



COMMUNITY EDUCATION COUNCIL DISTRICT 15

Office: 131 Livingston Street, Room 301, Brooklyn, New York 11201

CEC15@schools.nyc.gov | tel. 718-935-4267 | facebook.com/CECD15 | CECD15.org

September 20, 2022

Calendar Meeting

President's Report - Camille Casaretti

Welcome to the CEC15 September Calendar Meeting. I'm Camille Casaretti, President of CEC15 and I want to thank you for taking the time to attend our meeting this evening. We're coming to you live from PS58 in Carroll Gardens. A special thanks to Principal Dello Stritto and her staff for offering us the use of her school. It's a pleasure to be here in community with everyone.

We're three weeks into the new school year and things are off to a good start. Children seem happy to be back in school after the long summer break and all of our school teams hit the ground running. I can't deny that the Mayor's Budget cuts haven't made an impact but our school leaders are doing an extraordinary job to assure that every child has what they need.

CEC15 is always advocating for our district public schools. We're out in the field and supporting behind the scenes. Every one of our D15 schools has an assigned **school liaison**. If you haven't met yours please reach out and we will make an introduction. All of our CEC15 members will be attending your School Leadership Team Meetings and working with your Parent Associations over the course of this school year. We are here to elevate your concerns and to advocate for your needs, so please don't hesitate to contact us.

Most recently, I was picketing on the steps of the DOE with about 100 other education advocates and elected officials to demand that the **budget cuts** be restored. Our district was owed \$5 million dollars alone and with our advocacy efforts and the efforts of so many across the city, much of that money has been returned to our schools. This crisis was brought on by the Mayor and this is just another reason why we have to end Mayoral Control. Our school leaders know what they need to effectively run a school building. They know how much staff they require and they know their students well. This process is going to change in the coming year. We will continue to work with our City and State elected officials to make sure that no one Mayor can defund our schools.

And, as you've heard, we are still advocating strongly to have our **school based health centers** reopened. I spent the good part of the summer emailing and calling elected officials, working with families who had lost services with no notice, and we still have a way to go. Our school



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nurses are fantastic but they can't possibly replace an entire clinic of services. The collapse of funding to keep the clinics open was due to the NYS Senate not voting on a budget line for these clinics. We are expecting that they will vote to approve the funding when the Senate Session begins in January. Until then, in addition to the school nurse, a doctor has been assigned to each school that lost service, and that doctor will be meeting with students through appointments. If your family has any issues around receiving services at one of the schools, please let us know.

We're also working with the **Public Advocate** and will be holding a joint meeting virtually on Oct 6 with Brooklyn North CECs to elevate the terrible living conditions that many of our families are enduring in NYCHA residences. Children and families are impacted by the lack of hot water, no heat, leaking ceilings and black mold to name a few issues. Please join us to elevate your concerns and to discuss advocacy efforts to improve conditions for our families.

We're excited to see many new faces in parent leadership roles. Thanks to the many moms and dads who were elected to PAs and PTAs and FTAs Executive Boards in our district. Our Presidents Council has been very strong and we are looking forward to deepening our connection with them. If you want to learn more about **School Governance** there will be a FACE training tomorrow night, Sept 21 at 6pm via Zoom.

Also, of note for our PAs and PTAs, the **Participatory Budget** process has begun and our City Council people Alexa Aviles, Shahaha Hanif and Lincoln Restler all have money that they would like to allocate toward community projects. Group projects always have a better chance at being funded so take this opportunity to reach out to your neighboring schools for common needs projects. Don't forget that your school may be located in a different City Council District than the one you live in. Enter the school address in the MYGOVNYC.org website to find out who's representing your school.

Another place to learn about community projects is at your Community Board Meeting. District 15 encompasses 3 different Community Boards, CB2, CB6 & CB7. All of these boards have education committees and we work together to support our public schools. If you're free Tuesday night, Sept 27, please join us for a **Virtual Education Town Hall** with our 3 community Boards. We are working together to learn about and elevate your education concerns. Look for a flyer coming soon and please share this information with your friends in the District.

There's an exciting opportunity coming up in the Winter - the **Citywide and Community Education Council application period will be opening** for the next council term. This year, the



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NYS Assembly and Senate wrote a new seat into the law. I'm thrilled to announce that going forward, each District Council will have a Parent Representative from a D75 program. Our District has been advocating for more and more D75 inclusion programs and this new seat on our council will solidify the voice of many families in this District who have been systematically underrepresented for quite some time. If you know of anyone who might be interested in running for a seat on CEC15, or on any of the Citywide Councils, please let them know that the election cycle will be starting in the next couple of months. The next term begins on July 1, 2023.

There are a few events and meetings coming up that you might want to attend. One is tomorrow. **City Council Public Hearing on Sp Ed Sept 21 at 1pm**. Great opportunity to discuss any issues you are having with Special Education Services. You can find the link to the virtual meeting on the City Council website.

Freedom to Dream Day October 1st. Fun free event for families. There will be music, art projects and a celebration of the mural that has been recreated on the exterior wall of PS295 right above the new playground. More information will be coming via email.

Our next two meetings will focus on District Planning. The **CEC15 Business Meeting Oct 11** will be held at the District Office at 131 Livingston St, Room 301 and **our Calendar Meeting** on Oct 25 will be held at PS24 in Sunset Park. All the details for these meetings can be found on our website, CECD15.org