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**The City of New York
Community Board 8 Manhattan
Joint Meeting of the Social Justice Committee &
Youth, Education, and Libraries Committee
Monday, June 28, 2021 - 6:30 PM
Conducted Remotely via Zoom**

Minutes

Present: Lori Ann Bores, Taína Borrero, Loraine Brown, Barbara Chocky, Sarah Chu, Saundra I. Coleman, Billy Freeland, Edward Hartzog, Takako Kono, Wendy Machaver*, Malik May, Peter Patch, Rita Popper, Rami Sigal, Russell Squire, Marco Tamayo.

*Public Member

The topic of the meeting's discussion was: Education through a lens of Social Justice: A Discussion about the landscape in CB8, where we are, and what is needed. We were joined by guest speaker Kelly McGuire, Superintendent of District 2, New York City Department of Education. A survey was made available in advance and during the meeting to assess the needs of local families and students.

Saundra I. Coleman kicked off the meeting by offering a summary of the meeting's objectives – focus on our neighbors with school age children that live in CB8 and what has happened since the pandemic; as well as to have both committees come together to assess if there are issues or disparities with the hopes of combatting said problems so that all of our children are receiving the best possible education.

Taína welcomed and introduced Superintendent of District 2 Kelly McGuire of District 2 and thanked him and all DOE educators for their service over the past difficult year. Taína invited the Superintendent to speak about the state of the district post pandemic and to specifically address equity issues.

Summary of Superintendent McGuire's remarks:

- Difficult year for educators but also for families and kids
- He is running a reopening committee with members of the district team, parents, teachers and principals
- Goal of the committee is twofold: to hear from the group about what would help support a smooth and supportive reopening in the fall and to ensure we are lifting voices of families and kids who fall in different categories
- Importance of hearing from diverse voices within the school community
- Need a welcoming and affirming environment for students and teachers
- Some kids learned remotely until the last day of school
- Superintendent McGuire returned to district 2 in early February 2021 so a lot of systems and structures were already in place
- People were working very hard to put systems and structures in place to ensure kids stayed connected
- Even with that, small numbers of kids were difficult to reach throughout the pandemic
- But they found that for the kids that stayed connected, teachers are reporting decent progress over course of the school year (close to growth of a regular school year for many students)
- Consistency of connection has been most important factor in determining whether a child made progress
- Most of the students who did not stay connected in district 2 were:
 - o Students living in temporary housing

- Students in unstable or transitional housing
- Other equity issues during the pandemic – groups that were adversely affected:
 - Issues with technology (ipads that were distributed by DOE and ended up having tech issues)
 - Students with disabilities
 - English language learners
 - Students not connected to school/ students who didn't see school as their home
- Teams were put in place to communicate with families; this made a big difference to ensure there was someone at the school they could connect with if any tech issues
- Superintendent McGuire wants to look at how to improve instruction for Black and Latinx kids who in this district have not made the kind of progress that White and Asian kids have
- We have significantly higher numbers of kids reading at grade level (estimated at about 75%) than in other districts but we need to make sure we focus on the kids not making the same growth and gains
- The ULit program has been popular – educators are complimentary of the work they've done in our schools
- Interesting things being planned at the school level beyond just literacy
- There is a push to accelerate instruction at the national level but locally, principals and teacher leaders looking to slow down and go deeper into content
- Proficiency rate for reading at grade level in District 2 is around 80% (caveat that we have 30,000 kids so that's still a lot of kids left behind)

A lengthy discussion and Q&A ensued following Superintendent McGuire's presentation with ample participation from both the public and members of Community Board 8. Speakers commented on a variety of issues, including but not limited to:

- Concerns about the quality of education being provided to students citywide
- Concerns related to the education that children in public housing are getting within our district
- Inequities that existed during the pandemic for low-income communities because of lack of quality Wi-Fi connections
- Discussion of summer programs for kids like Summer Rising (Superintendent McGuire offered to help parents identify sites to send their children)
- Concerns with diversity of staff at schools in the district (one parent expressed that PS 151 had no teachers of color with only one African American teacher in the whole school)
- Concerns about metrics being used to assess children pre and post pandemic

Several speakers suggested that there be future joint meetings like this one.

No resolutions were proposed.

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 8:30pm

Sarah Chu, Saundrea I. Coleman, Social Justice Committee Co-Chairs
Taína Borrero, Peter Patch, Rami Sigal, Youth, Education, and Libraries Committee Co-Chairs