

## Chancellor's Parent Advisory Council

Tweed Courthouse \*52 Chamber Street, New York 10007

### **CPAC Parent Advisory Council Board**

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August 12, 2021

Chancellor Meisha Ross Porter  
First Deputy Chancellor Donald Conyers  
Department of Education, Tweed Courthouse  
52 Chambers Street  
New York, NY 10007

Dear Chancellor Porter and First Deputy Chancellor Conyers,

As we look forward with optimism to the re-opening of fulltime, in-class instruction in the fall, we feel it is important to revisit the issue of the high school superintendency structure. At this point last year there were many press reports stating that the DOE was revamping the high school superintendent structure, returning to borough/district-centered high school superintendents and eliminating the confusing Affinity superintendents. CPAC applauded this change as we had opposed the structure since its inception under Chancellor Fariña, approving [a letter](#) in 2015 which has proved to be as relevant today as six years ago. In July 2020 CPAC approved [a letter](#) sent to First Deputy Chancellor Donald Conyers and Deputy Chief Academic Officer Lawrence Pendergast again urging the elimination of the Affinity Superintendents and requesting that we be allowed to provide input on the new structure. As we emerge from the pandemic with a fresh start and a new Chancellor, **CPAC again asks that the high school superintendency be revamped and reimagined to a borough/district centered structure that allows for greater partnership among all stakeholders.**

- 1) The CPAC High School Committee is requesting a zoom or in-person meeting** to discuss the reasons for our support for a borough/district centered structure. The CPAC High School Committee includes in its membership current and former High School Presidents' Council presidents, members of the CCHS, and appointees to the PEP.
- 2) We urge you to create a stable, workable, borough/district-centered structure that meets the needs of all stakeholders and will remain in place for years to come.** Currently, the responsibilities of high school superintendents are shuffled every year or two, which is clearly untenable. Superintendents need to develop the deep understanding of their schools and staff which comes with long experience with the same schools, akin to that which exists at the elementary and middle school level, so they can offer the much-needed guidance our high schools deserve. The high schools under superintendents' supervision need to be sufficiently close so the superintendents can visit their schools without spending all day in a car and so that stakeholders (parents, teachers, and principals) can easily meet with their superintendent, or simply share best-practices amongst themselves, without traveling to another borough. And superintendents should be given a reasonable number of schools to oversee.
- 3) Please ensure that the new structure either works with the existing DLT structure or create a Borough High School Partnership** which brings together the high school superintendent(s), CSA representative, UFT representative, High School Presidents' Council president and CCHS representatives. All high school superintendents with schools in the district or borough must be required to attend the DLT or Borough High School Partnership meetings, as well as the High School Subcommittee and High School Presidents' Council meetings. This responsibility needs to be laid out as part of

the restructuring of the superintendency. We need to find forums for high schools that work as effectively as our DLT structure does for elementary and middle schools.

4) When the Affinity structure is replaced, **please make clear to parents and students that successful programs within the Affinity Schools will not be affected.** Parents and students will need confidence that the change in structure will not negatively impact their schools and programs.

A revision of the high school structure will lead to improved collaboration among stakeholders and better outcomes for our students, families, and schools. We look forward to meeting with you in person or via zoom in the next few weeks to discuss changes to the high school superintendency. We can be reached at CPACHSCommittee@gmail.com.

The CPAC High School Committee

Approved by the CPAC membership at its August 12, 2021 CPAC meeting