



Chancellor's Parent Advisory Council

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April 01, 2022

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Smaller Class Sizes

Dear all:

The Chancellor's Parent Advisory Council (CPAC) has long supported efforts to reduce class size in New York City schools. CPAC represents all the PAs and PTAs in NYC, and through them the parents of New York City school children. In the wake of the pandemic and with the infusion of new state and federal funds, we believe smaller classes are more important and more possible than ever, given the emotional and remedial supports that many of our children need, and the infusion of new state funds.

In May 2021, CPAC passed a resolution, to require smaller classes in NYC public schools.¹

At our April 14, 2022 meeting, we again passed a resolution in support of this goal. The new resolution is below, and we would appreciate a response from you, as soon as possible.

Whereas:

1. In the Campaign for Fiscal Equity (CFE) lawsuit, NY's highest court determined that NYC public school class sizes were too large to provide students with their constitutional right to a sound basic education; and
2. Reducing class size has proven to be one of the best ways to improve student learning, raise high school graduation rates, lower teacher attrition rates and disciplinary problems, and narrow achievement and opportunity gaps between racial, gender, and economic groups;
3. NYC is now receiving full funding from the CFE settlement, amounting to \$1.3 billion over three years, as well as billions of dollars in federal funds;
4. According to DOE data, average class sizes are lower this year, due primarily to enrollment decline, but remain highly inequitable across the city, with many students in many schools and districts subjected to far larger class sizes than the citywide averages;
5. Instead of building on this progress towards smaller classes, and making it more equitable across the city, the DOE instead proposes to cut \$375 million from school budgets, which will cause the loss of over 3,000 teachers and likely increase class size to pre-pandemic levels;
6. Instead of providing more space in overcrowded districts, the DOE also proposes to cut \$1.5 billion from new capacity in the Capital Plan, which will cause the loss of over 11,000 school seats compared to the adopted Plan, with losses of 6,000 seats in both Queens and the Bronx;
7. Especially given all the disruptions the pandemic has caused to student learning and social connection, smaller classes are more necessary than ever and essential to their health, safety, and emotional well-being, as well as their academic achievement.

¹ <https://www.cpacnyc.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/01/CPAC-Sent-Class-Size-Matters.pdf>

Therefore, Be It Resolved: The Chancellor's Parent Advisory Council (CPAC) urges the Mayor, Chancellor Banks, the State Legislature, and the City Council to implement the following measures:

1. The State Legislature shall pass [S6296A](#), sponsored by Senator Jackson and [A7447A](#), sponsored by Assemblymember Jo Anne Simon, that would phase-in class size caps over the next five years, at no more than 20 students per class in grades K-3; 23 students in grades 4-8, and 25 students in high school;
2. That, DOE shall create a five-year plan to accomplish these goals, and create sufficient space by building and leasing more schools, aided by the infusion of new state and federal funds;
3. That rigorous reporting requirements and accountability provisions be required, so that smaller classes actually result from this plan;
4. That in order to create more space for smaller classes, the DOE shall refrain from cutting any seats from the capital plan and will relocate as many 3K and Pre-K classes from elementary schools to CBO's and DOE Pre-K centers, that currently have sufficient space;
5. That the City shall revamp the Uniform Land Use Review Procedure (ULURP) process to require that all new large-scale developments include space for new schools in their projects;
6. That given the enrollment decline and the new state and federal funding, we must take advantage of this golden opportunity for the city to provide the smaller classes that NYC students have long needed and is their right under the state constitution.

Approved at the April 14, 2022 CPAC meeting.