



COMMUNITY DISTRICT EDUCATION COUNCIL 3

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I.A. District 3 Community Superintendent

Resolution Vol. 12 P No. 7

CEC3 RESOLUTION:

THE DISTRICT 3 COMMUNITY EDUCATION COUNCIL DEMANDS NYC DOE ABANDON ITS "TURNAROUND PLAN" AND GIVE MEANINGFUL SUPPORT TO STRUGGLING SCHOOLS

Approved at the April 4, 2012 CEC3 Calendar Meeting

by a Vote of the 9 Members Present (6 In Favor/0 Opposed/3 Abstained)

Council Members In Favor: Annechino, Ballard, Frey, Gotbaum, Rengier, and Simpson

Council Members Abstained: Deen, Fiordaliso and Goodridge

WHEREAS, on January 12, 2012, Mayor Bloomberg announced that New York City would take "immediate action" to implement a "school turnaround program" and Chancellor Walcott submitted to NYSED a letter of intent to amend NYC DOE's School Improvement Grant (SIG) application;

WHEREAS, the initial SIG application submitted in July 2011 was for \$65 million in funding over the next two years, to be distributed among 44 PLA schools, 11 of which were scheduled to phase out, and 33 (including 25 high schools) were slated for or were already undergoing "restart" or "transformation" under the federal school improvement guidelines; and

WHEREAS, the "turnaround" strategy of school improvement relies primarily on (i) replacing 50% of the teachers; (ii) replacing principals who have been in place more than three years; and (iii) changing the school's name and DBN number; and

WHEREAS, NYC DOE has issued Proposals for Significant Changes in School Utilization and Educational Impact Statements (EIS) for all 25 high schools that will, upon approval by the PEP at its April 26, 2012 meeting (an approval that is a foregone conclusion), essentially "erase" 25 high schools, including high schools with a proud history of achievement and neighborhood connections; and

WHEREAS, in hearings and meetings held subsequently it has become clear that NYCDOE's sudden shift in school improvement strategy will de-stabilize thousands of students in primarily large, comprehensive high schools, and —by mandating the replacement of teachers and principals according to rigid and fundamentally arbitrary criteria—will have the perverse effect of penalizing the very people who have made significant improvements in several of the high schools now subject to "turnaround"; and

WHEREAS, NYCDOE has put forth no evidence that the "turnaround" strategy has actually improved educational outcomes for any school, let alone a number of schools sufficient to justify the massive disruption and dislocation involved; and

WHEREAS, NYCDOE has claimed that it was “forced” to adopt the turnaround model because restart and transformation “are no longer available” to NYC but has pointed to no federal or state law or regulation that in fact prevents NYCDOE from continuing with the restart and transformation models if it so chooses; and

WHEREAS, NYCDOE has further claimed that millions (variously, \$65 or \$58, spread over two years) in federal dollars are at stake, but has failed to acknowledge that (i) it is not certain that the “new” schools that will open as replacements will in fact receive the suspended SIG funding; and (ii) to the extent teachers who are “replaced” are put into the ATR pool, the costs to the city will ultimately dwarf any federal or state grants received (for all 1800 “replacement” positions at the 33 schools, the cost is estimated to be almost \$180 million per year);

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the District 3 Community Education Council condemns DOE’s “turnaround” plan as hastily conceived, irrationally formulated, arbitrarily implemented and not reasonably calculated to improve educational outcomes for the thousands of students affected. The District 3 Community Education Council calls on DOE to:

- 1) withdraw all Proposals for Significant Changes in School Utilization and EISs that involve a shift from transformation or restart models already underway; and
- 2) conduct school-by-school reviews of its current school improvement strategies (transformation and restart) to assess which measures and programs have been effective or are showing promise in raising student achievement and improving the school environment; these reviews shall be conducted in a transparent manner, and include all stakeholders-- administrators, teachers, staff, students and parents; and
- 3) determine for each school whether it is appropriate to continue or adjust the interventions put in place under restart or transformation, bearing in mind that both improvement strategies contemplate multi-year plans and that none of the 25 high schools have exceeded the time allowed under the federal guidelines; and
- 4) ensure that all struggling high schools, whether or not they are undergoing federally-specified reform plans, are given adequate support so that the students can not only graduate but receive the kind of education that will enrich their lives and prepare them for the future.