



## **Community Education Council District 20**

### **April Calendar Meeting**

**Date:** 4/9/25

**Meeting Start Time:** 6:00 PM

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

**Excused:** Maya Rozenblat

**Unexcused:** Ryan Li

**I. Meeting Called to Order:** Elizabeth Chan, 2nd Vice President

**II. Roll Call:** Stephen Stowe, President

### **III. New Business**

#### **a. Public Speaking Session**

A member from the community expressed their gratitude to Dr. Pretto and District 20 for explaining the policy related to sharing predator information in their zip code at last month's meeting. The community member also shared their surprise that while the DOE is required to share that information, it is up to the NYPD to first provide the information, which they have not consistently done. There were also comments regarding funding for teacher hiring and the need for more space for students. Another member shared their dissatisfaction with the lack of data indicating D75 students attend afterschool programs and Summer Rising. Noting that transportation is a large issue.

#### **b. School Construction Authority - Presentation on Proposed New Primary School Site**

Steve Gonzalez, Development and External Affairs, from the School Construction Authority presented the proposed new primary school site on New Utrecht Ave in District 20. The proposed primary school site is at 7120 New Utrecht Ave, Brooklyn, NY 11228. The proposed site is approximately 22,158 square feet and is estimated to add 451 seats. Public comment period ends on 4/29/25, inquiries can be made at [sites@nycsca.org](mailto:sites@nycsca.org). The council engaged in conversation, discussing sizing of site, zoning for students in the area, timeline for purchasing and construction, concerns from incoming noise from nearby train, D75 seating, how approximate seating is calculated, and estimated cost of the site.

#### **c. Report of Superintendent**

Dr. Pretto presented on the Civics For All Partnership alongside Tracy McCarthy Norr, District Achievement and Instructional Specialist, who coordinates Civics for All in District 20. District 20 is a Civics For All partner-district with the goal of empowering students with knowledge and skills to be informed and engaged

citizens. District 20 has been a partner-district since 2022. A hallmark of CFA partnership is Soapbox NYC, a public speaking experience that calls on students to speak out about issues that affect them and their communities. Students create and advocate for solutions to improve their schools, communities, and the lives of other young people. A Soapbox NYC competition is held where all NYCPS students share their speeches. District 20 students have made it to the finals three years in a row. The last CFA event for the year is on May 29th at P.S. 939, D20 Civics - Democracy Begins Here - Educate, Advocate, Act. Two student finalists from P.S. 264 and J.H.S. 259 presented their topics which included internet misinformation and school shootings. The council inquired Dr. Pretto and Tracy McCarthy Norr on how student conversations about civic awareness adhere to the guidelines from the DOE regarding political and social discussions, how students are taught to research and articulate, inclusivity of all opinions from students, and teaching method differentiations based on grade level.

**d. Council President Report**

President Stephen Stowe reminded the community of CEC Elections. CEC 20 Candidate Forums have already been conducted and can be re-watched [here](#). Voting begins on April 25th and it can be accessed through [NYC Schools Account](#).

**e. Public Speaking Session**

A parent shared their concern regarding the removal of the opt-out option of the HIV Curriculum for Grade K-5 students. Another parent inquired about introducing a new Horizon Program in a D20 middle school. Currently there are no nearby middle school Horizon Program for District 20 students. Dr. Pretto responded, noting that there are preliminary discussions regarding introducing a Horizon Program in District 20 in School Year 2026.

**IV. Old Business - Approval of the March 2025 Calendar Minutes**

Calendar Meeting Minutes Approved

**V. Adjourn**

a. Motion to adjourn - Wenming Chen, Second: Kevin Zhao

I. All in favor

b. Meeting adjourned at 7:35 PM

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

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

Submitted by Kevin Vizhnay, Administrative Assistant