

Citywide Council on Special Education

Friday, December 17, 2021

Combined Business/Calendar Meeting Minutes

Call to Order

The Meeting was called to order by Co-President Ellen McHugh at 6:14 pm.

Roll Call

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

Interpreters were introduced.

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

Joseph Ng was appointed Time Keeper

The minutes of September 23, 2021 were approved – six yeses and two abstentions.

Co-Presidents' Reports

Ellen McHugh

- Attended the Literacy Summit by the Parents for Inclusive Education – a five-day program providing parents with information for students with disabilities. Was impressed with a former NYC public school student who spoke about his journey (Peter Trojic). Would like to see if we can get him for the Annual IEP Conference.

- There's still a lot of discussion about COVID and how serious this new variant it. The CCSE can't tell you to get vaccinated or wear a mask. We can only encourage you to read the information that is available and to make a decision for yourself.
- Brief recap of the November Calendar Meeting on the enrollment process for students with disabilities in middle and high school. Plan to have Part II meeting on the admissions process in the new year.
- There was a Graduation Measures meeting where the federal government is looking at how services are provided for children with special needs. New York State currently has a five-year research project to get input from families with special needs children.

Presentation - New York City School Construction Authority (NYNCSA)

Zeeshan Ott - Director of External Affairs at the New York City School Construction Authority

- Presented an overview of the New York City School Construction Authority (NYNCSA) The FY2020 –2024 Capital Plan Capital Plan.
- There is no specific plan for special education. Special education falls under the funding for the school or district the school is in.
- The FY2020 – 2024 Capital Plan - \$20.6 billion
 - \$9.84 billion Capacity – building new schools or school addition
 - New Schools – 35 new schools opening in the 2021/22 including 10 – 3K's and 2-Pre-K's
 - \$7.26 billion Capital Investment - include school repairs or major renovation.
 - Capital Investment - repair window, roof replacement, boilers H VAC systems, fire alarms, public address systems, electrical upgrades, plumbing issues.
 - Work closely with Division of School Facilities (custodial staff, facility directors) with complaints or requests for repairs for school facility. Usually with Building Condition Assessment Survey (BCAS) done by the School Construction Authority (SCA) or a problem reported by the Division of School Facilities that is escalated to the SCA.
 - Funding from Elected Officials: The local New York City Council Member, Borough President, or state elected officials may also fund projects.
 - City-Wide Initiatives: Mayoral & City Council initiatives, such as Physical Education for All and the Air Conditioning program.
 - \$3.51 billion Mandated Programs – repairs or renovations done to be in compliance with government regulations/building code requirements.
- SCA also is focused on working with MWLBE Program – minority and women-owned, locally based business enterprises. Also created a mentoring program that provides support and access to capital and business opportunities for qualified emergent MWLBE's.

- In FY21 Citywide, SCA awarded \$558,863,141 in prime MWLBE contracts across 409 projects to 128 firms.
- In FY21 the SCA Mentor Program awarded \$81,854,002 in MWLBE contracts across 249 projects to 93 firms.
- CEC's can also request capital projects by filling out form to request repairs in schools in their district. Projects have to be a permanent enhancement, with a lifespan of at least 5 years, and a minimum cost of \$50K. Deadline to submit a proposal is January 15, 2022.
- Will share presentation and additional information with AA to share with attendees.

Paullette Healy moved and Cynthia Arbulu Vacca seconded to table items eight, nine and ten on the agenda until after the completion of the Members Reports. There was a voice vote and all agreed.

Member Reports

Cynthia Arbulu Vacca

- Attended the Literacy Summit: Reaching Every Reader on December 9, hosted by Advocates for Children, ARISE Coalition and NYC-DOE. Presenters talked about how a child learns to read, what needs to be implemented in schools to help with that process. How COVID has set students back in their reading. Diversifying literacy to meet the needs of every student. Recordings of the summit will be available later in the month.
- The Summit also pushed a Call to Action (see below). Would like the Council to sign on as an organization. Council will wait to vote on this until the next meeting in order to have it translated.

Paullette Healy

- District 20 has been advocating for a D75 middle school in their district for over 10 years and the good news is that they are finally getting a new school. Our Lady of Guadalupe is the new middle school D75 site, slated to open 2024. There will also be an additional D75 accommodation classroom in the new Nathan's middle school site as well as D75 all-inclusive building opening up in Sunset Park.

Carolyn Castro

- Expanded on the Literacy Summit and how fantastic it was. It broke down the different areas, talked about reading awareness, letter knowledge and decoding skills. Questioned whether the current way of teaching helps to support students. Talked about the different levels of support in reading from teachers and providing teacher training to help them instruct students moving forward.

- Received a letter in response to Mayor De Blasio's December 14 deadline that all students must have at least one vaccination to be able to participate in competitive sports or some afterschool programs. Concerned because child does not participate on a team just plays outside with other students. However, will be subjected to these requirements.
- Cynthia Arbulu Vacca explained that some outside organizations that provide afterschool programs to schools may have these requirements because the staff is not comfortable engaging with students who are not vaccinated.

Paullette Healy moved and Cynthia Arbulu Vacca seconded to adjourn the calendar meeting and resume the business meeting. There was a roll call vote and all members in attendance voted yes.

Calendar Meeting Adjourned – 8:17 pm

Paullette Healy moved and Carolyn Castro seconded to resume business meeting. There was a roll call vote and all members in attendance voted yes.

Letter to Education Panel to vote YES on Chancellor's Regulation D-210

Paullette Healy moved and Ellen McHugh seconded to send Letter to Education Panel to vote YES on Chancellor's Regulation D-210 as a Council. There was a roll call vote and the seven members voted yes.

Resolution on ACS and DOE Partnership

After a lengthy discussion, the Council voted to table this issue until the next meeting.

Letter to Incoming Mayor and Chancellor

The Council reviewed the proposed letter. Joseph Ng moved and Cynthia Arbulu Vacca seconded that the Council should send the letter to the incoming Mayor and Chancellor, once necessary edits are done. There was a roll call vote and eight members voted yes.

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

Meeting Adjourned – 9:16 pm

Reaching Every Reader

Join the Call to Collective Action

Teaching children how to read is one of the most fundamental responsibilities of our public schools. Reading—the ability to gain meaning from print—is the gateway to future learning, both in and out of the classroom; it is essential for full participation in civic life, democratic society, and the 21st century economy.

Every student in New York City deserves the chance to learn to read, no matter the school they attend or the neighborhood they call home. And science tells us that nearly all children can become skilled readers when they receive high-quality, evidence-based instruction. We know that children learn literacy skills best when they are explicitly and systematically taught how to break the code that connects sounds and letters; when the curriculum reflects their lived experiences and affirms their cultural and linguistic identities; when language and literacy development are both understood as dynamic processes; and when their teachers have the training and support they need to be effective. Research lights the path forward, and success requires a long-term, citywide commitment to making evidence-based and culturally and linguistically relevant reading instruction a top priority.

How reading is currently taught around the city differs, to some degree, by school, neighborhood, and district. The goal is for there to be a consistent use of scientifically based and culturally and linguistically relevant curricula. If we are committed to supporting all students, including our marginalized students, then students with dyslexia and other language-based learning disabilities will be ensured proper instruction and intervention, and students who learn in two languages will benefit from literacy instruction that uses and values their home language.

Now is the time for all New Yorkers—educators and school staff; parents and students; policymakers and philanthropists; community-based organizations, advocates, and faith leaders—to come together around a shared vision for universal literacy. Together, we will fight to ensure that every child, in every classroom, in every language, has the support they need to become a successful and lifelong reader.

Required

- 1. I am signing the call to action** On behalf of an organization
- 2. Name of organization** As you would like it to appear on the call to action
- 3. Your name** We want to know who is completing this form, but only the *organization's* name will appear on the call to action
- 4. Your email address**
- 5. I am authorized to sign the call to action on behalf of my organization**

Yes