



LINDA B. ROSENTHAL
Assemblymember 67th District

THE ASSEMBLY
STATE OF NEW YORK
ALBANY

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Committee on Alcoholism & Drug Abuse

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Task Force on Women's Issues
Legislative Women's Caucus

February 4, 2020

Richard A. Carranza
Chancellor
New York City Department of Education
52 Chambers Street
New York, NY 10007

Dear Chancellor Carranza:

I am writing to request an explanation for the lack of formal action taken by the New York City Department of Education (DOE) in response to the use of racially charged and insensitive language to describe Asian Americans by Brooklyn Community Education Council (CEC) 22 member Jackie Cody in the Education Council Consortium listserv.

Though Ms. Cody used this derogatory language in September of 2019, I am unaware of any action the DOE has taken since then in response. Some members of CEC3 in Manhattan, who represent the schools in my district, were so dismayed by the lack of official action, that they recently proposed a resolution, which was adopted, condemning the situation. The DOE must uphold a zero-tolerance policy for racist language and actions used by elected representatives, and there must be established protocols in place, such as required diversity training, when situations like this arise.

New York City is home to the most diverse school population in the country. In the district that I represent and system-wide, there are children, parents, and CEC Board Members of color from all backgrounds. They were rightfully shaken by this situation and are looking to the DOE for leadership.

While Ms. Cody's comments cannot be taken back, the incident creates an opportunity for the DOE to work hand in hand with CEC members citywide to foster a more respectful and inclusive community. The DOE and the CEC should collaborate to create a uniform Code of Conduct for all districts to abide by - to ensure that elected parent representatives are upholding the standards of leadership that are expected by their communities.

In addition, the DOE should require leadership and cultural competency training for all parents who are elected to represent their districts. Fostering an educational culture of acceptance, respect, and understanding should be a common goal of students, teachers, administrators, and parents alike.

Thank you. I look forward to your response.

Sincerely,

Linda B. Rosenthal
Member of Assembly – 67 AD
Chair, Committee on Alcoholism and Drug Abuse