



Chancellor's Parent Advisory Council

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March 10, 2022

Chancellor David Banks
Department of Education
Tweed Courthouse
52 Chambers Street
New York, New York 10007

Dear Chancellor Banks,

Now that your tenure has begun as NYC's new Chancellor, CPAC wishes to draw your attention to a structural issue that has long plagued the Department of Education: **the lack of high school voices, which minimizes discussion of high school issues. The Chancellor's Parent Advisory Council (CPAC) has long argued for the development of Borough High School Partnerships to bring together high school stakeholders to facilitate these much-needed discussions.** Former Chancellor Carranza recognized this issue and former First Deputy Chancellor Donald Conyers spearheaded this Partnership by launching a pilot in Queens just before the pandemic hit. **We urge you to pilot this program in all five boroughs.**

The problem:

1) The current structure of parent engagement drowns out the voices of high school parents.

CPAC includes **32** parents representing each of the K-8 district Presidents' Councils but just **5** parents (1 from each of the 5 boroughs) representing all the high schools in their borough. There are 32 district CECs representing K-8 students with a total of **384** members but just 1 Citywide Council on High Schools (CCHS) with **14** members. This anti-high school bias has a substantial impact on high schools, from capital funding to in-depth discussions of high school issues.

2) The current DLT structure does not work for high schools. Across the city, DLTs bring together the district superintendent, UFT, CSA, and DC37 representatives; the district Presidents' Council president; chairperson of Title 1 DPAC; and usually the CEC president. DLTs have deep discussions about K-8 educational policies, develop the DCEP, and address K-8 issues that surface during meetings. Although Chancellor's Regulation A-655 requires all high school superintendents with high schools located in the geographic district to attend DLT meetings, this is too big a burden, as high school superintendents would need to attend multiple DLT meetings (some up to a dozen or more). In practice,

high school superintendents rarely attend, often making the CSA representative their “designee” or sending their FLC. Rich discussions focused on high school issues among high school stakeholders leading to concrete action plans simply cannot take place without the key player (the high school superintendent) in the room.

A possible solution:

We urge the DOE to move forward with its pilot to create a Borough High School Partnership. CPAC and the Queens High School Presidents’ Council had been working with former First Deputy Chancellor Conyers to pilot the Borough High School Partnership in Queens. The goal was to bring together the key high school stakeholders (all high school superintendents with schools in Queens; UFT, CSA, DC37 representatives; the high school Presidents’ Council president; and borough CCHS representatives) to discuss high school issues within the borough and develop the goals and targets for high schools in the district DCEPs within each borough. We had held the first meeting with parent leadership and the geographic superintendents and began laying out the groundwork when the pandemic hit. We would greatly appreciate the relaunching of this initiative and urge that it be piloted in all five boroughs.

The Borough High School Partnership seems to us to be the simplest solution to allow for the elevation of high school voices within the DOE. We strongly believe that it is long past due for the DOE to create a forum for high school stakeholders to meet and discuss high school issues within the borough. Our high school students and high school staff deserve nothing less.

We would welcome the opportunity to discuss this matter with you further.

With much appreciation,

The Chancellor’s Parent Advisory Council

Approved by the membership at its March 10, 2022 meeting

Cc: First Deputy Chancellor Daniel Weisberg, Chief of Staff Savita Bharadwa, Deputy Chancellor of School Leadership Desmond Blackburn, Deputy Chancellor of Family and Community Engagement and External Affairs Kenita Lloyd

Related letters:

[August 2021 CPAC letter urging the elimination of the Affinity superintendencies and a shift back to a borough- or district-centered high school superintendency structure](#)

[November 2017 CPAC letter requesting that NYC move to borough-level DLTs for high schools \(a.k.a. Borough High School Partnerships\)](#)