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**The City of New York
Community Board 8 Manhattan
Youth, Education, and Libraries Committee
Thursday, September 22, 2022 - 6:30 PM
This meeting was conducted via Zoom**

Board Members Present: Vanessa Aronson, Taína Borrero, Addison Lehv, Elizabeth Rose, and Judy Schneider.

**1. Back to School Update and Q&A with New York City Department of Education
Superintendent Kelly McGuire**

- a. Summary of updates provided by the Superintendent
 - i. Newly expanded district team has been doing school visits across the district
 - ii. There are a few new principals in the district, including at PS 527
 - iii. 3K is expanding at PS 6 with an additional section of 3K added – seeing lots of interest in early childhood programs in the district
 - iv. Families coming to the district that are asylum seekers are mainly on the west side - it has been approximately 200 students/families in the district, including at Baruch Middle School
 - v. Needing to pivot a lot to make sure that these new families are being served well - the school community and leaders have been supportive and want to help these families
 - vi. Recently there was a dangerous incident in the public park next to PS 198 - are in touch with the school safety offices in the Department of Education as well as NYPD and Parks Department to work together with them to see what can be done to get more support for patrolling that playground after school hours.
 - vii. DOE has been reorganizing - from 6 members on the District 2 team to 36 members in just the past two years and many of them are school facing.
- b. Superintendent McGuire then opened the discussion for a Question-and-Answer sessions with members of the board and members of the public. Topics pertained to:
 - i. Early childhood education
 - ii. An issue with toilets at Eleanor Roosevelt High School
 - iii. New technology being used in schools for students to see their grades and teachers to take attendance
 - iv. Quality of public-school options for families that live in public housing in the district
 - v. Families not getting into the schools that they are putting on their applications as a result of how popular the schools are

2. **Overview & Discussion of Universal Child Care Act** – Brandon Jordan Legislative Director from Council Member Menin’s office. Council Member Menin is the sponsor of the [legislation](#)
 - a. Brandon Jordan shared some statistics about the state of childcare costs and availability in New York City, including that as of 2019 average annual childcare in New York City for infants up to 18 months cost \$21,000. He also shared that over 1,100 childcare centers have closed in the past 5 years.

- b. Mr. Jordan gave an overview of the five bills comprising the Universal Child Care Act introduced by Council Member Julie Menin designed to move toward universal childcare
 - i. [Intro 0485](#)- A Local Law to amend the administrative code of the city of New York, to create an electronic childcare directory.
 - ii. [Intro 0486](#)- A Local Law to amend the New York city charter, in relation to establishing a childcare advisory board, a seven-person task force to study this issue.
 - iii. [Intro 0487](#)- A Local Law to amend the administrative code of the city of New York, in relation to establishing a childcare subsidy information portal.
 - iv. [Intro 0488](#)- A Local Law to amend the administrative code of the city of New York, in relation to establishing a childcare program fund, which would provide a \$1,000 grant for full time employees (up to 20) to help childcare centers who are at risk of closing.
 - v. [Intro 0489](#)- A Local Law to amend the administrative code of the city of New York, in relation to a childcare certification program.
 - c. As of this Committee meeting, the legislative package had last been heard by the Committee on Women and Gender Equity on June 29. Council Member Menin has the support of a Supermajority of Council Members on four out of the five bills. If passed, NYC will be the first city to pass comprehensive legislation like this to move toward universal childcare.
 - d. Mr. Jordan shared that the Council Member is hopeful that the Universal Child Care Act will pass on October 12th and invited members of the committee to join a rally on the steps of city hall at 11am.
 - e. The committee discussed potentially passing a resolution to support the legislation but decided not to in the hopes that the Act may be passed by the Council before our next full board meeting.
 - f. Comments and Questions from the public and the board related to the below topics
 - i. Scarcity of childcare spots in our community
 - ii. Restrictions on childcare centers, including the requirement to use a first-floor space for fire safety purposes
 - iii. Lack of affordability and childcare deserts
 - iv. High operating costs (such as rent) and extremely low pay for most employees
 - v. “Catch 22” scenarios, including when 3K and Pre-k- participating centers can no longer accept ACS vouchers and are now at risk of closure
 - vi. The desire for improved coordination between municipal stakeholders such as DOE, ACS, and the Mayor’s office
 - vii. The importance of codifying this step toward universal childcare into law
 - viii. Methods of quality assurance, which will not be a part of the Universal Child Care Act.
 3. Old Business – None
 4. New Business – None
 5. The co-chairs made the following announcements about upcoming committee meetings
 - a. October – Meeting will feature a panel of principals from local schools (tentatively looking to invite the principals from PS6, Robert Wagner Middle School, and Eleanor Roosevelt High School)
 - b. November- Because of the Thanksgiving holiday, the meeting will be held on Wednesday November 30, and will focus on partnerships between DOE schools and independent or parochial schools
 - c. December – Meeting will be canceled as it would fall during the week between Christmas and New Year’s when many people are away and when school is on holiday break.

The meeting adjourned at 8:04PM

Vanessa Aronson and Taína Borrero, Co-Chairs