**Joint Meeting Minutes**

**Community District Education Council 26 (CEC26)**

**President Council District 26 (PCD26)**

**New York City Department of Education**

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*Council Members:* **J Danielle Giunta h Chin**

**Alan Ong Michelle Liu Tanweer Ansari Community Superintendent**

**Dilip Nath David Wong District 26**

**John Gavros**  **Shengchao Yu**

**Karen Rose Scutt Adriana Aviles**  **Website: www.cdec26.org**

**January 31, 2019**

**Calendar Meeting- 7:00 PM**

**Meeting called to Order and Roll Call at 7:05 PM by Alan Ong.**

**Present**:  Alan Ong (President), Karen Rose Scutt, Shengchao Yu, David Wong ,John Gavros, Michelle Liu, Shajid Ali Muhammad, Adriana Aviles, Roy Menendez , Linda Lovett and Cathy Grodsky

**Absent**: Dilip Nath (excused-work-related issue), Shernette Walters, Renee Cosides, Claudia Goodson and Alicia Wehner  
**Also Present**:  Superintendent Danielle Giunta, Dr. Tara Davidson, Kimberly D’Angelo District 26 Family Leadership Coordinator, Wendy Mo and Farjana Faruk.

1. Superintendent’s Report-

* Superintendent Giunta welcomed D26 community. She also introduced Ms. Wendy Mo , newly appointed Family Coordinator for D26
* Introducing Executive Superintendent Lawrence Pendergast.
* She shared information about early childhood education.

1. Welcome by President Council District 26 President Cathy Grodsky. CEC Alan Ong provided guidelines and rules on the town hall to listen to every members of the community.
2. SHSAT Admission Criteria Changes Presentation- Sarah Kleinhandler and Nadya Chadha (Please see addendum A).

* Public Comments/ Questions-

1. **State Assembly Member Ed Braunstein-** I am very proud to represent District 26 and volunteer like yourselves are very involved parents are the reason we are very successful in District 26. We have strong disagreement with the proposal but we do work together on many other issues and I truly appreciate them attending and presenting tonight. Last year when Mayor Office proposed the proposal, I was the first one putting out statement opposing it. The city specialized HS are only few of them. They are objective and predictive measure on science, engineering computer, math and technology. They are predictive and objective measure which will determine which students are most likely to succeed. I think it’s fair and objective. I will continue to work with my colleague to reject this plan which does not improve the specialized HS. I do share many of people concerns with lack of representation with black and Latino community. I do want together with people who wants to change it. One proposal is increasing test prep particularly quality test prep access to students. We also want to increase the amount of specialized HS. I stand with you and colleagues to reject the proposal in the future as well.
2. **Councilman Peter Koo**- I strongly support Specialized HS and support the test. Test and system of test has been used for a long time. All professional jobs have a type of test to determine and you have to prepare for each certification and exams. They mayor proposal presents us with a socialist and communist system. The top students in some High School cannot get into top colleges because school varies from community to community. Every student is self-inspired. Why do we have G&T program and prepare only limited students? Why not prepare all students at the same level?
3. **State Senator Toby Stavisky-** I support diversity and I support the SHSAT exam. We should have both. The problem is not with the test. The problem is a lack of student preparedness, especially in the early grades. I speak tonight as a graduate of the Bronx High School of Science, and the parent of a Science graduate. In addition, I taught at Brooklyn Tech. Unfortunately, neither the Mayor nor the Chancellor met with the parents, the CEC, local community leaders or elected officials. I was notified on a Saturday morning in April two hours prior to the Mayor’s announcement. It would have been preferable to work together. It’s not too late. There are several things the Mayor and Chancellor can do to improve diversity. Our gifted and talented programs prove to be an effective way of challenging young people. By recognizing more students at an early age, they would be prepared for high schools. Instead of parents “opting in” for children to be tested before entering third grade, I introduced legislation to make the test automatic unless the parents “opts out”. In addition, gifted and talented program should be offered in all 32 school districts. The DREAM specialized high school institute, created by DOE prepares middle school children for the exams-in a very limited way. There are two programs, one after school and one during summer and fall, prior to the exam in only 20 locations. There were approximately 607 seats last year. A second program, the SHSAT school day imitative can be found in 50 middle schools. Both of these programs must be expanded to all school districts for all students who are eligible, considering the fact that more than 28,00 middle school students apply for approximately ,5, 700 seats. This can be done without eliminating the SHSAT. Another suggestion is to improve outreach to economically and racially undeserved communities. Many parents are not aware that these schools exist because they do not have access to information on these programs. In addition, we should provide test preparation for all sixth grade students, as well as practice SHSATs. People scrimp and save so they can send their children to test preparation classes. I believe the City should do this free of charge. Lastly, we should establish more specialized high school. I believe we must keep the test because the computer grading the SHSAT exam does not recognize race, gender, religion or ethnicity. It is still the most objective method to determine admission. The solution is to improve K-8, identifying youngsters at an early age and providing resources. There are no quick fixes. The highest poverty rate in NYC is the Asian Community.
4. **City Council Member Barry Grodenchik-** We have excellent schools and it’s not because of chances but by hard work by principal, district, students and parents. Every single school is important in the whole NYC and we should treat every school should be treated as important school. In order for students from District 26 to attend Stuyvesant, the commute is very long. We only have one specialized school in Queens and located in the 2nd floor a building with 400 students. We need to expand specialized HS in queens and spend $17.5 billion to improve and expand our schools across NYC. We need to find a solution for children spending 1.5 hours traveling to each school. We want to ensure every child in the city to have the best education.
5. **Representative from Senator John Liu- Lisa DellAquila-** We appreciate DOE presenting however, this presentation is nothing new. Senator Liu statement is the policy is ill unconceived and misdirected and will not result in better education. He voiced his opposition to Chancellor and Mayor.
6. **Assembly Member Ron Kim-** Assembly member Ron Kim representative stated that they do not see eye to eye with the policy that the Mayor proposed. The mayor proposed the changes over night without taking any input from the communities or reaching out to members of the communities prior to the proposal.
7. **John Gavros-** As alumni of the Specialized HS, something has been bothering me about the proposal. You mentioned that 7% of students from all middle schools but every single middle school is so different.Why not aggregate top 7% from all students in NYC rather than by individual schools.
8. **Cathy Grodsky-** Question about result coming out this year- will the process be delayed this year and the notification of it? Answer- There will be no delay and will come out in March even though lawsuit for discovery program is still in court.
9. **David Wong-** I do believe that we need to expand Queens HS of Science. Secondly is this proposal it is engineering and I went to Brooklyn tech and we took the test, it was fair. The mayor is engineering to make the school what they want the school to look like.
10. **Shajid Ali Muhammad-** parents in our district work hard and the mayor is penalizing students and families for working hard. It is not fair to penalize one community to lift up another community. We need to provide accessibility and tools for all student succeeds.
11. **Karen Rose Scutt-** I do not support the same old test to determine eligibility but due to lack of transparency, community outreach and flawed proposal, you need to go back to the drawing board and reassess the proposals.
12. How DOE believes that lowering standard in the specialized HS will benefit everyone?
13. Robert Foster - I’m speaking to you tonight as a parent and a retired teacher. There are serious problems with this proposa1.The SHSAT is a good test. It is not and has never been racist – it only cares if you are smart enough to make the grade. It's so good that elite private high schools in the city use it of their own choice to offer admissions to some students solely on the basis of their excellent test score. There's nothing wrong with the test, nothing needs to change, and it doesn't need to be eliminated. (2)The Discovery Program proposal will hurt the students it tries to help. Academic requirements at the specialized high schools are very demanding, as we heard tonight from Ethan [9th grade Sty speaker earlier that evening]. Letting in UN-qualified students, and the Discovery Program students are unqualified or they wouldn't need to be in that program to get a seat, means these students will have a much harder time in their classes than their peers who passed the SHSAT. Put yourself in that student's shoes - it's hard enough to motivate yourself to work hard to keep up, but when you have the self-doubt that you're not good enough and you don't belong there in the first place, that's really damaging psychologically. (3). Unqualified students disrupt the classroom leading to bad experiences for all. I have taught for many years and one of the worst situations I faced as a teacher was when a student had fallen behind and became hopelessly lost. They couldn't learn any more unless the whole class slowed WAY down, a disservice to all those qualified students and their education. Far better is to let people learn with similarly capable peers. This is the best way for the students and the teacher to have a successful learning environment where everyone can progress. (4) Letting in primarily unqualified minority students encourages racism. In a specialized school now, everyone knows they deserve to be there since they all passed the test. If most of the under-represented minorities are part of the Discovery Program, their classmates will begin to think those minorities aren't as smart or qualified since the ones they see at school aren't as good, having been admitted with lower standards. We don't want to make racists out of the next generation of our students, the college admissions departments who will review their applications, or their future employers by setting up a system where the under-represented minorities at these high schools are systematically less qualified than their peers.
14. Laxmi Ernest - What stops a poor performing school from giving a 100% average to get their kids in?
15. George Wu- A few weeks ago, we celebrated the legacy of MLK who said that he hoped that children will be judged by the color of their skin but by the content of their character. Which program or policy reflects more the vision of MLK where the children of NY are judged by the content of their character in an unbiased manner and by their own hard work?
16. If no changes in GPA or exam scores before and after proposal, doesn’t this mean these aren’t good predictors of meeting to high standards of SHSAT and specialized high school?
17. Judy- why can’t more new specialized high school in each borough be established using DeBlasio’ S plan and compare that to the current system? Why limit the pie? Expand the number of seats so everyone can win.
18. Grace Song- The proposal will do nothing to improve the education but divide our communities into ethnic groups.
19. Keep SHSAT because it is good system to have quality control. Exam is open to public. It is not culture biased and only good for students who work hard and get prepared. There is nothing wrong with the exam, but something wrong with people. When some students do well, we should not remove it but we should get more funding to create free tutoring program. 7% proposal penalizes good kids in good school. I do not want racial quota and we want fair admission.
20. Laura Ng.- The new proposal is taking away opportunities from children who has worked hard throughout their life who have giving up free play time to focus on doing well and attending a specialized high school. If a child is not able to do well in test, how would they do well in a specialized HS?
21. As a queens resident parent, I would welcome a proposal to expands seats in specialized high school to provide accessibility to more students.
22. Can you clarify on the lottery process? Is it based on luck that children will be admitted to schools after the initial acceptance?
23. Sandy Ho- The specialized High School are for the elite. Why does DOE feel that it needs to represent the population in NYC?
24. Amy Tse- Why does the DOE feel lowering standards and admission bar for specialized high school will help raise the level of education of the students they hope to help?
25. Can you confirm as to how long the DREAM program will be available since criteria will change for admission in 2 years?
26. What are the DOE plans to support Specialized HS to handle change in student population needs such as handling more SWDS and ENL students? Will we have a “team teaching/ENL AP English Class”?
27. Benjamin Cardozo used to be a better school before students from Jamaica HS were integrated. I do not want the same thing to happen to specialized HS.
28. Janet Chen- the proposal is against the law if DOE expands the discovery program in summer 2019 without approving by the NYS Legislature.
29. Jamila-Sofia- In years one and two, will the 3% and 5% of kids be given offers before the test? If not, what about over tap? What if an offer to a 3%-5% kids is declined?
30. Specialized HS is not the problem. City should fix K-8 education system. If top 7%, goes to specialize HS where do you put the extra students from D26?
31. Is there a geographic quota based on school district? How does school ranking impact selection/admission?
32. Phil Wong- I spoke with NYS Education Committee and that we have diversity people but it’s not diversity but disappropriation people. We keep saying that all Asian are the same but that is not true. We have Vietnams, Bengalis, Malaysians and Indians.
33. Victor Quan- There are 4,000 seats in Specialized HS. With my election and the mayor proposal, the seat will only increase additional 280 seats for black and Hispanic population in Specialized HS with the changes. What about 770,000 students so it doesn’t make sense that to increase only 280 seats for black and Hispanic population with the new criteria takes away opportunities from 770,000 students to even have hope to apply for a seat and work harder.
34. Figure out another solution to increase diversity.
35. Ethan Lam- I am freshman at Stuyvesant HS. I do not agree with the mayor plan and if you take a look at your data, that students that are receiving 3 in the state exam can have an opportunity to attend Stuyvesant HS but attending Stuyvesant, I understand that if you do not receive 4 and up, it will be difficult for you to succeed at Stuyvesant due to rigorous classwork and homework. You need to be adaptable to the work quick and fast.
36. Angela – The proposal is very deceitful. Discovery Program has existed and has 65% Asian Students so it will not change anything but the proposal will automatically eliminate 85% Asian population in the Specialized HS with the new program. Just by attending Specialized HS, we can’t prevent African American students from joining gangs or Latino community from selling drugs. It’s a social problem and we need to work on the social issue.
37. The proposal pits Asian community against every other community. Can you breakdown the ethnic groups in Specialized HS.
38. You mentioned that students will be attending Specialized HS with different academic level.

DOE Nadya Chadha- Different schools have different / it’s that 7% of one school might be different from 7% of another schools. Within a school, it is identify top performer.

1. Serena Tang- Competition brings out the best of us. This test makes our children more competitive.
2. We do not racial quota and we want a fair process.
3. Pan Zout- SHSAT is a race blind fair test.
4. Cheng Wan- As a mother what I would say to my child – look at the new proposal that they want to reduce Asian population from 50% to 30% in the school District 26 which is more than 50% of students. Unfortunately, because you were born in a different race, even though you worked hard, you have to give up your seats to someone who is not deserving. You are fooling the public that getting A from Harvard is the same as getting A from Queens Borough Community College is the same. Queens in most culturally diverse in the world, are we turning the history back 100 years ago when we discriminate one race over another?
5. The problem with the proposal is you proposed the proposal before engaging the community. The proposal is racial profiling and racial balancing which is not what our city is about. You need to reconsider the proposal and take the opinion from the community and resubmit the proposal.
6. Karen Wang- I am an alumni of Specialized HS and I didn’t take any test prep but studied on my own while my parents were working in a factory. Majority of the children in Specialized HS are children from immigrant family who are eligible for free lunch. Stuyvesant was different from my Junior HS. Kids were worried about grades and competing to achieve higher grades. It was a like a minded community which makes it truly special. Teachers were not special but we worked hard together. Let’s make our low performing school better. Let’s not lower the bar for the specialized HS as the mayor is proposing. We shouldn’t lower the standard to come back to community and say that we improved the education but by lowering the standard.
7. I studied hard to attend the schools without any prep. It’s unfair that we will be forcing students to Specialized HS when they are not ready for the competitiveness which exists in the schools. You are setting up children for four years of misery and failure if they are not prepared to compete.
8. **Alan Ong-** it sickens me that it has torn the city apart. We in District 26 are against the proposal. There has been changes to scramble paragraph which have been remove and multiple choice question has also changed. We also added 30 minute to the exam. It’s almost level playing field and we need to look at every child and make sure that every child is ready and prepare for quality education.
9. Alan Ong mentioned about upcoming CEC election and parents applying to be part of CEC member.
10. D26 Family Leadership Coordinator Kimberly D’Angelo shared information regarding upcoming Parent Workshop.

John Gavros motioned to adjourn meeting. Motion passed unanimously. Meeting Adjourned at 9:40 PM.

**January 31, 2019**

**Calendar Meeting- 7:00 PM**

**Meeting called to Order and Roll Call at 7:05 PM by Alan Ong.**

**Present**:  Alan Ong (President), Karen Rose Scutt, Shengchao Yu, David Wong ,John Gavros, Michelle Liu, Shajid Ali Muhammad, Adriana Aviles, Roy Menendez , Linda Lovett and Cathy Grodsky

**Absent**: Dilip Nath (excused-work-related issue), Shernette Walters, Renee Cosides, Claudia Goodson and Alicia Wehner  
**Also Present**:  Superintendent Danielle Giunta, Dr. Tara Davidson, Kimberly D’Angelo District 26 Family Leadership Coordinator, Wendy Mo and Farjana Faruk.

1. Meeting was called to order by Alan Ong 9:30 PM.
2. Motion was made by John Gavros for approval of December 20, 2018 minutes. Motion was approved unanimously.
3. David Wong shared information about balance in the budget and reviewed. Council approved budget unanimously.
4. Council also voted on purchasing microphone of $625.00. Motioned to approve by Alan Ong and passed unanimously.
5. President Report- **Language Survey-**please complete it.
6. District Spotlight School visit
7. District 26 students learning lion dancing as it’s dying out and I would like to make myself available to teach students in D26.
8. We have new DSF representative.

Adjournment: Alan Ong made a motion to adjourn. John Gavros seconded the motion.  All in favor. The meeting adjourned at 10:15 PM.

Absent: Dilip Nath notified Alan Ong and AA that he is unable to attend due to work related issues.

Addendum A-