superintendent; David Pretto, D20 Superintendent William Chin, Family Leadership Coordinator; Steven Wieser, FACE Representative; Ellen Dreisen, UFT Liaison; Steve Gonzales, Community Affairs/Project Support Manager; Gayle Mandaro, Senior Director of the Real Estate Division

- I. **Meeting called to Order (00:55:30):** Steve Stowe, President
Roll Call (00:55:42): Alice Licato

- II. **Old Business (01:02:57)**
 - a. Approval of March Calendar meeting Minutes
 - i. Minutes unanimously approved
 - b. Steve Stowe made a motion to remove the bylaw public speaking session to ease the schedule of the meeting (01:04:55); Second- Alice Licato
 - i. All in Favor

- III. **SCA New School Proposal (01:10:00)**
 - a. Steve Gonzales and Gayle Mandaro gave a presentation on the proposed acquisition of a new site on Fifth Avenue between 88th and 89th Streets for a new 572 seat primary school
 - b. Until May 16, 2021 the public can email their questions and comments to sites@nycsca.org or mailed to New York City School Construction Authority, 30-30 Thompson Avenue, Long Island City, New York 11101, Attention: Gayle Mandaro
 - c. Feedback from council members (01:14:22)
 - i. Steve Stowe asked about the practicality of building another elementary school when there are two in close proximity; Does the size of the lot preclude it from being a middle school or high school (01:15:54); inquired about the auditorium upgrade for j.H.S. 201 (01:23:57)
 - ii. Alice Licato stated that there is a need for a high school and having a screened high school in D20 is something that has been discussed in the past (01:17:17); for clarification, asked if this presentation marks the opening of the 45 day public comment period (01:21:39); asked If the cost of the property is public knowledge- not until the sale is finalized (01:28:57)
 - iii. Adele Doyle reiterated the need for a high school and how it seems that consideration from the community has been excluded (01:18:43); why no one seems to want to build a high school (01:19:45)
 - iv. Vito LaBella asked if lots 28 and 39 are owned by the same person and if the sale has already gone through (01:25:08); the price per square foot (01:26:34)

- v. Alan Aja gave the numbers of high school enrollment and overcapacity of Fort Hamilton (01:31:22)
- vi. Alice Licato asked about the next Capital Plan, and when the building would be complete, and an expected date of completion (01:34:48)
- vii. Adele Doyle asked if it was possible to amend the Capital Plan and what would be the best way to get the councils advocacy to the public (1:35:39)
- d. There have been several conversations between Capital Planning and the Office of District Planning surrounding D75 seats (01:23:18)
- e. Public Comments (01:29:54)
 - i. Principal Janice Geary asked Steve Gonzales to look into the gym construction at McKinley
 - ii. Paullette Healy commented that it seems that Special Education students are in a holding pattern with available seats due to capacity issues (01:31:59)
 - iii. Cynthia Vacca mentioned the close proximity of the other schools and the need for middle school, high school, and special education seats (01:40:10)
- f. This land was not included in the previous capital plan because it was not an option at the time (01:37:50)
 - i. Alice Licato stated that now there is space to be budgeted, it is up to the council to form a petition, get parents support, and compel elected officials to build a high school (01:48:12)

IV. Launching of the Arts Showcase Initiative (01:50:41)

- a. Adele Doyle gave an update on the arts showcase
 - i. Schools have been submitting students' work
 - i. P.S. 48 has submitted a montage
 - ii. There is a survey for the arts teachers, asking why they chose to become arts teachers
 - i. They are invited to submit their own work, but a glitch in the system is preventing them from being able to do so

V. Report of the Council President (01:56:27)

- a. Steve Stowe mentioned the Parent survey and that it is still a work in progress

VI. Report of the Superintendent (01:58:19)

- a. Superintendent Pretto made a statement on the increasing anti-Asian racial violence in the country which will be sent to schools to forward to the parents
- b. He gave updates on work that the schools have done in response to guidelines for the state exams (02:01:43)
 - i. All ELA, math, and science exams will be in person
 - ii. Schools are doing outreach to determine who is interested in participating in the exams
 - iii. Remote students are not expected to participate, but can if they would like to
- c. Requested district data was shared (02:03:25)
 - i. D75 seats
 - ii. Implicit Bias training (02:04:10)
 - iii. Update on building closure criteria (02:04:48)
 - iv. Blended Learning opt-in period (02:06:11)
 - v. Monitoring student progress (02:07:34)
- d. Alice Licato asked for clarification on the state tests and notification of the opt-in period (02:11:21)

VII. Public Speaking (02:13:43)

- a. Cynthia Vacca asked Superintendent Pretto if the implicit bias training discusses ableism, anti-hate, and interacting with diverse populations, and are there any plans to hire a diverse teaching staff (02:14:40)
- b. Yi Fang Chen asked for clarification on how the implicit bias training focuses on Asian discrimination (02:22:07)
- c. Paullette Healy thanked Superintendent Pretto for his statement; asked about reconvening the equity committee; provided a link for the updated PEBT benefits (02:26:15)
- d. Vito LaBella asked about the legality of a principal posting a vacancy notice looking for someone of a specific race, ethnicity or gender (illegal by Federal Law); suggested that retiring Fort Hamilton Officers, whose communities are underrepresented, be placed in a mentor program to teach at D20 schools (02:29:22)
- e. Alice Licato asked if the CEC could participate in the implicit bias training; asked if there is already a program for military officers to teach (02:32:00)
- f. Cynthia Vacca asked about assessment systems and the use of iready for diagnostics (02:33:55)
- g. Heidi Sarantopoulos asked about the future of G&T programs and where they fit in D20; asked what Superintendent Pretto feels are some of the major issues in the district (02:35:59)
- h. Francine Almash spoke about the issues of non-compliance that affects the special education students and their families, asked what is the superintendent's impression of special education in the district and would he sit down and talk with the parents; asked if there are any plans to create some kind of accountability (02:40:47)

VIII. Resolution 13 on Supporting the Asian Community (02:48:56)

- a. Yi Fang Chen asked for the resolution to be supported based on her feeling that the DOE is taking away educational opportunities from the students (02:49:25)
- b. Steve Stowe made a motion for a proposed amendment to change the title to "Resolution 13 Condemning the Recent Rise in Anti-Asian Violence and Supporting the District 20 Asian American Education Community" and adding two whereas clauses
 - i. Simeon Stolzberg stated that the second whereas statement should be a resolve (02:52:29)
 - ii. Alice Licato asked for clarification on the statistic of nationwide violence (02:53:11)
 - iii. Alan Aja asked for clarification on the amended changes; suggested removing the statistic to reflect that people sometimes are too afraid to report hate crimes (02:54:27)
 - iv. Roll call vote to add the proposed amendment to Resolution 13

1. Steve Stowe- Yes	7. Mauricia Cadillo- Yes
2. Dina Guirguis- Yes	8. Yi Fang Chen- Yes
3. Robert Aguilar- Yes	9. Adele Doyle- Yes
4. Alice Licato- Yes	10. Vito LaBella- Yes
5. Inga Smolyar- Yes	11. Simeon Stolzberg- Yes
6. Alan Aja- Yes	
 - v. Amendment passes unanimously
- c. Simeon Stolzberg asked for an explanation on the next to last resolve, specifically on the diversity of vocational objectives (02:58:43)
 - i. Alice Licato suggested changing "vocational" to "professional" for clarity (03:00:00)
- d. Alice Licato asked for clarification on the aim of the resolution and to go over each whereas and resolve statement as it was just presented to the council that day (03:02:01)
 - i. Adele Doyle stated that the resolution is to acknowledge that hateful rhetoric and bias towards the Asian community occurs over time through certain statements, policies, and acceptance of bias; stated that she will call for a roll call vote that night, no matter what, because we need to support council member Yi Fang Chen (03:04:04)

- e. Alan Aja stated that he feels the resolution has a great start, but it has several faults; suggested having strong asks such as reinstating the equity committee and hiring a diverse pool of teachers and administrators to reflect the different cultures in the district, and have culturally relevant curricula (03:06:59)
- f. Robert Aguilar stated that he feels the opening amendment is on point, but the resolution seems to lose focus after that, it feels more like a resolution supporting G&T rather than an anti-Asian hate resolution, bothered by the fact that it was just presented and there is no time to make the changes necessary to make it powerful (03:09:23)
- g. Steve Stowe made a motion to begin public speaking; Second- Inga Smolyar, but there are council members who would like to comment (03:11:39)
- h. Vito LaBella stated that there are a lot of conflating issues, and he believes that the Asian community feels that they are being attacked from both sides: individuals who don't support what they believe in and those who are conflating anti-Asian and anti-China (03:11:51)
- i. Alice Licato clarified Mr. LaBella's statement that people may have an issue with the Chinese government's policies, but not the Chinese people; emphasized that voting on the resolution without going over each whereas statement puts the council in a difficult position (03:14:11)
- j. Steve Stowe made a motion to begin public speaking; Second- Vito LaBella (03:16:50)
 - i. Sandy Chum-Wu stated that she feels the resolution does not reflect her concerns and challenges as part of the Asian community, a diversity and inclusion professional, as well as the PS 682 PTO President; it does not identify the challenges, systemic injustices, or the obstacles that the community experiences, would like to see how the Asian community was polled (03:17:19)
 - ii. Tamara Stern agreed with Sandy; agrees with supporting the Asian community; feels like G&T is being pushed when there are already several G&T resolutions; the council should really focus on what to say to make it stronger; should revisit the anti-blackness resolution that was denied (03:19:59)
 - iii. Francine Almash agreed that the resolution feels like an attempt to push G&T; confused that in the context of the past year, the council has tried to speak out against anti-black violence but was denied for it not being an educational issue; hopes that the council fixes the resolution so it does what it is intended to do; asked why it is ok for the council to address anti-Asian violence but not anti-black violence (03:21:53)
 - iv. Heidi Sarantopoulos stated that crimes against Asians are done by more than one person and she would like to see a resolution where people can learn about all cultures; feels the war against G&T is also discriminatory against Asians, who make up a lot of the G&T seats; said this resolution should be edited to be more inclusive (03:23:45)
 - v. Melanie Liu believes that the resolution is on educational issues; Asian parents are being discriminated against SHSAT and now G&T, so disagreeing with the resolution is an act of Asian Hate (03:25:56)
 - vi. Paullette Healy believes the resolution is the antithesis of parent engagement; It has not been given the care and attention that it deserves; the amendment to the original resolution being included as an afterthought is disingenuous; the resolution excludes autistic students from the Asian population (03:27:29)
- k. Alice Licato feels that there are some things that should be removed or changed: footnote number 6, name the political officials, whereas number 7, whereas number 8; suggested a special meeting focusing on the parent survey and this resolution (03:32:05)
 - i. Alan Aja agrees with holding a special meeting
- l. Inga Smolyar is good with either making changes now or holding a special meeting; would remove the fifth resolve (03:36:36)
- m. Motion to remove the fifth resolve; Second- Alice Licato (03:38:55)
 - i. Steve Stowe- Yes
 - ii. Dina Guirguis- Yes

- iii. Robert Aguilar- Yes
 - iv. Alice Licato- Yes
 - v. Inga Smolyar- Yes
 - vi. Alan Aja- Yes
 - xi. Simeon Stolzberg- Yes
 - vii. Mauricia Cadillo- Yes
 - viii. Yi Fang Chen- Yes
 - ix. Adele Doyle- Yes
 - x. Vito LaBella- Yes
- n. Amendment passes unanimously
- o. Alice Licato made a motion to remove footnote number 6; Second- Steve Stowe (03:43:42)
- i. Steve Stowe- No
 - ii. Dina Guirguis- Yes
 - iii. Robert Aguilar- Yes
 - iv. Alice Licato- Yes
 - v. Inga Smolyar- No
 - xi. Simeon Stolzberg- Abstain
 - vi. Alan Aja- Yes
 - vii. Mauricia Cadillo- No
 - viii. Yi Fang Chen- No
 - ix. Adele Doyle- No
 - x. Vito LaBella- No
- p. Motion does not pass with 6 No votes, 4 Yes votes, 1 Abstain
- q. Motion to end the debate and send the resolution to a vote (03:46:49)
- i. Steve Stowe- Yes
 - ii. Dina Guirguis- Abstain
 - iii. Robert Aguilar- No
 - iv. Alice Licato- No
 - v. Inga Smolyar- Yes
 - vi. Alan Aja- No
 - vii. Mauricia Cadillo- Yes
 - viii. Yi Fang Chen- Yes
 - ix. Adele Doyle- Yes
 - x. Vito LaBella- Yes
 - xi. Simeon Stolzberg- No
- r. Motion passes with 6 Yes votes, 4 No votes, 1 Abstain
- s. Motion to vote on Resolution 13- Steve Stowe; Second Adele Doyle (03:50:19)
- 1. Council members were able to comment with their votes
 - ii. Steve Stowe- Yes
 - iii. Dina Guirguis- Abstain
 - iv. Robert Aguilar- No
 - v. Alice Licato- No
 - vi. Inga Smolyar- Yes
 - vii. Alan Aja- No
 - viii. Mauricia Cadillo- Yes
 - ix. Yi Fang Chen- Yes
 - x. Adele Doyle- Yes
 - xi. Vito LaBella- Yes
 - xii. Simeon Stolzberg- Abstain
- t. Motion passes with 6 Yes votes, 3 No votes, 2 Abstain

IX. Proposal of Bylaw Amendment- Social Media (04:04:43)

- a. Steve Stowe introduced the revised guidelines which incorporates changes made at the March Calendar Meeting
- i. Motion to approve the Social Media amendment- Vito LaBella; Second- Simeon Stolzberg (04:12:19)
 - 1. Steve Stowe- Yes
 - 2. Dina Guirguis- Yes
 - 3. Robert Aguilar- No
 - 4. Alice Licato- Abstain
 - 5. Inga Smolyar- Yes
 - 6. Alan Aja- No
 - 7. Mauricia Cadillo- No
 - 8. Yi Fang Chen- Yes
 - 9. Adele Doyle- Yes
 - 10. Vito LaBella- Yes
 - 11. Simeon Stolzberg- Yes
 - ii. Motion passes with 7 Yes votes, 3 No, 1 Abstain
- b. Alice Licato proposed two amendments to the Social Media waiver (04:15: 18)
- i. Strike the phrase “and cultivate the positive intent of this page” from the last sentence
 - ii. Strike the phrase “unless such consensus has been previously established by resolution”
- c. Alice Licato made a motion to remove the two discussed phrases from the social media waiver; Second- Vito LaBella (04:17:39)

- i. Steve Stowe- Yes
 - ii. Dina Guirguis- Yes
 - iii. Robert Aguilar- Yes
 - iv. Alice Licato- Yes
 - v. Inga Smolyar- Yes
 - vi. Alan Aja-Yes
 - vii. Mauricia Cadillo- Yes
 - viii. Yi Fang Chen- Yes
 - ix. Adele Doyle-Yes
 - x. Vito LaBella- Yes
 - xi. Simeon Stolzberg- Yes
- d.** Motion passes unanimously
- e.** Motion to approve the social media waiver, Steve Stowe, Second Alice Licato (04:20:44)
- i. Steve Stowe- Yes
 - ii. Dina Guirguis- Yes
 - iii. Robert Aguilar- Yes
 - iv. Alice Licato- Yes
 - v. Inga Smolyar- Yes
 - vi. Alan Aja- No
 - vii. Mauricia Cadillo- Yes
 - viii. Yi Fang Chen- Yes
 - ix. Adele Doyle-Yes
 - x. Vito LaBella- Yes
 - xi. Simeon Stolzberg- Yes
- f.** Motion passes with 10 Yes votes, 1 No
- g.** Alice Licato introduced a change to the bylaws Section 1.1 Calendar Meeting (04:23:06)
- i. Change “or” to “and”, and include “24 hours” in {1} where it states resolutions shall be delivered to the President or Recording Secretary before the start of any calendar meeting
 - ii. Simeon Stolzberg suggested the written copy be sent to all the council members (04:26:00)
 - iii. Steve Stowe suggested that resolutions be distributed “at least 24 hours” (04:29:40)

X. Adjournment (04:30:35):

- a.** Motion to adjourn: Steve Stowe, Seconded: Simeon Stolzberg
- b.** Adjourned at 10:38 PM

Submitted: Natalia Mondesir
April 29, 2021