



## COMMUNITY EDUCATION COUNCIL DISTRICT 15

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### **RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT OF VIRTUAL MEETINGS IN OPEN MEETINGS LAW**

*The Community and Citywide Education Councils (CCECs) are composed of parents who have been elected or appointed to serve as stakeholders of NYC School Community Districts, and specific cohorts of students, representing NYC public school students and their families.*

*The following resolution offers CEC 15's position regarding the inclusion of a virtual option to the Open Meetings Law:*

**WHEREAS**, the Open Meetings Law that requires Citywide/Community Education Councils (CCECs), School Leadership Teams (SLTs), and District Leadership Teams (DLTs), to hold in-person public meetings;

**WHEREAS**, CCECs, SLTs and DLTs are part of the New York City public school governance structure intended to enable parents to not only observe important decision making processes at the school and district levels, but also to provide comments and feedback on issues that are important to students and families;

**WHEREAS**, as permitted under Executive Order 202.1, these bodies have held public meetings remotely since mid-March 2020;

**WHEREAS**, attendance has increased dramatically in many meetings since they were made remote;

**WHEREAS**, meetings are easier to attend remotely for parents with younger children and children with disabilities because of the relief from childcare, transportation, and specialized care. Representation of these vulnerable groups becomes more likely in a virtual setting.

**WHEREAS**, more families are able to engage in school governance through virtual access since the NYC Department of Education has provided free internet-enabled devices to families who need them;

**WHEREAS**, remote meetings allow disability-related reasonable accommodations, such as closed captioning and chat functions for communication, for individuals with disabilities to participate in the meeting or program;

**WHEREAS**, remote meetings have also allowed for more accommodations for those families requiring translation and interpretation services in order to support their inclusion in discussions related to our communities;

**WHEREAS**, the ease with which remote meetings can be recorded and disseminated throughout the community has increased the inclusion and feedback of families whose employment and other responsibilities might've prevented their in-person involvement before;

**WHEREAS**, transparency in the decision making of school communities is more important than ever in building confidence in the safety of our schools, and eliminating remote access to planning meetings erodes that confidence;

**WHEREAS**, the NYC Department of Education, in its efforts to include and empower more parents, supports this request.

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that CEC15 requests an amendment to Open Meetings Law, allowing CCECs, SLTs, and DLTs the option to continue meeting virtually, which would greatly enhance their ability to engage with community members and provide greater transparency and public feedback.**

*This Resolution was approved at a CEC15 Calendar Meeting held on August 24, 2021 by a unanimous vote of members present including: Camille Casaretti, Antonia Ferraro, Tia Schellstede, Claudia Lechuga, Vincent Lu, Nana-Poku Agyekum, Alfred De Ingeniis, and Joseph Alexander.*