

September 24th, 2021 Meeting Minutes:

Meeting called: 6:04PM

Aurora: Pledge of Allegiance:

Interpretation: Spanish, Bengali, Arabic

Roll Call by Aurora:

Present: Sandra DeJesus, Farah Despeignes, Lourdes Jibodh, Sabrina Rocchio, Aurora Ronda, Gina Staton

Absent: Sharaf Alghaithi, Crystal Brockington, Latoya Coleman (excused), Ismaila Mamanedan, Anjelica Vasquez

Introduction of the Council Members

Approval of July 14th Minutes:

Motioned by Aurora 1st, Lourdes 2nd : NOT APPROVED 5/6

Sandra DeJesus, Farah Despeignes, Lourdes Jibodh, Sabrina Rocchio, Aurora Ronda, Gina Staton

A.R. appointed until after July Meeting

Approval of August 31st Minutes with adjustments to the Presidents Report: APPROVED 6/6

Motioned by Aurora 1st, Sandra 2nd

“Adjustment: Farah Despeignes, read by Lourdes Jibodh”

Sandra DeJesus, Farah Despeignes, Lourdes Jibodh, Sabrina Rocchio, Aurora Ronda, Gina Staton

Assemblyman Kenny Burgos of the 85th District

President's Report:

September Opening was on the mind of many parents. We still believe, we (all of CEC 8), that 60% or so of parents in NYC still believe a remote option is necessary. NYC CEFT held a round table with Senator John Liu, who is the chairperson of the Education Committee. The State assemblyman has a bill to bring back the remote option on the table that will most likely not be voted on until January. The opening in September was not anything impressive. We plenty of parents who do not want enroll their child into school when the Mayor and Chancellor assured they were ready. After 2 weeks, there has been more than 1k positive Covid cases. No more PPE or limited amounts of, reduction of safety agents because of vaccination requirements; principals are feeling like they are on their own. The safety issue on top of health issues. Quarantine remote is for the quarantine classes are not up and running. Some cases in the city was the entire school campus closed. Your child is not receiving any kind of instructions. Home instruction is 1 hour/day for medically fragile students; that is not really instruction. We have parents who are keeping their kids home because they feel schools are not safe. There are parents and lawyers that are ready to sue the DOE and whichever it takes on the grounds of educational neglect. At CEC8, we know plenty of parents who have had the virus; this is nothing short of a disaster. You should do what is best for your child, including keeping your child home if that's how you feel. This is outrageous. We are

demanding of the DOE, Chancellor, and Mayor to give remote option and make sure kids are not penalize and parents are not punish. We have been hearing reports that the DOE has been calling ACS. We are ready for a class action lawsuit, to sue ACS and DOE if it comes to that. Your children are your children, they do not belong to Meisha Porter, they do not belong to Bill de Blasio, they belong to you—you decide what is best for your child. CEC 8 will stand behind you 100% if need be. And the DOE and Mayor need to understand that our children and our children and that is a civil rights issue. Therefore, parents if you are not comfortable sending your child, don't.

There will be a rally at City Hall Park at 12pm. A demonstration will take place by not only parents, students, DOE employees. Make sure the Mayor is hearing your voice.

Another issue is bringing up Mayoral Control. Right now, the Mayor has the lives of your children and yours in his hands. No one person should have that kind of power. As the vote comes up in June 2022 now is the moment, us as citizens of NYC, who do not believe that your lives should not be in the hands of one person. Start mobilizing and organizing to tell Albany that Mayoral Control needs to end and it needs to end now. This is unacceptable. Parents, take the schools back, they belong to you; take your city back, it belongs to you; take the lives of your children back, they belong to you; and take your life back because your lives belong to you. Thank you that is my report.

No Report from the Superintendent, due to the rescheduling of the meeting

Reports from members:

Lourdes Jibodh: I have similar feelings. Thank you for such an eloquent report, you had me in tears. I have been experiencing phone calls from parents in HS levels, parents across the BX that have been waiting for enrollment, visiting FWC in long lines to be told, "we will send you an email with the next steps." From the last person that I received some paperwork, the last time they heard from anyone was from Sept 14th. Her child is still not enrolled. I finished helping a family with the support from the BES office to get a child enrolled in a school after a whole week school-less. We understand that is a trend because everyone is overwhelmed, times right now are not like any other. Ours families are trying hard to reinstate some sort of credibility for the DOE by continuing by sending our kids into the public system. We really want to continue to believe in them and sending our children to school, no jobs would exists. Do the work you are paid for; if you are enrollment, enroll students. There are many people absent, I understand, many people waiting for things to happen. DOE is not one person, it's many people: get together and make it happen. We need as many students enrolled.

As far as Mayoral Control, I do agree with the president. We need to take everything back. Health belongs to us. It's time for the dismantling of Mayoral Control. For all of you council members, assembly members, all of you Senate that is listening in today, we expect to hear you will support us in this decision.

Aurora Ronda: I agree with you both whole-heartedly. Mayoral control is not ok. This is a Communist act and is violating our rights horribly. I am up running and visiting school and reaching out to families. Doing what I have to do, first day of school I went see if any schools in my area needed any assistance. Kids are not going into the building until well after 10:30a. PS 62, 69, 72. UIM, those are my schools of record. So far they're running smoothly. Kids who graduated out of PS going into IS/MS returned their

devices and are having a hard time getting new ones. Records of returned devices were not handed in or are declared to exist. We are trying to figure out how that process can speed up. One principal had ordered devices that they are backordered until 6 months from now. What happens when there is a storm or a school shut down?

Gina Staton: I agree about the Mayoral Control and the mess of the beginning of class. I have been trying to help parents as much as I can. I've been getting letter after letter from parents who are concerned and terrified about the Covid Situation. I'm being asked what they can do, like rallying, and we are reach out to all in our capacity and continue to fight. I've also spoken to doctors and taking these extra precautions is what is the right thing to do.

Sandra DeJesus: I agree with everything everyone has said. I cannot attend a rally because I have a granddaughter who is quarantining; although, she has tested negative. I take precaution in my own. I have an issue with one my schools I liaison with, why is there is no nurse, no medical support. The parent's child is diabetic and there was no one to perform medical performances. How are we going to get these nurses in the schools, epi-pens, shots, etc.? What is the child supposed to do if the remote option is not given? And former AP269, is now Principal Audrey Connolly I would like to say congratulations to her.

Office of Councilman Gjonaj: I'm hearing a lot of powerful speeches, we do hear you. If you need anything, we are here at your disposal.

Lourdes Jibodh: In addition to what I reported. Our children deserve equitable education. On Monday, the mandate that just came out, making schools possible to stay open due to many teachers remain unvaccinated. It is concerning that the DOE is prepared to bring in people from outside countries to teach our children. To take the jobs of staff members who have sacrificed their earlier years to be the pillars to our children's education. How is that equitable public education, when there are great teachers who may not be getting the shot as of Monday? I would love to understand how that is equitable. And who is teaching our children so ready to pivot yet remote learning is not up and running, Google classrooms should have been ready that are not. I have questions, where are those people and who are those people to answer with the truth?

Aurora Ronda: I echo that sentiment, there are 45k teachers who are unvaccinated and what will happen?

Announcements:

Committee Chairs and Co-Chairs Introductions with individual descriptions:

Social Media; Aurora Ronda, Co Latoya Coleman:

As Social Media chair, I will get the word out by advertising to help empower families, and gain the necessary resources needed. We are available via Twitter, Facebook and a website is underway.

Youth Committee; Lourdes Jibodh, Co Farah Despeignes:

The District 8 Community Education Council Youth & Education Committee is a space dedicated to young people and the issues that young people are concerned about. We are here to support young people in learning how to speak about their issues to one another, to school officials, to their parents, to the community and to policy makers. We also want to create a space for young people to serve their schools and the District 8 Community. Above all, we want this space to be a place where young people have fun as they learn to impact the world around them.

Anti-Bullying/Domestic Violence AKA AB/DV; Latoya Coleman, Co Aurora Ronda

AB/DV is to bring awareness through workshops. I want to volunteer my time by handing out information on what to look for when it comes to this type of behavior.

Special Education: Sabrina Rocchio, Co Lourdes Jibodh

The Special Education committee's purpose is to advise, empower, and share information with district parents. The committee welcomes members who represent all special education students in District 8. Together we can assure that SE can be seen as specialized instruction designed to meet the learning needs and provide opportunities to their fullest potential.

Parent and Community Engagement aka PaCE: Aurora Ronda, Co- Latoya Coleman

As chair, we want the parents to be empowered by using their voice when it comes to their children's education. We will network with families and neighboring communities to ensure families are getting the necessary support.

Mental Health: Gina Staton

As the chair of the newly formed Mental Health Committee, my goal is to raise awareness in schools and the community about mental health issues. The available resources I find, I plan to work with schools to identify where it would most benefit students and families. Mental health problems are too often overlooked, and I am passionate about changing that reality to give our children the best chance at success.

Next: NYC CEFT formerly known as Bronx PLAG

For further information please email info@ceftnyc.org, bxadvocates@ceftnyc.org

Motion to Write a Resolution to vacate the seat of missing elected members:

Sandra DeJesus 1st, Aurora Ronda 2nd

YES: Sandra DeJesus, Farah Despeignes, Lourdes Jibodh, Sabrina Rocchio, Aurora Ronda, Gina Staton

Public Agenda:

Public Participation:

Nichelle Rodriguez: Question regarding the presence of elected officials at this meeting, looks like Councilman Gjonaj was the only elected official. What can we also do to involve other elected officials? Just like Councilman Gjonaj made themselves available tonight. It's very clear that in order as district members and elected officials to be heard and to make some type of wave in the mayoral level of government. We need more of other elected council members to be present to be able to represent us and also fight for the things that you all have voiced out. I think of even seeing AOC on the news before and now I barely see her involved in anything local in our community and it would be great if she took a stand in terms of emphasizing the importance in how much we need a remote plan, how much there are all these other issues going on within our schools like the inadequacy of staffing of nurses in every single school. That should have been something done from day one. You're still putting students and staff members at risk by not having some type of health personnel available. What can we also do to involve other elected officials?

They put education heavily on their platform, and that is important but we are here now, in critical times where parents and teacher alike actually have the same concerns. Yet, these concerns are not being reverberated from Mayor de Blasio or any of his other elected officials below him.

Farah: I do want to point out that Assemblyman Burgos was on at the very top and do want to say that with NYC CEFT will be hosting roundtables with Senator Sepulveda on Oct 4th at 6pm and Oct 7th at 6pm with Senator Bailey, who is the chair of the Bronx Democratic Party who is responsible for all of the elected officials in the Bronx. After Senator Gustavo will be on at 7pm. Even with CEC8 itself aren't engaging with elected officials, the work with now NYC CEFT will be doing so. Last Spring we engaged with all elected officials. We are in the fight for real, we are having real conversations and they.

They are talking about changing systems, how do we come back at them and challenge them for our interests?

Sabrina Skelton: 2 questions, thank you for all the information. How is this communication of CEC meetings and follow-ups given to out parents? Q+A session with former Chancellor Carranza was great but no follow-up. I have had several questions that still remained unanswered.

Farah: That is a beautiful question. Thank you for that. Regarding Carranza, we sent a list of questions that remained unanswered and shortly after he resigned. When there is no answer that is because we are not getting them. DOE is not exactly responsive to parents and that is part of the fight. Tonight we are livestreaming on 3 different platforms. We are doing that for parents who had not had accessibility for in-person. Also we did not have an administrative assistant for a long time. Tonight, you heard her so much, we have someone who is making sure we are responding to emails and bringing questions to our attention that. We also have her now who will be helping build our website. I invite you to join us because it sounds like you have ideas on how to make this CEC even stronger, as we are moving on from the missing members who got elected, I invite you to join us, to make us even better. I wholeheartedly receive your critique and we are in the process of doing exactly that. We have a tiny URL on jot to join us on how to be in the know. Email us to get your questions answered or give us suggestions and I can tell

you I'm so happy to know that such a question came from you because it means that we are touching our constituents and that's the movement we've been doing that.

Sandra: I agree with you we need a parent like her.

Next: Comments and Questions from interpretations lines, any questions on your line:

Spanish Interpretation: Parent from MS331 Just asked for the phone number: 718.239.5895 at CEC8

Arabic Interpretation: No questions

Bangla Interpretation: No questions

Motion to Adjourn: 7:39pm

Aurora Ronda, Lourdes Jibodh Second

Latoya Coleman, Sandra DeJesus, Farah Despeignes, Lourdes Jibodh, Sabrina Rocchio, Aurora Ronda, Gina Staton

Call to order for Working Business meeting: 7:42p

Aurora Ronda did attendance:

Present: Latoya Coleman, Sandra DeJesus, Farah Despeignes, Lourdes Jibodh, Sabrina Rocchio, Aurora Ronda, Gina Staton

Absent: Sharaf Alghaithi, Crystal Brockington, Ismaila Mamanedan, Anjelica Vasquez

- I. PA/PTA meeting dates- Lourdes: Collaborate with the Office of Superintendent Joynt together all the information. Maybe to attend a few of them. Need to start getting the quarterly meeting with Presidents Council. As they are to be scheduled. CEC are liaisons to SLTs. Need to have a calendar meeting set with all. SLT/Principal to attend. Not sure if the virtual situation A-660 is changing/amending to include Hybrid or Virtual options. As far as CEC is to be aware of the PA/PTA meeting
 - a. Sandra: Having an issue with how a meeting took place. Farah reminded her that this meeting session does not oversee/interfere with how the logistics are performed.
 - b. Aurora: a good way is to reach out to the PCs.
 - c. Lourdes: I'm sure you've received the email regarding the FSC and FLC meet n' greet. I have come to familiarize with the FSC in some elections. Many of the messages are time sensitive. I'm good which ever date is chosen for then. Same goes for the Liaison list, please reply. If we want to have the Capital Plan ready before January we need to start going to our schools and asking the questions that need to be asked, and provide the necessary information to where ever it may be sent.
- II. Dr. Rosenbaum, Education for Excellence. He was hired on the high school level for PCs to give mental health development. It was about 3 hour meeting, it helped center many

parents, helped us with the meditation, he sells a really good program. Good idea to come presentation

- III. March/April 2022 Meeting Dates show conflict. Erendida proposes March for Thursday 17th and April Wednesday 13th. Richard then comments bylaws regarding the Annual meeting for reference. Aurora said we shouldn't do Friday's because it was not the most ideal for working people in the evening. Farah expressed more parents showed up versus the DOE staff although the turnout was much lower, but more parent engagement was experienced. Maybe Friday is well for parents (food for thought), DOE staff arrive because of the Superintendent. Maybe send out a survey to our parents whether Friday works best versus Wednesday.
- a. Lourdes: What are we going to do when we don't get support for the DOE platform?
 - b. Farah: I may get in trouble for this but there are options, send a pre-recorded video or another person in their place. Honestly is it part of their job as a Superintendent to be at the CEC meetings, as the parents decide. I am not worried about that but I am excited to connect with parents.
 - c. Richard: we should consider happy mediums, what is good for the geese isn't always good for the gander. It's good to have these discussions publicly but factor in everything before really deciding.
 - d. Farah: First thing might have to do is to figure out if the participation level is stronger for a Friday than a Wednesday night for parents?
 - e. Lourdes: How can we poll our constituents if we don't have access to that information?
 - f. Richard: This group here in the absence of an AA, you initiated the emailing list. You made the progress with creativity, like the website and such.
 - g. Lourdes: a sign-in sheet has to be provided like an in-person meeting, as well as a public speaking session. DOE is collecting data through SPLCI. Also it was not up-to-date. Why in the Central level are they not being updated and maintained.
 - h. Aurora: Erendida, I told you at the July meeting about the sign-in sheet.
 - i. Farah: A little birdie told me that Richard will be leaving,
 - j. Richard: I will be on the record to dispel
- IV. 2022 Locations: Lourdes: How are council member, who are not vaccinated because of medical conditions, going to be able to continue to do what is asked as elected representative.
- a. Richard: Great questions wishing we can forecast as we near the dates that will come in-person or continue virtually. Let's wait to see, it's constant change, so let's wait for clarity.
 - b. Lourdes: Unfortunately.
- V. PS 140 Still has Principal Cannon listed. The list has not been updated. Why am I collecting that data on my own, when the DOE should be the ones to do that. Who is responsible for updating these websites? There is a lot of misinformation, and many people have expressed saying they are leaving. What if someone moves into the community and calls to inquire? They then do

Adjourn at 8:24pm: Lourdes 1st, Sandra 2nd

Present: Latoya Coleman, Farah Despeignes, Lourdes Jibodh, Sabrina Rocchio, Aurora Ronda, Gina Staton

FINAL