



COMMUNITY EDUCATION COUNCIL DISTRICT 3

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District 3 Community Superintendent

Resolution:

Mayoral Control and School Governance

June 4, 2008

The NY State Legislature By Chapter 91 of the Laws of 2002, Education Law 2590, significantly restructured the governance of New York City Public Schools, effective June 30, 2003, giving the Mayor and the Chancellor greater authority over the school system. This law is to sunset on June 30, 2009 unless amended or continued by the legislature.

So that legislators will be informed of the effects of the restructuring on children, parents and the general community in District 3, CDEC3 held a hearing on April 16, 2008, at PS 185, where the public was invited to testify and comment about their experiences under mayoral control.

The following resolution was developed based on information gathered from surveys and comments presented at the hearing held by CDEC 3 on "School Governance And Mayoral Control" as well as verbally related experiences of parents and community members.

Whereas, under mayoral control, the system of admissions and choice in Community School District 3, that was working well to meet the needs of the community, has been replaced with a centralized system that causes numerous problems, especially with school choice and admissions for children and parents, and

Whereas, under mayoral control, the fair funding system that has been established has not been transparent and has a strong potential for destabilizing some schools; and

Whereas, under mayoral control, mid-year budget cuts, made with no prior notice and consultation, negatively impacted our schools; and

Whereas, under mayoral control, parents and the community strongly state that their concerns are not taken into consideration when the NYC Department of Education (DOE) makes policy decisions; and

Whereas, under mayoral control, test preparation and excessive testing have replaced creative curriculum and educating the whole child; and

Whereas, under mayoral control, the DOE has manipulated data, such as the drop-out rate, to get the appearance of success at the expense of accountability; and

Whereas, under mayoral control, the increase of charter schools in Community School District 3, and the manner in which charter schools have been sited, have resulted in increased crowding, and loss of educational resources and opportunities for some students; and

Whereas, under mayoral control, the number of senior managers at the DOE with education backgrounds has dropped to unacceptably low levels; now be it therefore,

Resolved, that the CDEC 3 strongly recommends that Chapter 91 of the Laws of 2002, Education Law 2590, (The Law) that restructured school governance to give the Mayor of the City of New York control over New York City Schools, be significantly amended, and be it further

Resolved, that CDEC 3 recommends that The Law be amended to put in place strong checks and balances that are enforced to assure transparency and accountability to the public; and be it further

Resolved, that CDEC 3 recommends that The Law be amended to provide for the appointment of all the members of the Panel for Educational Policy to a fixed term, with no limits to the terms they may be appointed; that eligibility for members not be limited to only parents of children currently in public schools; and that the majority of members not be appointed by the Mayor, with the Mayor having the power to appoint the Chancellor; and be it further

Resolved, that CDEC 3 recommends that The Law be amended to provide for the members of the District Community Education Councils to be elected through public elections, with all community members registered to vote being allowed to elect all members, except for two appointed by the Borough Presidents, with a majority of the members elected being parents of children in the public schools at the time of election; and be it further

Resolved, that CDEC 3 recommends that The Law be amended to empower District Community Education Councils to establish educational policy in their districts, in coordination with the District Superintendent and staff; and be it further

Resolved, that CDEC 3 recommends that The Law, as set forth originally, clearly define the role of the District Superintendent to assure his/her responsibility to hire and evaluate principals, assistant principals and other district office staff within the boundaries of the respective school district, so as to honor the integrity of the functions of the local school district; and be it further

Resolved, that the District 3 recommends that The Law be amended to provide for independent oversight to increase transparency and accountability of the school funding process; and be it further,

Resolved, that CDEC 3 recommends that The Law be amended to provide that either the Chancellor or his/her Deputy for Teaching and Learning must be an educator; and be it further

Resolved, that The Law fully reflect that the Chancellor is to be the voice and advocate for New York City Public Schools' students and families and communities, and not the voice and advocate of the Mayor.