

Citywide Council on Special Education

Thursday, January 6, 2022

Calendar Meeting Minutes

Call to Order

The Meeting was called to order by Co-President Ellen McHugh at 6:13 pm.

Roll Call

Cynthia Arbulu Vacca	Present
Julie Barreto	Present
Sanyi Beckeles-Canton	Present
Carolyn Castro	Present
Wenming Chen	Present
Heather Dailey	Present
Artelia Flowers	Present
Paulette Healy	Present
Ellen McHugh	Present
Erika Newsome	Present
Joseph Xing	Present

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

Interpreters introduced themselves.

Julie Barreto was appointed Timekeeper.

Presentation

Christina Foti - Division of Specialized Instruction and Student Support

- Introduced the student appointee to the CCSE – Nava Bahrampour
- Briefly touched on new changes and new administration. CCSE and D75 are part of a portfolio led by Caroline Quintana, Deputy Chancellor of Teaching and Learning teaching.

- Special Education Division will work more closely with the Office of Equity & Access, to ensure that students with disabilities are represented in all the department's equity work.
- Impartial Hearing Office – Judy Nathan (Executive Deputy General Counsel and Cheryl Williams (Senior Executive Director)
 - Discussed the impartial hearing process and the move to the NYC Office of Administrative Trials and Hearings (OATH).
 - No changes. Parents will still be able to access due process through the DOE's Impartial Hearing Office. Any changes will be distributed immediately and widely to parents using any means.
 - Addressed the concern that the DOE is hiring new lawyers to go to trial and they will lose their impartiality in representing parents. Explained that the new lawyers are DOE lawyers and will represent the DOE in trials and hearings, not parents. Most parents, who can afford to, bring their own lawyers to trials/hearings. The DOE does provide information about free legal services as part of the procedural safeguards notice, but the goal is to resolve the situation and avoid trial.

Co-Presidents' Reports

Ellen McHugh

- Attended an ECC Zoom training on “Contentious Meetings” conducted by Jay Worona of the NYS School Board Association. There was a bit of confusion about the meeting topic. The presenter was under the impression that he was training attendees (CEC's) how to deal with disruptions from the public during meetings but the training was to be how CEC members can work together within their own unit and be respectful of each other. Unfortunately, the presenter couldn't continue.
- Mayoral Control – Attended an ECC meeting on January 3 where there was a discussion on Mayoral Control. Mayoral Control was instituted in 2003 to give control of the DOE to the Mayor and is to be reauthorized every seven years. There is a push to give control back to Community School Boards during this year's NYS Senate and Assembly session. The current Mayor Adams is not in favor of reverting back to school boards.
- Encouraged members and other CEC members to get involved in the discussion and have their voice heard on the topic of Mayoral Control.
- Attended a District 20 meeting – a few years ago, a junior high school program for D75 students was closed by the DOE without any consultation with the parents. The new superintendent and staff are looking for ways to bring the program back.
- There was a discussion on CCSE's resolution to change Mayoral Control and a comparison of other CEC resolutions. Paullette Healy volunteered to put together a spreadsheet listing the commonalities of each resolution and the Council agreed to draft a

resolution that will combine parts of theirs and the other CEC resolutions. There will also be a sub-committee to review and finalize the draft for the members to review.

Approval of Minutes – October 7 & 21, 2021

Paullette Healy moved and Dr. Canton-Beckles second to approve the minutes of October 7, 2021. There was a voice vote. All members in attendance voted yes with two abstentions – Carolyn Castro and Cynthia Arbulu Vacca because they were not members of the Council at the time of the meeting.

Member Reports

Paullette Healy

- Because of staffing shortages, three principals from District 15 and 20 reported that students who needed 1 on 1 paras were not able to receive their services or academic support. The schools were not able to provide special education teachers in ICT classes. Unfortunately, the principals were denied their request to close their school because of extreme staff shortage.

Resolution on NYC School Governance

- Council Members were sent the resolution prior to meeting. Co-President McHugh asked to review the resolution so that there will be a vote at the next calendar meeting on January 20.

Heather Dailey suggested that the Council establish sub-committees to work on issues/projects so that meetings and the Council's work can be more streamlined and solutions can be more strategic. Heather Dailey moved and Carolyn Castro seconded to establish a sub-committee to address the issue of Mayoral Control. There was a voice vote and all members in attendance voted yes. Cynthia Arbulu Vacca, Carolyn Castro, Heather Dailey and Ellen McHugh volunteered to be on the sub-committee. A meeting of the sub-committee will be scheduled for January 13 @6:30 pm.

Heather Dailey moved and Cynthia Arbulu Vacca seconded to establish a sub-committee to work on the Annual Report. There was a voice vote and all members in attendance voted yes.

Paullette Healy moved and Carolyn Castro seconded to have the IEP conference virtually. There was a roll call vote and nine members voted yes. Two members were not present during the vote.

Sub-Committee Volunteers

- Mayoral Control - Cynthia Arbulu Vacca, Carolyn Castro, Heather Dailey and Ellen McHugh
- Student Member Nava Bahrapour - Annual Report and IEL Conference
- Dr. Sanayi Beckles Canton – Annual Report and Mayoral Control
- Heather Dailey – Annual Report
- IEP Conference – Cynthia Arbulu Vacca, Ellen McHugh

Paullette Healy moved and Cynthia Arbulu Vacca seconded to adjourn the meeting. There was a voice vote and There was a voice vote and all members in attendance voted yes.

Meeting Adjourned – 10:18 pm

APPROVED