

Community District Education Council District 26

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MINUTES OF BUSINESS & CALENDAR PUBLIC MEETINGS

Date: Thursday, November 30, 2006

Time: Calender Meeting, 7:00 P.M.; Business Meeting, 8:00 P.M.

Location: MS 74, 61-15 Oceania Street, Bayside, NY 11364-Rm 128

The meeting of the Community District Education Council of District 26 (CDEC26) was called to order and chaired by Rob Caloras, President at 7:10 pm in the Conference Room 128.

Roll Call: Rob Caloras, Dr. Lana Zinger, Jodi Nath, Jackie Montgomery, Yen Shia Chou, Susan Shiroma, Bona Sun, Debra Strassberg & Carol Gomez

Absent - Melissa Dorfman

Also in attendance was Lori Stein Butera, Parent Support Coordinator.

Guest Speakers: Pete Maddaloni, Queens Borough Chairman, Custodians Union (Local 891-International Union of Operating Engineers)

Business Meeting

Secretary's Report - Carol Gomez, Recording Secretary

- a. Reviewing of Empowerment Zone forum minutes of October 17th minutes were reviewed for corrections, changes or additions/deletions. Carol made a motion to accept the October 17th Empowerment Zone minutes and Rob seconded. Council voted unanimously to accept the Empowerment Zone minutes.
Reviewed the October 26th minutes for corrections, changes or additions/deletions. Rob made a motion to accept the October 26th minutes and Debbie seconded. Council voted unanimously to accept the minutes.
Reviewed Curriculum Committee minutes of September 29th for corrections, additions & deletions. Rob made a motion to accept the September 29th minutes and Jodi seconded. Council voted unanimously to accept the Curriculum committee minutes.
- b. Council was reminded that the November activity reports were due.

President's Report - Robert Caloras

1. Correspondence on the issues of education – holiday parties – upcoming meetings – use E-mails as a means of communication.
2. Articles regarding class sizes – Dist. 26 have the most crowded middle schools (7 & 8th graders) in the city. Average size is 33. The UFT contract calls for a cap of 30 students in Title 1 schools. Rob asked Mary Vaccaro, UFT Rep. to find out how this came about and let him know. In District 26, PS 94 is the most overcrowded school in the district. Rob informed the attendees that the DOE is in negotiations with the Little Neck Jewish Center for space that will be utilized by PS 94. Ms. Barbeosch, Principal of PS 94 states that there are some things that need to be worked out before finalizing. Once finalized, two grades can be moved over into this location.

Ms. Barbeosch also “thanked” the CDEC for obtaining a \$300,000 grant from City Council regarding the electrical upgrade at PS 94. The CDEC had contacted Councilman Avella regarding this problem last year.

3. DOE looking for land to build schools. Asking the attendees that if they know or see anything, to please contact the DOE or the CDEC.
4. Thanked the Ledger, Chronicle and Daily News on their coverage for stating the issues in District 26. There are 3 reporters who handle Queens and the members are free to contact them regarding District 26 issues. Rob also suggested sending letters to the editor.
5. Thanked Marlene Siegel for attending the October 26 meeting but requested the numbers in regard to the hiring & firing in Region 3 based upon the Chancellor’s reduction in force to fund the Empowerment schools.
 - a. \$2.96 million – Region 3
 - b. Chancellor states “that the cuts are for the funding of the Empowerment zone.”
6. CFE Decision – reduction in the amount needed to fund NYC schools on a yearly basis.
7. President’s Council attended by Rob & Jodi. Letter being drafted from President’s Council that will be going out to the Mayor regarding the UFT contract concerning “back to school curriculum nights” and the contract did not address this subject.

Empowerment Zone meeting discussed which is scheduled for December 12th, at MS 74 at 8 p.m. and Eric Nadelstern will be attending. Questions sent in to Rob to compile. Copy of previous flyer sent to President’s Council for changes.
8. Spoke about the Mayor’s Dinner which was attended by Carol, Bonnie, Suzanne, Debra & himself. Chancellor Joel Klein and Eric Nadelstern were also in attendance.
9. Conversation with Cathy Cahn regarding the Hall of Science money issues. Checking out other sources of funding is available.
10. Meeting with Mary Vaccaro, UFT representative. Spoke about the new contract where there are “no concessions”. Contract calls for an independent third party that will evaluate a teacher that receives a “U” rating. This is appreciated by the UFT members.

Informed the attendees about an organization called “**Common Good**”. It’s a teacher burdens report. This was a survey of 8 teachers of different experiences. The study was to find out what prevents or hinders a teacher from doing their job. (student discipline problems, assessment & testing that take time from the curriculum of teaching, mandated teaching procedures, schools management & paper work). (Attachment-Common Good)

Heartwarming announcements – Principal Ambrose (PS 115) performed in Prospect Park for a holiday lighting ceremony where as the Mayor attended.

The Mayflower School (PS 191) is doing a “Toys for Tots” collection.

Treasurer’s Report – none

Superintendent’s Report – Anita Saunders - none

Committee Reports - Zoning & Outreach; Curriculum & Grants Information

1. Zoning & Outreach

- a. MS 172 – Rob & Jodi made a school visit. School has an overcrowding problem. School utilizing the City Council allotments. Principal upset that parents are not getting more involved with their school.
Principal created the New Visions program & a food committee. PTA donated money for the enrichment programs.
Problem with losing students during the Muslim holiday (Ramadan) where students stay out 2-4 weeks off.
Cell phone policy in effect – acceptable to students. Confiscations are taking place also. Carol Gomez attended the Health & Safety Fair on Nov. 18th at MS 172. This fair is held on a yearly basis where various businesses from the Community get involved including the police department. It was very informative.
 - b. Debbie, Carol and Susan visited MS 74 and met with the Principal, Ms. Dapolito. The Council was informed that another letter will be sent out to the Principals to set up the other school visits.
- 2. Grants** – Susan informed the council members that books will be delivered to MS 74 that can be used by teachers, principals, parent coordinators & PTA Presidents. Will also draft a letter to be sent out to the newsletter. By the next meeting date, a user policy and announcement set up for how the parents and teachers will come into Room 128 to begin using the books.
- a. Setting up a Grants Information Committee bookshelf at MS 74, Room 128.
 - b. Access to making photo copies and catching up on their reading regarding proposals.
 - c. Will set up a training & workshop session.

Lori Butera- Parent Coordinator

1. Applications for the Gifted & Talented are due by December 1st, 5 p.m.
2. Attend a parent workshop – elementary schools – participate in “Studios in a School”. Parent Coordinator attended with a librarian or an ELA/ELL coach and they worked together. They were trained by artist in incorporating art & reading program together & how you incorporate the arts & academics together. The workshop was free (2 days) & it is a non profit organization.
3. Copy of Workshop pamphlet requested for council members.

New Business

1. Jackie informed the council of a letter from Brian Ellner that was sent out to all Board of Ed employees pertaining to the bus route changes that would take effect December 4th. Per Rob, a “stay” was put through by the bus drivers union to hold off.
Jackie will look into this and update council at next meeting.
2. Debra attended the MS 74 PTA meeting where a policeman spoke on safety. MS 74 instituted a “Safe Haven Program” where businesses have been solicited for safety. The child would be able to go into this business if he/she feels for their safety. The child would be able to contact their parents or the business will contact the police department depending on the circumstances. Debbie would like to see this made a district-wide program. Debbie would like to contact all the schools in District 26 to discuss the Safety Haven Program. Rob suggested that Debbie should meet with Ms. Dapolito, Principal of MS 74 to see what is involved in creating this. The CDEC would help in spreading the word.

Old Business

1. Jackie asked who would be attending the Christmas Dinner.
2. Reminder – December 5th is the UFT Dinner

Rob made a motion to adjourn the Business portion of the meeting and Debbie seconded, council agreed unanimously.

Meeting adjourned at 8:25 p.m.

PUBLIC MEETING

The meeting of the Community District Education Council of District 26 (CDEC26) was called to order and chaired by Rob Caloras, President at 8:35 pm in the Conference Room 128.

Rob introduced Pete Maddaloni, Queens Borough Chairman, Custodians Union (Local 891-International Union of Operating Engineers), Matt Wilde-VP & Joe Sanfilipio to address the custodians' budget cut.

Pete outlined the budget cut:

1. 300 employees cut – full budget cut started Sept. 15, 2006-January 16, 2007. High schools are losing 1 ½ people. This is the 3rd cut since 1998. Some schools are losing full time employees and making them part time employees. Elementary & middle schools lost one full time person & made him part time.
2. Cleaning & maintenance will not be performed as frequently. Allotment for supplies will be reduced also.
3. 8 schools in Region 3 (4-District 25 & 4-District 28) will be privatized. These custodians have retired. Work will be outsourced to other companies.
4. Union would like for the CDEC to reach out to the Chancellor.

Matt Wilde outlined:

1. Schools will be cut in proportion to their size. Schools under 50,000 square feet will only be cut 2 cents per sq. ft or less than \$1,000. Larger schools will be cut 8, 10 or 11 cents per sq. ft, meaning more than \$22,000 will be trimmed off the budget for those above 200,000 sq. ft.
2. Question asked about excess money – required to spend money that is placed in the budget every year (budgetary year runs January 1 – December 31st). Problem is a lagging income. Ex: Beacon Program runs on Saturdays & some Sundays – money laid out first and reimbursement is later. When December comes sometimes the reimbursements are not received which means the schools get short-changed and this is called “lagging”. Per Matt, you cannot spend money you don't have.
3. Empowerment schools will be using their budget to pay for everything.
4. List of minimal responsibilities are in the contract of what the custodians must do each day.
5. Last manpower study done in the early 60's showing how long it would take to do each job.

Rob asked that a representative come from the Custodians Union to speak at the December 12th Empowerment forum meeting.

Ms. Dapolito, Principal, MS 74 –

1. Stated that she suffered a 4 hr cut at her school. Spoke about different things being affected (painting, minor repairs, and putting things together for some teachers).
2. Spoke about the quality of work being done when school was privatized. The custodian had to contact the main office just to get mops, cleaning products. Spoke about an employee not having clearance to work in a school setting.
3. Stated that not everything is cost effective because in the long run, things were neglected (bathrooms out of commission). Maintenance not done within in a year created more problems down the road.
4. Asking for everyone to take a stand. Feels that her custodians are part of a family who take interest in the children and take pride in their school.
5. No funding for taking care of the outside school grounds (landscaping).

Rob asked Local 891 reps would they grieve the privatization of schools and he stated they would.

Rob made a motion to send the Chancellor, Operations Rep and the Mayor a letter and Jackie seconded. The council voted unanimously to get a letter out to the Chancellor outlining their concerns and dislikes regarding the custodial budget cut and privatization. Susan suggested getting the other CDEC's to write letters also. Rob will draft a letter for the Chancellor and send it to the members to critique it.

Rob suggested proposing a resolution. Rob made a motion to pass a resolution that the CDEC is against the imposition of the latest wave of custodian cuts that are clearly as expressed by the DOE only to fund the Empowerment Zones that have nothing to do with budgetary needs of the DOE and these cuts will be hurting and preventing the custodians of our schools from doing the job that they must do to keep our schools running properly and our children will suffer and as such we resolve to do everything we can to prevent the rollback of these cuts. Jodi seconded the motion. The council voted unanimously to this resolution. (See Attachment)

Meeting ended at 9:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by Marian Mason, Administrative Assistant, CDEC 26.

Custodial Resolution

CDEC26 RESOLUTION ON CUSTODIAL BUDGET CUTS

Pursuant to New York State Education Law Section 2590-e subsection 14, Community District Education Council 26 holds public meetings every month during which the public may speak so that parents and the community have a voice and public forum to air their concerns.

Pursuant to New York State Education Law Section 2590-e subsection 18, Community District Education Council 26 is empowered to provide input, as it deems necessary, to the Chancellor and the City Board on matters of concern to the district. Under this authority, Community District Education Council 26 sets forth the following:

Whereas Schools Chancellor Joel I. Klein announced in October 2006 that the Department of Education is pursuing opportunities for greater efficiencies in facilities, transportation, and energy in order to redirect dollars to schools.

Whereas, starting in October, but retroactive to July 1, 2007 the Department will reduce custodial budgets by 3.5%. This reduction will yield more than \$10 million annually and is to be used to fund Empowerment Schools.

Whereas, since 1998, there have been two previous cuts to custodian budgets.

Whereas, this budget reduction shall lead to part-time and full-time employees on custodian staffs being fired or having their work hours reduced.

Whereas, the cleaning and maintenance responsibilities of custodian staffs will be the same after this budget and staff reduction Whereas, District 26 schools have dedicated, hard working custodians and staff members who keep our schools properly cleaned and maintained.

Whereas, this budget reduction will lead to less cleaning and maintenance work being done at District 26 schools, and a diminished custodian budget allotment for supplies at our schools.

Whereas, this budget reduction is not related to the budgetary needs of the Department of Education, rather this cut is only to provide additional funding for Empowerment schools.

Be it resolved;

We, the members of the Community District Education Council 26, declare the reduction of custodial budgets to be against the best interests of the children and students of District 26 and all New York City Public Schools. This reduction shall lead to our schools not being properly maintained for educating our children. We appeal to the Chancellor to end the implementation of this reduction and reimburse schools for any reduction already made.

DATED: JANUARY 9, 2007