

# Community Education Council District 32 Meeting

<b>IEP COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES</b>	<b>February 10, 2020</b>	<b>8:15 AM</b>	CEC D32 Office 797 Bushwick Ave Brooklyn, NY 11221
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<b>Type of Meeting</b>	<b>IEP Committee Meeting</b>
<b>Note Taker</b>	<b>Stacie Johnson, Recording Secretary</b>
<b>Attendees</b>	<b>IEP Committee Meeting</b>
	<b>Martha Bayona</b> <span style="float: right;"><b>Present</b></span>
	<b>Luis Fonseca</b> <span style="float: right;"><b>(Vacated Seat on February 7, 2020)</b></span>
	<b>Joanna Fuentes</b> <span style="float: right;"><b>Present</b></span>
	<b>Desines Rodriguez</b> <span style="float: right;"><b>Absent (excused)</b></span>
<b>Quorum</b>	<b>Met</b>

**IEP Committee Meeting: 8:33 AM**

1. Call to order and roll call: Present: Martha Bayona, Joanna Fuentes. Absent: Desines Rodriguez (excused). Member Luis Fonseca, former CEC32 Member and member of the CEC32 IEP Committee vacated his seat on Friday, February 7, 2020.  
  
Present as well were, Mses. Viviana Delgado and Marlene Rossi, parents and PTA representatives of 32K116.
2. The IEP Committee Introduction (5 min)
  - a. The CEC32 IEP Committee is made up of three members of the CEC32: Member Joanna Fuentes, current IEP Representative and Chair of the Committee; Member Martha Bayona, the CEC32 President; and Member Desines Rodriguez, Treasurer and former IEP Representative of the CEC32. Member Luis Fonseca was part of the IEP Committee until he vacated his seat on the CEC32 on Friday, February 7, 2020.
3. Planning: IEP Committee meetings, parent events, and workshops (45 min)
  - a. Special guest: Ms. Zoe Lence-Calix, Special Education Community Support Coordinator, will join us for guidance and support. Ms. Lence-Calix works with all schools in Brooklyn North and serves 22,000 families with children who have an IEP in kindergarten through 12th grade. She supported integrated services in the CSD32 back in 2007. For assistance, Ms. Lence-Calix's direct line is (718) 935-3731.
    - i. The IEP Committee members will work on a mission statement.
    - ii. Membership in the IEP Committee: The CEC32 Bylaws are in the process of being amended in order to delineate guidelines on committee memberships. The Council is open to recommendations.
    - iii. Planning: The IEP Committee looks to host various events and parent workshops, to know most of our schools' parent liaisons, and to work in collaboration with the CEC as a whole in order to ensure that children with Individualized Education Plans (IEPs) are placed in the right settings and are provided the services that their IEPs require. Sometimes schools are unresponsive to parent requests for guidance or do not seem sufficiently informed on the matter and do not meet the student's needs within the appropriate time, forcing parents to pay out-of-pocket for services that are meant to be provided through the child's IEP. The IEP Committee seeks to ameliorate these issues.  
  
Additionally, parents often do not know the type of therapy that their child is receiving or when the child is assigned a new teacher. Transitioning to another teacher or between treatments should be discussed with the parent and every school staff member should be aware of this. Members of the administration and school staff are certified to assist parents with matters related to their child's special education. This information can also be requested during SLT meetings. Principals are also responsible for every single body in the building, the academic monitoring of every children, and for ensuring that there is progress and a safety component in place. Only special education administrators (there are eight in Brooklyn North), however, can give advice on special education.
    - iv. Whom should parents reach out to for assistance? 311 is the best place to start. All calls related to concerns in Brooklyn North are directly routed to Ms. Lence-Calix. Her direct line is also (718) 935-3731.

- v. What happens if my child is denied services? Fight for due-process rights. The IEP is a legal document supported by federal, state, and local orders, and must be honored. If a school is unable to fully serve a child, another placement/school must be found for the child.
- vi. What if I am told that I have to remove my child from a school because it is not my zoned-school? This is a violation of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). Parents of students who are turned down after communicating to the school that the child receives special education services, immediately need to go to the district's Family Welcome Center (1665 St. Marks in the CSD32) and address the issue with the Committee on Special Education. The parent must demand an immediate evaluation of the child's needs.
- vii. What should I expect a school not to do? A school should not dispute a medical diagnosis, nor force a parent to prove that the child is taking medication in order to enforce his/her IEP. Families cannot be intimidated.
- viii. How long is the evaluation process? The evaluation process takes 60 days from the day the parent signs consent. During those two months, the team may assess the child, review the data, and sit down to discuss the information holistically with the parent as an important partner in the conversation so that a decision can be made as to what kinds of services the child requires. Parents may not always agree. One recommendation is to ask about flexible programming. For example, if a child is good at math but cannot read due to cognitive issues that create deficiencies with reading comprehension, parents may first ask why the child has been assigned to the class structure that they have, and suggest a flexible program. This may require the child to be placed in an ICT setting for math, where he or she is still getting the special education support services that they require and in a 12-1-1 (more restrictive setting) where they get the more concentrated supports for reading. This comes from the Special Education Office at the Central DOE. Ms. Lence-Calix works directly with the central office and the department that works on policy.
- ix. Why do schools often do not provide information about the services that they offer at open houses or when parents ask direct questions about their child's needs and how they can be serviced at the school? At times, a child's IEP recommends that the child be placed in an Integrated Co-Teaching (ICT) setting so that the child may have an opportunity to compete their peers and all holistically in one class work and learn together, except that the child with an IEP requires additional support services. Schools often, however, want to change their models and refuse to offer the necessary classroom settings for children who have more severe disabilities and need more supports. This is because these students do not bring sufficient funding into the school to hire a teacher. At the end of the day, the funding that a child brings may determine more strongly the services that they get than the actual services that are required in the child's IEP. Schools are therefore moving from the 12-1-1 more restrictive classroom model into the ICT model. This is an issue because other academic intervention services are no longer considered, as the child is already receiving the services through the IEP, but those services are not sufficient. In these cases, families need to advocate for assistance finding another placement for the child.
- x. What does this look like in the CSD32? Considering the extreme underenrollment in the district, instead of allowing schools to expand, the space should be utilized to provide services that the children need.
- xi. How many funding streams are there for a school? There are two funding streams: one for children who are on the school's register as of October 31<sup>st</sup>. These students all bring in the same dollars to the schools. The second funding stream, as of December 31, is for children who bring additional funding into the school. A child in an ICT setting brings in about \$7,100; a child who is in a full-time self-contained setting brings in about \$4,800 if in grades kindergarten through eighth, and \$2,100 if in grades 9<sup>th</sup> through 12<sup>th</sup> (high school). Children who receive 20% through 59% of the services bring in about \$5,100.
- xii. How do we teach our parents to fight? Through instruction. Monolingual-Spanish parent workshops will be provided on the 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> of February at 32K384 to review the Family Guide to Special Education with families and talk about other specific topics, and will go through an IEP (a blank one) in order to explain where information is located in an IEP and what story the document tells about the child.
- xiii. Translation is required: If a parent needs translation services, every document that a parent receives must be translated into the family's home language. This includes the assessment letter and the IEP. Each school allocates \$4,000 to \$5,000 in their budgets for translation services. Additionally, if the parent is having an initial evaluation of their child, the parent should ensure that, before the meeting takes place, they receive a copy of every assessment of the child that is completed by the school.
- xiv. What can I do if my child does not have an IEP but is not making academic progress? If the child is not making academic progress, the parent may write a letter stating that, although the school had attempted the specific services, the child is not achieving academic progress, and therefore the parent wants to have the child evaluated for the first time. When a parent gives the letter in, the parent must ensure that the person who receives the letter signs and dates it and gives the parent a copy of the signed and dated letter back. This ensures compliance.
- xv. What does the evaluation process look like? The first step of every IPE is a meeting with the parent, in which they are asked for a social history update to understand the state of the child at birth, including any complications that occurred when the child was born. Then parents are given a form and asked to sign a consent for assessment; parents must sign a consent for physical education, speech therapy, occupational therapy, physical therapy, and all other types of assessments. Behavioral assessments are made if the child has issues with behavior in the classroom, so that the parent may determine what the triggers of that behavior in the classroom are.

xvi. What do I do if my child is being yelled at, grabbed, or mistreated by staff in any other way? Submit a complaint in writing. Adults often do not rationalize and fail to instruct a child. Staff must also be encouraged to apply the same rules that they enforce for the students.

b. Planning for parent workshops: With the support of the IEP Representative, the CEC32 can get in contact with parent coordinators and start to bring workshops into the schools. This way, by bringing information into every school, parents will be empowered to be real advocates. The workshops can take place in the morning, afternoon, or evening. These workshops would not be provided in charter schools, as they are independent entities. The CEC32 will email the Superintendent so that she is aware of its work with the PTA/PAs and will then email all schools, carbon copying the PTA/PAs. This way, convenient dates may be set according to the parent coordinators' availability and they may assist with outreach to parents. PTA/PAs are encouraged to share the information with other parents to assist with outreach. Copies of any necessary information can be made at the CEC office. Ms. Lence-Calix's office has sixteen cases of the Family Guide to Special Education in multiple languages, in addition to transition guides. She will need the dates and times of the planned workshops, whether they will be monolingual, and if interpretation services will be provided. Split sessions in English and Spanish are also an option. PTA/PAs will obtain resources on how to plan for events. This includes the Family Guide and parent safeguards with information about their rights.

4. Public Comment (10 min)

a. Jessica Franco, Community Liaison for the Office of the Senator Julia Salazar: Ms. Franco was impressed and happy to know that Ms. Lence-Calix is a big resource for families. The Senator's Office covers the Greenpoint through East New York areas. Education looks different depending on the zip code (one of the biggest issues to tackle), but students with special needs are not getting the services that they should be getting, regardless of the zip code; everything seems very difficult to navigate in the Department of Education and it often takes years to obtain the services that a child needs. The Office wishes to see these efforts replicated throughout Brooklyn North.

5. Adjournment: 9:45 AM

<b>APPROVAL OF CALENDAR AND BUSINESS MEETING MINUTES, AND COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES</b>	December 19, 2019 - <b>Approved</b> [Met Quorum]
A draft of all meeting minutes are available within two weeks after the meeting and posted on the Council's website at CEC32.org.	
<b>ADJOURNMENT</b>	Meeting adjourned at 9:45 AM
<b>SUBMITTED BY:</b>	Silvia Belmonte, Administrative Assistant

**Approved on:**

\_\_\_\_\_ Recording Secretary