



President: NeQuan C. McLean
Vice President: Victor Iroh
Record Secretary/B.P Appointee: Tanya St. Julien
Treasurer: Tonya Channell
Borough President Appointee: Ralph Yozzo

Council Member: Barnabas Uba Shakur
Council Member: Marta Torres
Council Member: Gwendolyn Moore
Council Member: Natasha Seaton

November 16, 2018

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

Dear Chancellor Carranza,

On Wednesday, November 14th, earnest and dedicated parents and community members of District 16, attended our Community Education Council meeting to learn more about G&T enrollment data, Specialized High School (SHS) info and C4E funding. Despite open school night and a plethora of other good and important meetings or events, they chose to be at this meeting in order to get information that they need to make decisions to support their children and our schools in a community that has been historically underserved.

Unfortunately, our council, parents and community members all felt an assault of disrespect as the OSE and the C4E presentations offered little explanation and fell short of fairly basic expectations.

OSE

Our council requested information from the Office of Student Enrollment (OSE) on October 16. Based on our initial conversation, we believed that the head of OSE, Sarah Kleinhandler, would come prepared with answers to our questions about G&T and SHS. However, Ms. Kleinhandler did not attend and did not notify us in advance. Instead, two other representatives (Nadiya Chadha, who was expected to accompany Ms. Kleinhandler, and another person who chose not to sign in) presented the information. Brandon Bloomfield from Intergovernmental Affairs was also present. The majority of the meeting focused on the Specialized High School proposal, which was not the central point of our request for this presentation. And they couldn't even answer those questions!

A few of these questions are sampled below:

1. How recent is the D16 income data in the SHS presentation? Who is included?
2. Why is the admin power of the mayor and chancellor not being used to advance changes in the 5 schools not held under the law?
3. What is the DOE and mayor doing to retain students and create culturally responsive curricula and agendas for all schools?
 - a. Ms. Chadha's response was that LaShawn Robinson is leading this work and that the School Diversity Advisory Group is developing these recommendations.
4. Where is the data on middle school G&T programs?
 - a. Enrollment representatives said they do not have information and said that G&T is a school-based decision that is not monitored by central teams, despite it being in the Middle School Directory.



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The presenters were unable to answer questions about the G&T data, which was the catalyst for the meeting. Our CEC worked in tandem with Councilmember Cornegy's office for approximately one year to bring these opportunities to D16 students. Our community was looking to understand these options in D16. And Ms. Chadha told us that despite G&T options in the Middle School Directory, these programs are not real. She further explained that if students are accessing these G&T options to gain admission to a school, they are likely being placed in other, non-G&T programs once they arrived. Our community was not only shocked but dismayed.

Community members articulated how disrespected they felt, while listening to a presentation from people who neither understood our community dynamics nor the details about the proposal that they were sharing. When asked why the head of OSE did not lead this presentation, Ms. Chadha explained that it was open school night. As parents who juggle professional and parental obligations, we know that open school night dates are shared with ample time for parents to plan. Ms. Kleinhandler had ample time to inform us of her inability to lead this presentation. Further, while we have corresponded with Ms. Chadha over several weeks, she explained that she didn't know that she was on the agenda until the same day of the presentation.

Contracts for Excellence (C4E)

Adrienne Huggins led the C4E presentation that same night. In the past, Laurita Moye provided us with a thorough presentation that left our community more knowledgeable about how our schools and students are supported with C4E funding. Ms. Huggins came unprepared. In fact, she asked us for the powerpoint presentation, as she didn't have a copy with her. She then told us that this wasn't her presentation and proceeded to read from paper. Ms. Huggins had a polite disposition, but had no answers to any of our questions. She referred us to email ContractsForExcellence@schools.nyc.gov for all answers. A few of these questions are sampled below:

1. What is the relative rate of distribution to all schools?
2. If D16 schools are largely under-enrolled, why is so much money being allocated to class size reduction?
3. Why do the numbers not tally up to 100%?

In closing, we request a presentation about how the NYDOE is supporting D16 students through G&T programs, including how the SHS proposal will be a more inclusive process in admission as well as retention. We request that this presentation be led and informed by the decision makers who are leading these efforts - Deputy Chancellor Josh Wallack, Deputy Chancellor LaShawn Robinson and anyone else who will be able to answer our questions. We are asking for another C4E presentation, led by someone who can provide information applicable to D16 schools and students. D16 will no longer be ignored and marginalized. Our kids and our schools deserve our advocacy, and we can only do that well with good information.

We look forward to your prompt response to our requests and the points of this letter. Please contact our President, NeQuan C. McLean at (347) 470-4975 or nequanmclean@cec16.org.

Sincerely,
The Members of the Community Education Council District 16