

Minutes for the CEC District 15 Meeting
WORKING SESSION MEETING

Date: Tuesday, October 6, 2009

1- Call to order 6:15pm: Theresa Lantigua

Members Present: Theresa Lantigua, James Devor, Valerie Price Ervin, Liz Rosenberg, Amy Sirot, Alisa Yalan-Murphy, Mark Kolman, Ken Kramer, David Stutt, Janna Turoff, Janet Williams.

Additional Participants: Anita Scop, Acting Community Superintendent in District 15, Romaine Smith.

Approval of Minutes: Minutes of September 1, 2009 meeting were **APPROVED** as written.

2- Presidents Report- Jim Devor

- Motioned to Amend the Agenda: to designate a second person to DLT - District Leadership Team.

-Information on DLT: Meetings are held once a month. Developing the Comprehensive Education Plan is the primary function of the DLT. DLTs provide support, guidance, technical assistance and assist in conflict resolution to the SLTs in their districts.

-After discussion, the body agreed to designate Valerie as the second DLT member and Mark as the Alternate to the DLT.

DOE ISSUES:

City Council Hearing on Implementation of School Governance amendments to Education Law.

- No Chancellor nor Deputy Chancellor – The DOE's contempt for the Council and its intent to change District governance as little as conceivably possible was evident.

For example:

-Parent Academy – No steps to comply with the new provisions for the creation and facilitation of the Parent Academies allegedly because the State had not yet allocated the money. This is a clear breach of the City's promise when the “Chapter Amendments” were negotiated and passed.

- District Superintendents’ - There has been no written description of the District Superintendents’ revised job duties because, after meetings held with the Superintendents, it was unnecessary to put such changes in writing (!). (Curiously, the next day, a job description was drafted and sent) Moreover, it was stated by DOE that the roles of District Superintendents as Senior Achievement Facilitators outside of their Districts were so complex, it would take a whole year to fully wind those responsibilities down to the extent that that the DOE could completely comply with the mandate that District Superintendents predominantly serve within their Districts.

-PAVE and PS 15 hearing–

- It is the President's belief that changes in school utilization such as an increase of 1/3 in the allocation of space within a school (as is what has been proposed by DOE for PAVE in PS 15), constitutes “a significant change in school utilization” requiring an “Educational Impact Statement” and a public hearing process plus a vote by the Panel for Educational Policy (as

required under the recent revisions of the Education Law)..A **resolution** should be passed by CEC-15 calling upon the DOE to follow the law (including the public hearing process). This position was presented at the most recent DLT meeting and the UFT representative seemed especially supportive

- At a constituent meeting held by Daniel Squadron, the Senator acknowledged that the DOEs failure to adequately anticipate the rise of student populations, demonstrates a serious failure by the School Construction Authority.

3- **Superintendent's Report – Ms. Anita Skop**

-School Report Card – only one school in the entire district received a B. To that end, it was accepted that the tests were easier this year. **State defined standard:** children performing at a **level 3** is considered passing; **level 4** is considered above standard. By June of the next 4 years, all children will at a level 3. Tests may become harder and more rigorous. 95 percent of children must take the test. Some children do not show up for the test.

-Progress Report: Schools have made astonishing progress.

-Quality Review Scores: Schools that received an A will not be getting a quality review.

Only two schools that are eligible for review are MS 442 and PS 38.

Jim Devor asked about testing with modifications.

Anita Skop-Parents getting doctors orders for additional modifications (anxiety, panic) must have 504C, a modification. The school is legally bound to provide for the child's modification. 1-Most common is legally called time-and-a-half or double time. 2-Separate location- in a small room (not in a classroom) in small groups of 4 or 5, where there is less distraction. Some other modifications are children who have scribes. On math tests, children can have translators.

Mark Kolman asked if charter schools are part of this testing with modifications?

-Anita Skop- "Sometimes, testing is a way of life....Charter schools must now take special needs and problematic children."

-Attended Planning Meeting- Joint session – District 13/15 – revisiting 133.

It is a real concern if it went along with the original structure and plan of two schools, one building, and two entrances under different districts. If the original plan were followed, it would be a segregated school. District 13 is mostly African American, District 15 is primarily Caucasian. They are now rethinking and making it one school.

Jim Devor: District 13 was the one who wanted a separate school. Keep 133 as a District 13 School. Arts and Letters is a prime example of a working shared school model.

Anita Skop: We are in dire need of elementary seats, there is overcrowding in kindergarten.

-DLT Meeting Rescheduled

-Mark Kolman articulated that he was interested in the DLT position.

4. **Debriefing of Public School 15 Calendar meeting - Theresa Lantigua**

Theresa gives the Chair to Jim Devor

-“It was a difficult and passionate meeting.” As our first meeting, it came off as unprofessional, and the Council was not united. There were negative and abusive phone calls from parents about the tone and conduct of the meeting and the members. There should be a protocol when we are in front of an audience and in front of the media. The council should be a united front.

David Stutt: Articulated that the tone and representation of the council at the meeting was less than professional, and attempted calm the audience by stating that Jim's views were his own, and not representative of the council as a whole.

Liz Rosenberg: In the future we the council should set the tone of the speech, and define the CEC.

Janna Turoff: How to structure a conversation to be helpful.

Ken Kramer: "We need to come off as a united front."

Janet Williams has the floor.

Janet: Parents are looking at CEC as a team.

Jim gives Theresa back the Chair.

Jim Devor: It was a good meeting despite conflict. The perception was they thought it was an ambush and a set-up and they reacted. Spencer Robinson got all of his time to speak – fair opportunity to speak. It is within his partnership to be fair. Feels good came out of meeting. A lot of listening.

Liz Rosenberg: "How do we follow up with Office of Portfolio to find out what is happening?"

Anita Skop: Will bring Courtney here to the CEC to talk.

Jim Devor: Proposal of Resolution- If the resolution passes and DLT passes it, that change is set under law. TWEED listens when people make noise – Power by Parents.

Janet Williams: "Where is the anger targeted?" "Was it parents against parents or was it targeted elsewhere?"

5. School Visits- David Stutt

PS 321: On Sept 18, 2009 met with Liz Phillips, Principal, and Rachel Fine, Co-Pres PTA. For FY 2009 (usually allocated in summer/fall 2008 for school year '08-'09) 321 applied for \$200K Sec 254 Reso A Funding Allocation to "Construct a Permanent Wall between Auditorium and Gym." Per the CEC this was approved by SCA in 2008. They ask that we follow-up on this.

PS 172: On Sept 26, 2009 met with Jack Spatola, Principal. 172 submitted a "Playground Proposal" to the SCA's 2010-2014 Five Year Capital Plan. They ask that we try to help get this approved. They would, also, like to host a CEC meeting in the future.

MS 443: On Oct 1, 2009 met with Frank Giordano. Would like our help in securing funding for Playground Equipment, and to reopen the door to their yard which was bricked over some time ago. Frank would like to host our MS Principal Forum again.

-Put on our agenda K-2 testing- strongly disagree

Anita Skop: On K-2 testing: Pilots are running on K-2 testing. The idea is to catch student needs early. To have children sitting in classrooms where they are not challenged is a waste also.

-Janna Turoff- We are interested in healthier foods, added value. Make District 15 a pilot district for new food issues. Will meet with 295 people this week.

-Liz Rosenberg proposes that a committee is formed "Wellness and Sustainability" – voted on. Janet, Janna, Amy, Alisa will form this new committee.

6. Middle School Forum: Invited Middle School Parents and Principals

-Email invitations

-Statement: one size does not fit all. If the school has a physical space they must be accommodated.

7. Plan for November 19th Meeting:

Capital Plan: schools come to meeting. School Construction Authority will be at meeting.

Advise the schools: three plan reports: mechanical, electrical and physical. Questions: What do you need? What are your highest priorities?

November 3rd Business Meeting:

-Liz Rosenberg proposes discussion about goals and interests. Could talk about resolution A (money for schools).

-Report in K-2 assessment.

**8. Move to adjourn – Theresa Lantigua
Meeting adjourned at 8:41PM.**

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Submitted by Alisa Yalan-Murphy, Secretary, CEC 15