



COMMUNITY EDUCATION COUNCIL DISTRICT 15

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November 19, 2025

Calendar Meeting

President's Report - Antonia Ferraro Martinelli

Welcome everyone to the Black Box Theater at the Brooklyn High School of the Arts (HS 656). We are very grateful to Principal Vecchiano for accommodating tonight's meeting. I know Brooklyn High School of the Arts has a lot to offer, so before I delve into my updates, I want to invite **Principal Vecchiano** to speak about the school.

A lot has happened since our last meeting. There was a national election and there are a lot of feelings out there. A lot of people have legitimate reasons to fear the next four years, but we must find a way to keep doing the work on behalf of students and families, regardless of who is in charge. I will continue to host these meetings. I will continue to support our schools and children. I will continue to speak out for equity and integration. I will continue to speak out for our newly arrived students. I will continue to reflect the diversity of the district. Do I anticipate more obstacles? Yes. Do I anticipate a renewed effort to privatize schools? Yes. We will have to fight any efforts to lift the charter cap, or reissue charters, just as vigorously as we have to fight collocated charters, especially as we implement new class size mandates. Do I anticipate the appointment of a new Betsy DeVos or a MoM for Liberty? Yes. We will have to fight the anti-free speech agenda of book banners. I am still going to be here to do the work of defending our district against an anti-public school agenda that has existed for decades and was no less potent 8 years ago when I stepped on to the council. And I can't do it alone. I need all of our district parents and partners to join in that work because public schools are the true vehicles of democracy and upward mobility. We need them and they need us, more now than ever.

I am also going to continue to honor and reflect the people of our nation. November is [Native American Heritage Month](#). I have a beautiful scarf here that the PTA of PS 958 is selling. They created it to honor indigenous people.

I also have two banned books about Native Americans.

1. **Fry Bread by Kevin Noble Maillard**

“... this book explores the diverse and rich cultural significance of fry bread in Native American communities across the United States. In 2022 this book was challenged in Northampton, PA as part of a donation of diverse books by The Conscious Kid – a non-profit organization focused on equity and promoting healthy racial identity development. School board has put the book donations on hold due to (10) parents claiming the organization to be “a Marxist organization that promotes critical Race Theory.”

<https://dosomething.org/article/banned-books-list-native-american-heritage>

2. ***We are Still Here!* by Traci Sorell**

This book delves into the political history of Native Americans and Tribal Sovereignty. It was in the same group of books donated by [The Conscious Kid](#) that was challenged in 2022 in Northampton, PA. You can read more about the book challenge and the 50 books that were banned, including a book called, *Kamala and Maya's Big Idea*, by Meena Harris, who is the niece of Kamala Harris.

Add to Chat:

<https://www.marshall.edu/library/bannedbooks/we-are-still-here/>

The Conscious Kid

<https://www.theconsciouskid.org/>

November 29 is [International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People](#). In honor, I will share ***Sitti's Bird* by Malak Mattar**. The book is about a child channeling her trauma through art during the 2014 airstrikes on Gaza, and it is based on the author's own childhood experience.

Updates

On October 23, I attended a **zoom call with new Chancellor Ramos**. She spoke about prioritizing teachers with resources and targeted support. She spoke about how parenthood affected the lens through which she looks at parent engagement. She feels that parent leaders are an underutilized resource.

Ramos discussed a **pilot program to develop constructive partnerships between Superintendents and parent leaders** in select districts. The program would offer targeted support on structuring meetings, escalating concerns before they become major issues, developing and spreading best practices to facilitate Supt/Parent Leader collaboration.

FACE is dropping the word Engagement from the acronym. The E now means “Empowerment” again. Ramos emphasized that empowerment is everyone's responsibility and reiterated her appreciation for parent leaders.

Ramos said she is committed to continuity and stability. She will not be replacing Superintendents.

Ramos intended to bring back monthly meetings with CEC Presidents and additional events centered on specific topics. If members have questions or comments that they would like me to share with the chancellor at these meetings, let me know.

I had the opportunity to ask Ramos a question. As she is one of SCA's 3 board members, how does she plan to hold SCA accountable and would she support reforming the agency? She responded that she is conducting a citywide needs assessment, but did not believe this a time to implement changes at the SCA.

The CEC15 Call with CM Rita Joseph on SCA Accountability was canceled. I have made attempts to follow-up and will continue to do so.

Leslie and I met with Principal Castellucci of the Brooklyn New School and a **new Parent Coordinator candidate (Fernando Maneca)**. The candidate had been a parent at BNS and has a background as an arts administrator. The principal felt he was a good fit for the school community and hopes to move with the hiring ASAP.

Many of you already know that the DOE made a change to the 2024-25 Calendar. Schools will now be closed Dec 23.

Ask Alvarez to discuss two items:

1. FRAMEWORK FOR CLASS SIZE PLANNING

Chancellor Melissa Aviles-Ramos today announced a new framework for class size planning, developed in partnership with the United Federation of Teachers (UFT) and the Council of School Supervisors & Administrators (CSA). Under the framework, schools can choose to submit individual "Class Size Reduction Plans" for the 2025-2026 School Year (SY) to receive dedicated funding for implementation. In this school year the administration has invested [\\$182 million for class size reduction](#) and other purposes aligned with the state Contract for Excellence. This new framework will provide the second major investment of funding to align with the class size reduction mandate.

2. Technology Readiness Activity

District 15 was selected to participate in a technology readiness activity on November 6th, 2024. What does that mean for your child?

- Your child will still come to school.
- The teachers will assign a remote homework task for students to complete at home. Please ensure your child completes the digital activity at home on the above date.

- If your child does not have access to either a personal internet-enabled device or a NYCPS-issued device at home, be sure to reach out to your school to request a device

Chalkbeat Article Recess v Movies - PS 456

At the last meeting I discussed parent concerns regarding the quantity and quality of movies shown at recess instead of outdoor play. Chalkbeat covered the issue and one of our new schools, PS 456 received a nice mention about their regular recess walks to Prospect Park.

Share in chat:

https://www.chalkbeat.org/newyork/2024/11/07/nyc-parents-angry-over-too-many-movies-at-school-recess/?utm_source=Chalkbeat&utm_campaign=8c763f388a-New+York+NYC+parents+fun+as+screen+time+replaces+&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_9091015053-8c763f388a-%5BLIST_EMAIL_ID%5D&mc_cid=8c763f388a&mc_eid=2272dcd5ef

CEC15 still has a vacant seat for an MML Parent.

Share in Chat:

[Applications](#) in nine languages and all information about eligibility to CECs can be found [here](#). Please apply directly to the DOE at CCECinfo@schools.nyc.gov.

PEP meetings

Wed, Nov 20 - 6:00 pm, The Michael J. Petrides School 715 Ocean Terrace, Staten Island, NY 10301

If you would like to access this meeting remotely, please visit: <https://learndoe.org/pep/nov20>

Wed, Dec 18 - 6:00 pm, Sunset Park High School 153 35th Street, Brooklyn, New York 11232

If you would like to access this meeting remotely, please visit: <https://learndoe.org/pep/dec18>

Joint Presidents' Council Meetings

We have two Joint Presidents' council Meetings coming up.

- Monday, Nov. 25 at 6:30 pm. They will provide the link. Presidents' Council Meetings are not public meetings.
- Our December 10, Calendar/Business meeting will also be a Joint Presidents' Council Meeting. Note the change of Location of our next meeting- **PS 94 - 5010 6th Avenue**