

# Citywide Council on Special Education

Thursday, August 4, 2022

## Annual-Calendar Meeting Minutes

### Call to Order

The Annual Meeting was called to order by Co-President Erika Newsome at 6:07 pm.

### Roll Call

|                        |         |
|------------------------|---------|
| Cynthia Arbulu Vacca   | Present |
| Sanayi Beckeles-Canton | Absent  |
| Carolyn Castro         | Present |
| Wenming Chen           | Present |
| Heather Dailey         | Present |
| Artelia Flowers        | Present |
| Paullette Healy        | Present |
| Lauretta Joseph        | Present |
| Ellen McHugh           | Present |
| Erika Newsome          | Present |

A quorum was present.

Interpreters introduced themselves.

Council Members introduced themselves, their district and child's special needs category.

Francine Almash was appointed Timekeeper.

Ellen McHugh nominated and Erika Newsome seconded Paullette Healy as Chair Pro-Tem

### Election of Officers

#### **Office of Co-President**

Ellen McHugh nominated the slate of Ellen McHugh and Erika Newson as Co-Presidents.

Nominations were closed and a roll call Vote was taken. The slate received nine votes (unanimous – majority +) and was elected as CCSE Co-Presidents.

Chair Pro-Tem Paullette Healy stepped down as Chair and turned over the election process to Co-President Erika Newsome.

**Office of 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President**

Ellen McHugh nominated Paullette Healy as 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President. Nominations were closed and a roll call vote was taken. Cynthia ARbulu Vacca received nine votes (unanimous – majority +) and was elected as CCSE 1st Vice President.

**Office of 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President**

Paullette Healy nominated Cynthia Aarbulu Vacca as 2nd Vice President. Nominations were closed and a roll call vote was taken. Paullette Healy received nine votes (unanimous – majority +) and was elected as CCSE 2nd Vice President.

**Office of Recording Secretary**

Paullette Healy nominated Carolyn Castro as Recording Secretary. Nominations were closed and a roll call vote was taken. Carolyn Castro received nine votes (unanimous – majority +) and was elected as CCSE Recording Secretary.

**Office of Treasurer**

Ellen McHugh nominated Laurretta Joseph as Treasurer. Nominations were closed and a roll call vote was taken. Laurretta Joseph received nine votes (unanimous – majority +) and was elected as CCSE Treasurer.

Congratulations to the newly elected officers of the Citywide Council on Special Education

|                      |                                |
|----------------------|--------------------------------|
| Ellen McHugh         | Co-President                   |
| Erika Newsome        | Co-President                   |
| Paullette Healy      | 1 <sup>st</sup> Vice President |
| Cynthia Arbulu Vacca | 2 <sup>nd</sup> Vice President |
| Carolyn Castro       | Recording Secretary            |
| Laurretta Joseph     | Treasurer                      |

**Resolution to Fill Vacancy with Francine Almash**

Heather Dailey moved and Laurretta Joseph seconded to accept Francine Almash as a new member of CCSE. There was a roll call vote and all nine in attendance voted yes.

Carolyn Castro moved and Paullette Healy seconded to adjourn the Annual Meeting. There was a voice vote and all in attendance voted yes.

Co-President Erika Newseome called the calendar meeting to order at 6:34 pm.

## **Roll Call**

|                        |         |
|------------------------|---------|
| Francine Almash        | Present |
| Cynthia Arbulu Vacca   | Present |
| Sanayi Beckeles-Canton | Present |
| Carolyn Castro         | Present |
| Wenming Chen           | Present |
| Heather Dailey         | Present |
| Artelia Flowers        | Present |
| Paullette Healy        | Present |
| Lauretta Joseph        | Present |
| Ellen McHugh           | Present |
| Erika Newsome          | Present |

A quorum was present.

Francine Almash was appointed Timekeeper.

## **Presentation – Overview of Pupil Transportation**

Glenn Risbrook - Senior Executive Director – Office of Pupil Transportation

Presented a brief overview of OPT operations including:

- Eligibility Requirements
  - Stop-to-School and MetroCards
    - Eligibility is based on grade & distance between the home and school
    - Provision of stop-to-school bus is based on several criteria, including remaining within district lines and not exceeding 5 miles. If students cannot be assigned a stop-to-school route based on those criteria, they will receive a MetroCard.
    - Stop-to-school buses pick up and drop off students at a designated bus stop; one driver, no attendant.
  - Curb-to-School
    - Student receives Early Intervention or has a preschool IEP that recommends Special or Integrated Class
    - Student has an IEP that recommends curb-to-school transportation based on how student's disability is manifested with respect to ability to travel
    - Student has a 504 that recommends curb-to-school transportation based on how student's disability is manifested with respect to ability to travel, including the need for medical intervention (epi-pen, glucose monitoring, etc.)
- Challenges
  - Driver shortage due to pandemic
    - Due to the pandemic, bus driver retention and hiring has been a challenge.

- Providing bus service to disparate areas of the City
  - Difficulty identifying routes for kids in temporary housing and foster care who travel across district and borough lines.
- How parents can find information about transportation
  - Via for Schools is a transportation technology utilized by the DOE to provide parents with transportation information. Covers five areas: routing, fleet, automatic vehicle location (AVL), ridership, and real-time communications for bus staff, schools, and families
  - Additional information and questions can be found on the website and school hub
    - <https://www.schools.nyc.gov/school-life/transportation>
    - <https://supporthub.schools.nyc/>
    - Call the Office of Pupil Transportation at (718) 392-8855.

Please refer to the recording (<https://1drv.ms/v/s!Anvfy2ZMxJdkeOzBPjI0Vif8aHU>) for the full presentation.

Heather Dailey moved and Dr. Beckles Canton seconded to start a sub-committee on transportation - Transportation Committee. There was a voice vote and all 11 members in attendance voted yes.

### **Approval of Minutes – July 21, 2022**

Paullette Healy moved and Cynthia Arbulu Vacca seconded to accept the July 21, 2022 minutes as written. There was a voice vote and all 11 members in attendance voted yes.

### **Co-President's Report**

Erika Newsome

- Some parents still have not received transportation reimbursements from last year. Asking parents to have their information together so that CCSE can help support them. Suggested that parent make sure that the contact info is up to date so that schools are able to contact you.
- A concern that middle school parents have been receiving calls to change their child's IEP through a IDP Waiver Amendment only to find out later it is not what the parent agreed on and IEP was changed completely. Suggested that parents to visit their NYCSA and double check that the changes were correct.
- Website is still being updated with the minutes from term 2021-2023 only. If are interested in viewing older minutes, please reach out to AA.

Ellen McHugh

- Following up on Erika's report regarding IEP changes, suggested that if parents receive a phone conference, deny it and request a Zoom meeting and ask for it to be recorded. This will also help to make sure that all info regarding changes are correct.
- Attended a meeting with Deputy Chancellor Blackburn. He talked about his time as superintendent in Brevard County, Florida with a student population of 70,000 plus of K-12 graders. Class sizes varied from 16 to 1 or 22 to 1 and students did well in math and reading. Unfortunately that is not the case with NYC schools and he hopes to work with school principals and superintendents to implement a similar program.

- Family and Community Engagement (FACE) – CEC’s will now receive support from the Family Liaison Coordinator from their local district. CEC leaders were upset that they were not involve with the restructuring and expressed their concern during the meeting. The Citywides will remain with FACE and CCSE has a new liaison.
- Paullette and I are on the Fair Student Funding Committee to ensure that special education is funded at 100%. Since special education is a separate funding source, it is sometimes not part of the fair student funding conversation and the Committee is there to be that voice.
- There was a discussion about how education councils would interact with each other and the ECC – Education Council Consortium was mentioned as a resource of information, referrals and workshops.

## **Member Reports**

### Nava Bahrapour

- Congratulated everyone on OPT presentation with Glenn Risbrook
- Working with the Special Education Department as a summer intern and working on a language campaign to remove the classification of emotional disability or emotional disturbance which makes a student feel that they are wrong for struggling with their disability. Would like to change it to Social Emotional Impairment.
- Received good news regarding SEED (Sensory Exploration Education and Discovery). SEED will piloted in high schools this fall.

### Paullette Healy

- Attended the Fair Student Funding Committee meeting and a professor from Georgetown University discussed Edunomics a research program that analyzes how school budgeting and funding was done in NYC and around the country.
- Learned that the base weight (money allocated for each student entering the school system) for fair student funding has not changed since fair student funding was established in 2007.
- In previous conversations when it came time to discuss reformulating fair student funding, the story was “we didn’t have the money” or “the state didn’t give us any money.” Now that foundation aid is fully funded, the story is the same.
- Interesting note – with NYC being the largest school system, the per student funding is low (\$4,200) compared to other major cities including Boston (\$6,000) and Chicago (\$5,500).
- Francine and I attended a District 75 Leadership meeting where they presented Literary Supports for District 75. Very concerned about the program and how it’s supposed to support students with dyslexia.
- Attended a PIST (Parents to Improve Student Transportation) meeting and it was brought to our attention that there is a Chancellor’s Regulation coming for discussion at the next PEP meeting on August 11 regarding GPS equipment being mandated on buses. However, an additional amendment to the regulation will allow bus attendants and bus drivers to administer Glucagon to diabetic children. The Union is unaware of this. Will keep you updated.

## Carolyn Castro

- Received an email invitation to join the Literacy Advocacy Group from Deputy Chancellor Carolyne Quintana. The first meeting is scheduled for September 20. Will also be meeting with the Center for Public Research at Columbia University, who are managing this project.
- There are some concerns about the training of teachers and principals for the dyslexia schools. There are mixed reviews. Have reached out to some teachers, a few superintendents and CECs to ask about it. Will have a follow up report at the next meeting. Also reached out to CCSE Members for questions/concerns to discuss before the dyslexia presentation next month.
- Attended the rally and trial on Reconciliation of Fair Student Funding. Was not able to get into the room for the trial.

## **Unfinished Business**

### Resolutions

- Hybrid Meetings – Recording Secretary read the resolution. Cynthia Arbulu Vacca moved and Heather Dailey seconded to accept the resolution as read. There was a brief discussion changing the time of the meeting the Co-President Newsome inform the meeting attendees that changing the meeting time is an amendment to the bylaws and has nothing to do with the resolution to have hybrid meetings. There was a roll call vote and all 11 members voted yes and the motion passed.
- To Amend Bylaws to Include Hybrid Meetings – Recording Secretary read the resolution. Paullette Healy moved and Lauretta Joseph seconded to accept the resolution as read. There were some formatting changes. Paullette Healy moved and Carolyn Castro seconded to accept the resolution as corrected. There was a roll call vote. Eight members voted yes and three members abstained.
- Support Lawsuit Filed Against School Budget Cuts - Recording Secretary read the resolution. Cynthia Arbulu Vacca moved and Dr. Sanayi Beckles Canton seconded to accept the resolution as read. Laura Barbieri was introduced to give some background and perspective on the lawsuit so that members can have information to make an informed decision when voting on the resolution. There was a roll call vote and all 11 members voted yes and the motion passed.

## **New Business**

- 2022-2023 Meeting Schedule – The DOE added a parent/teacher meeting schedule for September 15 – 22 which conflicts with our meeting on September 15. The Council discussed options to change the date and decided on September 29.

## **Public Comment**

- Monica Major introduced herself as the Senior Director at FACE managing the Governance Team and providing support to the Citywide Councils.

Francine Almash moved and Dr. Sanayi Beckles Canton seconded to discuss changing the meeting start time to 6:30 pm, which is a bylaws amendment. After a lengthy discussion, it was decided to move the discussion offline.

Dr. Sanayi Beckles Canton moved and Ellen McHugh seconded to adjourn the meeting. There was a voice vote and all members voted yes.

**Meeting Adjourned – 9:36 pm**

APPROVED