



COMMUNITY EDUCATION COUNCIL DISTRICT 15

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

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March 14, 2023
Business Meeting

President's Report - Camille Casaretti

District Updates:

Antonia and I went to **Albany** yesterday. We met with Senators Liu, Mayer, Chu, Parker, and Gounardes. We also met with Assembly Member Benedetto's staff. We discussed public school advocacy: Maintaining the Charter Cap, Giving NYC Transition Aid, Ending Charter School CoLocations, Creating more transparency and accountability in charter school reporting, Ending Rental Reimbursements, amending the open meetings law, and other legislative issues we support like:

- Universal Childcare
- Expanded After School Programming
- Funding for asylum seekers
- Fund the School Governance Study to be conducted by the Commissioner
- Fund Universal meals

Antonia adds - Sen. Liu and Mayer informed us that the Senate has no intention of lifting the regional charter cap or reissuing zombie charters. They will not add it to their one house bill. Additionally, Sen. Mayer indicated that they intended to include funding for the school governance study. That is the study that seeks to develop a more democratic form of school governance for NYC which is currently exclusively run by the Mayor. Also, in speaking to various legislators, there was interest in funding expanded afterschool programming, but no specifics.

Unfortunately, Transitional Aid is not something state legislators were willing to address without the direct advocacy of Mayor Adams. The Presidents of CEC16 and 17 and I had a meeting with Deputy Chancellor, Kenita Llyod and Mark Treyger to advocate for transitional aid. As we have discussed in prior meetings, NYC schools are eligible for hundreds of millions of dollars to compensate for enrollment loss to charter schools, but Mayor Adams must ask the Senate for it.

Back in Albany, we discussed the need for state funds for newly arrived asylum seekers and migrant students. The Mayor is focusing on obtaining Federal aid, but it seems the state could assist as well if asked. So if anyone is listening, please encourage the Mayor to ask the state for transitional aid and aid for asylum seekers. We have over 5,500 newly enrolled migrant students



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in NYC. This number will continue to grow. The bottomline is NYC schools need all the support they can get from all available sources.

To follow up on something we were discussing at our last meeting regarding adding a possible **Restart Academy in District 15.**

<https://www.restartacademy.org/Home>

Supt Alvarez has been in conversations with Superintendent Esperance about a new school space for students who are recovering from substance abuse. They are working together to find a location for the program to exist in our district. He reported that Supt Esperance is fully on board.

NY City Council Education Hearing tomorrow morning, March 15 at 9am to hear feedback on the Education Budget. We will be reviewing a Resolution on the Budget later tonight that asks for DOE to assure that the \$90 million in FSF funds provided to schools with a high concentration of homeless students and/or in poverty will not cause other schools to be cut by that same amount. In addition to this ask, we are also asking for clarity in reporting, that budget cuts from last year are restored and that the capital plan be expanded to meet class size mandates.

You can send in written testimony for tomorrow's City Council Education Hearing:

https://council.nyc.gov/testify/?link_id=1&can_id=e162a5e988b2cf9c89a105c454340eee&source=email-class-size-working-group-hearings-on-next-years-budget-and-how-you-can-help&email_referrer=email_1844800&email_subject=class-size-working-group-hearings-on-next-years-budget-and-how-you-can-help

Update on Gowanus Neighborhood Rezoning: The City Council voted to adopt the Gowanus Neighborhood Plan on November 23, 2021. The Plan aims to support community goals such as **cleanup** of the Gowanus Canal and surrounding area, creating permanently **affordable housing** and diverse **job opportunities** and building and supporting schools, parks and other community resources and infrastructure. It was developed with community members and elected officials over the past four years. There will be a community meeting at PS32 on Wed, March 29 at 6pm. CM Hanif is hosting this public forum. Please plan to attend in person or via Zoom. Public advocacy has allowed for a \$250M capital improvement commitment.

Gowanus Neighborhood Rezoning

More information can be found here:



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[https://www.nyc.gov/site/planning/plans/gowanus/gowanus-framework.page#:~:text=Go wanus%20Neighborhood%20Plan&text=This%20document%20proposes%20zoning%20 changes,housing%2C%20jobs%20and%20open%20space](https://www.nyc.gov/site/planning/plans/gowanus/gowanus-framework.page#:~:text=Go%20wanus%20Neighborhood%20Plan&text=This%20document%20proposes%20zoning%20changes,housing%2C%20jobs%20and%20open%20space).

I want to elevate the issue with **drug and substance abuse happening in our schools** and remind families to review the Behavioral Expectations with their children. Students may think that vaping in the bathroom and sharing vapes is harmless but this constitutes distribution of drugs and is a level 5 infraction. Please talk to your children about drug abuse and alcohol abuse. Our schools are doing what they can and we need parents to reinforce these messages at home.

K-12 Student Bill of Rights and Responsibilities:

<https://www.schools.nyc.gov/get-involved/students/student-bill-of-rights>

Discipline Codes for K-5th grade and 6-12th grade are available at:

<https://www.schools.nyc.gov/school-life/know-your-rights/discipline-code>

Charter schools do not follow these DOE documents.

If you are having issues with suspension at your charter school, please file a complaint:

<http://www.nysed.gov/common/nysed/files/programs/charter-schools/doecomplaintprocess2019.pdf>

We've had a number of parents reach out to us about **Special Education services**. There is a lot of information on the DOE website:

Special Education:

<https://www.schools.nyc.gov/learning/special-education/preschool-to-age-21/special-education-in-nyc>

CCEC Candidate Forums are happening now. Please try to attend the forums so that you can meet the candidates running for CEC15 and other Citywide Councils. The CEC15 Candidate Forum will be held on Monday, March 27 at 6pm.

Register on the DOE website. Interpretation will be provided.

Candidate Statements can be found here:

<https://apps.schools.nyc.gov/CECProfiles/CandidateListByDistrict/15>



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Tonight at 7:30 PM, there is a virtual teach-in on NYS grade 3-8 tests and test refusal. Hear from parents, educators, and former NYC school principal (current congressperson) Jamaal Bowman about the NYS testing and your right to opt out. If you can't make it a video will be shared later.

NYS testing and your right to opt out forum

Register at: <https://tinyurl.com/nystest>.

Interpretation will be provided.

Please save the date for the CEC 15 **upcoming meeting**: [March 28th](#)

Next CEC15 Meeting, March 28th at 6:30pm

Register here:

<https://nycdoe.zoom.us/meeting/register/tJUqdOmrrDgrHtO5IBdKrwULVDSp1FJm4aP9>

The Office of District Planning will be presenting updates on the new school buildings anticipated to open in Sept. 2024

And lastly, there is a D15 Superintendent Town Hall tomorrow night at 6:30