



CITYWIDE DISTRICT 75 COUNCIL

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MINUTES CALENDAR MEETING

The Calendar Meeting of the Citywide District 75 Council was held on Wednesday, **September 21, 2011** at 6:00 pm at P037R: Michael J. Petrides Complex, Building B, 715 Ocean Terrace, Staten Island, NY . The following people were in attendance.

*Note: Mr. Williams, President called the Calendar Meeting to order.
Call to Order at 6:35 pm the Calendar Agenda

1. Roll Call

Able Alagbe	Present
Charlene Carroll-Hall	Present
Maureen Dantzler	Excused
Jackie Pierre-Louis	Excused
Allison Bridges-Matthews	Present
Diamaris Magarin	Excused
Gloria Ann Smith	Present
Alicia Valeus	Present
Joseph Williams	Present

2. Appointment of Time Keeper

Charlene Carroll-Hall, Council Member

3. Secretary's Report: Approval of Meeting Minutes

Joe Williams tabled the minutes until the next meeting.

4. Report of the President: Joe Williams

Mr. Williams mentioned the next item is the President's Report. He presented to the parents and council the welcoming letter and The Citywide District 75 Council August Report (see below).

Mr. Williams pointed out the items that the parents and council should be aware of. The budget for 2011-2012, this year the district had over a 12 million dollar cut. The superintendent and his staff this summer had to make some cuts some place and I have to commend them the cuts they made there was no significant impact effecting instructions. We were told we have to do more with less but I think the superintendent but it will not effect classroom instruction. There is no loss of teachers in the school level and the district will absorb most of the cuts.

Also in the report is something we all should be aware of is the Common Core Standards. It's something that forty-seven states have adopted. What it means actually is that fifth grade is being taught in New York the same way it's being taught in the southern states. When this takes effect when you move from state to state (participating states) in the common core standards transitioning into your grade instead of being held back a grade because of the different teaching standards (Texas and Alaska is not participating). Common Core Standards prepare students for college and are career ready.

Related Services this year will have a different look than it did last year.

Attached Introduction Statement and Report:

September 8, 2011
Dear Parents,

I would like to take this opportunity to welcome all students, parents and guardians to the 2011-2012 school year. On behalf of the Citywide District 75 Council we warmly welcome you.

One of the key components to your child's success is the ongoing involvement of parents in the school community. A good way to get involved with your child's school is by becoming an active member of the school's PTA.

I encourage all of you to do so and seek out school Leadership Team (SLT) positions at your child's school. District 75 schools offer a variety of opportunities for parents to learn and celebrate with our schools, children and community. Please check for notices of upcoming meetings in your child's backpack.

We look forward to working together with you to ensure that your child has a quality education experience in District 75!

Respectfully,
Joe Williams
President and Advocate Appointee to the Citywide District 75 Council
Vice President of the District 75 Presidents' Council

The Citywide District 75 Council August Report

From Mr. Joe Williams, Council Member

(A) The 2011- 2012 Budget From District 75 Council

FY 12 Program to Eliminate the GAP (PEG)

As a result of current fiscal conditions, there was an FY 12 Program to Eliminate the (PEG) budget reduction to District 75 in the amount of \$12,082,908

In as much as services provided by District 75 schools are IEP (Individual Education Program) mandated, this reduction was not assessed to schools on a per capita basis.

The PEG reduction will be as follows:

District 75 C- First Coaches:

(1) In FY 12, 2.00 FTE C- First Coach positions will be eliminated

(2) School Based Coaches:

Beginning with FY 12, District funding for the position a 1.00 FTE School Based Coach has been eliminated.

(3) Bus Transportation Paraprofessional:

A three percent (3%) reduction to the initial allocation for Bus Transportation Paraprofessionals has been made to school allocations.

(4) Project Arts:

A ten percent (10%) reduction to the initial allocation for project Arts has been made to school allocations.

(5) Paraprofessional Replacement Service:

A reduction to the initial allocation for Paraprofessional Replacement services from 8 days per years to 6 days per years has been made to school allocations.

(6) Home Instruction Per Session:

A reduction to the Per session budget for Home Instruction has been made based on a review of current expenditures.

(7) Reduction of Other Than Personal Service (OTPS) Expenditures:

A reduction of three million dollars (3,000,000) of OTPS expenditures will be made in FY 12

(8) School Aides:

To meet the FY 12 Program to Eliminate the Gap (PEG) a reduction of the allocation equivalent to 1.00 FTE School Aides is being applied to school

(B) The Common Core Standards:

What is the Common Core State Standards Initiative?

The Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts & Literacy in History/ Social Studies, Science and Technical Subjects ("the Standards") are the culmination of an extended, broad-based effort to fulfill the charge issued by the state to create the next generation of K-12 standards in order to help ensure that all students are college and career ready in literacy no later than the end of high school.

(1) The FY 12 Budget District 75:

As a result of current fiscal conditions, there was an FY 12 Program to Eliminate the Gap (PEG) budget reduction to District 75 in the amount of \$12,082, 908. A comprehensive review of the District budget by the Superintendent and CFN staff was made in order to address the budget reduction, with an eye on minimizing impact to school.

(2) The Common Core State Standard:

After studying The Common Core State Standards questions to be asked

- a. Why do we need educational standards?
- b. How are educational standards determined now?
- c. Is having common standards the first step toward nationalizing education?
- d. What is the common Core State Standards Initiative?

5. Report of the Superintendent: Gary Hecht,

On behalf of Superintendent Gary Hecht and Deputy Superintendent Barbara Joseph thank you for coming to today's meeting. Arthur Fusco the net work leader for district 75 middle and high school. The school year opened with no major issues except with busing. Every school year there is always issues with busing. District 75 is tackling the busing issue at the school level and the district is also working with OPT. The district continues to open classes and will have an accurate number at the end of the month. By October first Superintendent Hecht should be able to provide the council with an exact number. The Progress Report: grades will be open to the public soon and many of our d75 schools do receive progress reports and grade on the report range from A to F. we are happy to announce that two of our school P231K& 12X was recently removed from the persistently dangerous list. Quality Review: we were recently informed that many of our schools would be reviewed this year except school reviews ion 2009-10 and 2010-11. We anticipate that 44 of our 56 school will be reviews. It's a two day process; parents are interview, staff and students and look at school data. Related Services: The district is working closer with parents, providers and principals in regards to the progress that was made to related services and how to move your children to greater independence. However to many of our present and former students are currently home because agencies are unwilling to accept students due to their extreme mandates. What we need to do as a school community is to work together to move students into a greater independence. No principal will remove related service from the student. There needs to be a conversation between the parents, student and provider. As our students are progressing and moving up in year's services should be gradually decreasing for life long independence.

6. Citywide District 75 Council Busing Survey: Presented by Diana Marenfeld

Diana Marenfeld, Busing Committee Chairperson and Council Member during her appointment to the council Ms. Marenfeld and the council worked diligently to assist the parents of District 75 with busing issues that were brought to their attention. Diana mentioned that the council has been working with OPT for the past seven years and this has been a passion of hers.

The council sent out a survey to each school in district 75 for he parents to fill out. We received back 966 hard copies (hand written surveys) and 47 on line surveys; in total there were over a thousand responses. In the surveys there were over 800 comments that we had to read and sort out the largest response we received was from Queens followed by Brooklyn, Bronx, Manhattan and then Staten Island. The largest age group response was the 5 to 7 year olds followed by the 10 year olds, 13 to 18 and 19 years-plus. What was really interesting to us the parents really documented their child's experience with OPT/Busing.

Diana read one of the parents documented experience with the bus company that she and her child went through daily.

Diana Marenfeld presented a power point presentation during her segment of the councils finding of the busing survey. The power point presentation is available upon request.

7. NYC Department of Education Busing Booklet, Presented by OPT

The Citywide District 75 Council produced a busing booklet for the parents of district 75 to use as a guide to navigate OPT. In the beginning of the summer the council provided a copy to OPT to weave out any discrepancies. During the summer the members of the council and OPT worked jointly on the busing booklet for presentation during the councils September Calendar Meeting. Because of the change of command at OPT the council was not able to present and provide the booklet to the parents during the September Calendar Meeting. The presentation of the busing booklet was tabled for presentation at a later date.

8. 2011-2012 School Year Busing Concerns: Open Discussion

Mr. Campbell, Borough Director for Staten Island, OPT informed the council and parents that some of the issues on the survey presented by the council we are improving at OPT. We are taking the steps to improve the response time to customer service. We reorganized recently in May and we now have Borough Directors that serve as liaisons for each borough to the schools and parents. Communication has shown an improvement and we can improve a little bit more. We are trying to reach out to parents and schools to fix their concerns. Mr. Campbell mentioned that OPT receives IEP information twice a day, he estimated that ten changes will arrive in the morning and ten more will arrive in the afternoon. Changes are made to the routes, limited time travel and other mandates as soon as the IEP information is entered into the computer.

Frustrated parents brought to the attention to the council and Mr. Campbell the following complaints:

- Time travel (delays)
- Late pick up and drop offs
- Route changes without proper notification
- Scheduled picks times changed unrepentantly
- Child (ren) does not have a Para
- Child is mandated to be on a mini bus, instead on a full size bus

- High School students riding with Elementary/Middle School students
- Son does not have a mandated Car seat on the bus
- OPT Customer Service providing parents with Complaint Numbers; one parent has 6 complaint numbers without a resolution.

The council provided parents with A Busing Complaint Form to fill out and to be returned to the council. The council will email the complaints to Eric Goldstein, Director of OPT for a resolution to their concerns regarding busing.

9. "Aniya's Law" Presented by Sam Pirozzolo, President

Mr. Michael Reilly, Council Member of CEC31 and co-chair of the transportation and safety committee.

Mr. Reilly mentioned that special education under NYS Education Law is mandated to have busing for the students. However general education students are not mandated to receive busing.

In October 2009 I wrote a report asking for an expansion of the Staten Island 7th & 8th Grade Variances. I handed the proposal to then Chancellor Joel Klein and he passed it to Michael Best, Council for the DOE. I received a reply within a week stating that the DOE can't do it and it's just not going to happen.

Currently with Mayor Bloomberg, he informed all city agencies to make cuts. What OPT did was to take away the Variances for the 7th & 8th Graders. So in 2010 the 7th & 8th grade Variances was revoked in Staten Island for the general education students. But it's just not the 7th & 8th graders affected by the removal of the variances it's also affecting our 3rd, 4th, 5th, and 6th graders. If you're less than a mile away from the school they are not eligible for bus service. Under OPT's guidelines 3rd to 6th grade if you live more than a mile, even affecting some kindergarten to second grade if you live more than half a mile your not eligible. We predicted that this was a mistake and could be harmful to child(ren). June 28.11 the last day of school Aniya Williams was struck by a tractor trailer and killed as she crossing the road to catch the city bus. Steven Beck and I reached out to Senator Lanza and Assembly member Michael Kruzack with their support the report they drafted the legislation has passed in the NYS Senate and its now at the NYS Assembly Education Committee. We are asking the community and parents to help support the bill "Aniya's Law" number 2988A by writing to the NYS Assembly and the Ways & Means Committee (who determine the funding/budget). We also have posted on Facebook information regarding the law as well as to who to reach out to and their contact information.

Meeting Adjourned at 9:00 pm