

CLASS SIZE AND SCHOOL OVERCROWDING

RESOLUTION # 3-2014 – CDEC 26 REQUESTS SMALLER CLASSES AND TO STOP THE OVERCROWDING

WHEREAS smaller classes are the [number one priority of NYC parents](#) in DOE surveys every year;

WHEREAS every year since the survey has been given, class sizes have increased and in the early grades are now the largest in 15 years;

WHEREAS [most NYC principals say](#) classes should be no larger than 20 students per class in grades K-3, no larger than 23 students in grades 4-5, and no larger than 24 in all other grades in order to for them to provide a quality education.

WHEREAS In the rest of the state outside NYC class sizes [average 20 to 22 students in all grades](#),

WHEREAS NYC students with a far higher need level are expected to achieve the same standards, with class sizes as much as 50 percent larger in many schools;

WHEREAS In the Campaign for Fiscal Equity case (CFE), the state’s highest court concluded that NYC students had been denied their constitutional right to a sound basic education in large part as a result of excessive class sizes;

WHEREAS In July 2003, [a panel of educators called the Professional Judgment Panel](#) commissioned by CFE called for [class sizes](#) of no more than 14-17 students per class in elementary schools, 23 students per class in middle schools, and 18-29 students in high schools, depending on the poverty level of the school, and Carmen Farina, then Superintendent of District 15, was a member of this panel;

WHEREAS In 2007, a new state law called the Contracts for Excellence (C4E) was passed in response to the CFE decision, requiring NYC to enact a plan to reduce class size in all grades;

WHEREAS The city’s C4E [plan, approved in 2007 called for the city to lower class sizes](#) to an average of no more than 20 students per class in grades K-3, 23 students per class in grades 4-8 and 25 in core high school classes over five years;

WHEREAS the previous administration allowed class sizes to increase instead, and reach levels the [NY Supreme Court found to be unconstitutional](#);

WHEREAS Mayor de Blasio campaigned on a promise that he would [achieve specific class size reduction goals](#) by the end of first term and if necessary, raise revenue to fund this;

WHEREAS during his campaign, de Blasio also pledged that he would [comply with the plan](#) the city submitted in 2007, calling for class size reduction in all grades to the levels mentioned above;

WHEREAS according to the C4E law, NYC was supposed to align its capital plan with its class size reduction plan, but this has never occurred;

WHEREAS three recent reports from [Class Size Matters](#), the [Independent Budget Office](#), and the [City Comptroller](#), reveal the increased overcrowding in our schools and the apparent lack of focused efforts on the part of DOE to address this critical problem;

BE IT RESOLVED that In order to fulfill the mayor's promises and the needs of our children, **CEC 26** urges the Chancellor to put forward aggressive yet reasonable annual targets for class size reduction, allot a significant share of the [\\$644 million in the city's C4E funds](#) specifically towards achieving those goals and provide sufficient oversight to see that schools use these funds appropriately.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Chancellor should immediately re-install the early grade class size funds that the DOE eliminated in 2010, and restore the class size limits of 28 in grades 1-3 eliminated in 2011;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Chancellor and our representatives on the City Council should expand **the new proposed five year capital plan to at least 100,000 new seats**, because as presently constituted it includes insufficient new capacity to alleviate current school overcrowding, reduce class size and/or address projected enrollment growth;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that that the Mayor heed the decision of the state's highest court, listen to parents, educators, and what research shows, and follow through with his promises to NYC voters by reducing class size;

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED that our children deserve to receive their right to a quality education, and this needs to happen now.

PASSED and ADOPTED this 23rd Day of September, 2014 by vote of the Council Members present at the public meeting (6 in favor - 0 abstention - 0 not in favor).

RESOLUTION APPROVED AND ADOPTED BY DISTRICT 26 CDEC