



COMMUNITY
EDUCATION
COUNCIL
DISTRICT 31

Dr. Roderick Palton
District Superintendent

OFFICERS

Lucia Curatolo-Boylan
President

James Desiderato
1st Vice President

Frank Marino
2nd Vice President

Andrew Guido
Recording Secretary

Joseph Bird
Treasurer
IEP Representative

Amanda Wolkowitz
D75 Representative

Daniella Caputo
Teresa Circelli
Borough President
Appointees

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Melissa Cosentino

STUDENT MEMBERS
Jordan Dale
Mia Perez

VACANT
ELL Representative
D31 Representative
D31 Representative
Parliamentarian
Administrative Assistant

CEC 31 Hybrid Business Meeting and Calendar
Meeting Minutes
Monday June 9th, 2025

Business Meeting

- **Call to Order** at 6:38 PM and welcomed by President Lucia Curatolo-Boylan

- **Welcomed interpretation services** in Russian, Mandarin, and Spanish

- **Roll call of Members**

***In-Person:** Lucia Curatolo-Boylan, James Desiderato, Andrew Guido, Amanda Wolkowitz, Teresa Circelli, Melissa Cosentino, Joseph Bird, Daniella Caputo, Mia Perez*

***Absent:** Frank Marino and Jordan Dale*

- **Approval May Draft Business Meeting Minutes**

Motion to forgo reading minutes aloud in the interest of time. Minutes were distributed to the public prior to the meeting and presented on screen during the meeting.

Motion 1st: *Melissa Cosentino*

Motion 2nd: *Andrew Guido*

Meeting minutes were approved by all members

- **President's Report**

- **2025 CEC Elections:** Campaign season has concluded. Families: Visit schools.nyc.gov/Elections2025 to learn more about who will represent your District for the 2025-2027 school years. Due to run off elections in several districts throughout the city which are occurring now through June 12th we reject results to be results to be released shortly thereafter.
- **Candidate Information:** Profiles for all 44 candidates and a recording of the March 27 candidate forum are available online. All current CEC members are running for re-election.
 1. <https://apps.schools.nyc/cecprofiles/CandidateListByDistrict/31>
 2. <https://www.schools.nyc.gov/get-involved/families/education-councils/elections/candidate-forums>
- **FACE Update:** Upcoming virtual workshop: Supporting My Child's Cognitive Development: Mathematics, Reasoning & Problem-Solving. Families play one of the most important roles in a child's learning and development. We're here to support and celebrate that journey with you. Join us for an interactive, hands-on virtual session focused on strengthening your child's early math, reasoning, and problem-solving skills. In this session, you'll learn fun and practical activities that you can do at home to help build these essential foundations, all from the comfort of your own space!
 - Session Dates & Times:
 -  Monday, June 9th at 11:30 AM



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-  Monday, June 16th at 6:00 PM
- Please see the attached flyers and registration form. 🖱️ Registration Form
- Spots are limited, so don't wait—sign up today! We look forward to learning and growing with you.
- **D31 Superintendent Evaluation:** is due by June 30th New York State education law requires that community education councils evaluate community superintendents on an annual basis. They have an additional resource for us that we can view on demand. The purpose of the evaluation is to allow the superintendent to receive feedback, to promote growth as an instructional leader, and to foster a stronger collaborative relationship between the superintendent and our council. I'll distribute the form again with full council, though this particular form is not required for use. It's just what we use generally to gather feedback, and then we'll share that form out at our June meeting so that everyone can approve submitted to the division of school leadership.

● **Councilmember Reports**

None

● **New Business for next month's agenda**

None

● **Motion to Adjourn**

Motion 1st: *Amanda Wolkowitz*

Motion 2nd: *Daniella Caputo*

● **Meeting Adjourned 7:11pm**

Calendar Meeting

- **Call to Order** at 7:34PM and welcomed by President Lucia Curatolo-Boylan

- **Welcomed interpretation services** in Russian, Mandarin, and Spanish

● **Roll call of Members**

In-Person: *Lucia Curatolo-Boylan, James Desiderato, Andrew Guido, Amanda Wolkowitz, Teresa Circelli, Melissa Cosentino, Joseph Bird, Daniella Caputo, and Mia Perez*

Absent: *Frank Marino and Jordan Dale*

● **Approval May Draft Business Meeting Minutes**

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Motion 1st: *Joseph Bird*

Motion 2nd: *Andrew Guido*

Meeting minutes were approved by all members

• **Presentations**

**Presentation: School Construction Authority (SCA) – Proposed New School Site Presenter:
Steve Gonzalez, Borough Representative, SCA**

- **Project Overview:**
 - **Location:** Corner of Abington and East Reading Avenues, Great Kills, Staten Island (District 31)
 - **Proposal:** Construction of a new 754-seat primary and intermediate school, including D75 programming.
 - **Site Size:** ~96,147 sq. ft. (~2.2 acres); currently 18 privately owned vacant lots.
- **Nearest School:** PS 32 on Barlow Ave (overcrowded at 114% capacity).
 - **Process & Timeline:**
 - **Current Phase:** Site selection and public comment.
 - **Public Comment Period:** May 7 – June 30, 2025.
- **Next Steps:**
 - SCA awaits City Council approval and property acquisition.
 - Design phase (approx. 1 year) follows.
 - Bidding (6–8 weeks) and construction (approx. 36 months) to follow.
- **Environmental and inter-agency reviews (DOT, DEP, FDNY) will take place before final approvals.**
- **Additional Notes:**
 - Zoning decisions (i.e., school attendance boundaries) are handled by the DOE, not the SCA.
 - Emphasis on the need for additional seats, particularly in the South Shore due to overcrowding.
 - Discussion of the ongoing demand for 3K seats in the South Shore area—space availability remains a limiting factor.
- **Contact for Comments:**
 - **Email:** sites@nnycsci.org
 - **Mail:** Kelly Murphy, NYC SCA, 2501 Jackson Avenue, Long Island City, NY 11101
 - **Phone (Steve Gonzalez):** (347) 539-0157
 - **DOE Contact:** Rebecca Lichtenstein (R.Lichtenstein2@schools.nyc.gov)
- **Closing**
 - Appreciation extended to Steve Gonzalez and SCA for their efforts and the informative presentation.



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Presentation: Contracts for Excellence & Class Size Reduction Presenter: Dr. Roderick Palton, District 31 Superintendent Guest: Elba Rodriguez, Budget Director, District 31

Topic: Overview of Fiscal Year 2026 Contracts for Excellence (C4E) funding, class size reduction mandate, public comment process, and budget allocations.

- **C4E Background**
 - Originated in 2007–2008 under Foundation Aid.
 - Funds must support high-needs student populations: English language learners, students in poverty, and students with disabilities.
 - 2022 updates included **class size reduction mandates**
- Eligible Funding Areas Include:
 - Extended instructional time, after-school programs, multilingual and bilingual education, Pre-K expansion, class size reduction, and school quality initiatives.
 - Also supports middle/high school restructuring and advanced coursework access.
- FY 2026 C4E Budget:
 - Total increase: **\$286M** (from \$802M to \$1.089B).
 - **\$241M** allocated for class size reduction.
 - **\$45M** phased in from prior year allocations.
 - **District 31 allocation: \$68.2M** across various categories:
 - Discretionary funds: \$26.3M
 - Class size reduction: \$17.5M
 - Fair student funding: \$12.7M
 - ICT classrooms, ASD classrooms, summer programming, Pre-K, etc.
- Public Comment Period:
 - **Deadline:** July 8, 2025
 - Email:
 - contractsforexcellence@schools.nyc.gov
 - classsize@schools.nyc.gov
- Draft Class Size Reduction Plan Highlights:
 - 750+ schools received funding to hire ~3,700 teachers.
 - Class size plans were developed collaboratively with School Leadership Teams (SLTs), reviewed by DOE, UFT, and CSA.
 - 46% of NYC classrooms currently under the mandated class size caps, exceeding the 40% requirement for SY 2024–25.
 - Efforts underway to repurpose space for additional classrooms and expand seat capacity
- **Council & Community Discussion Highlights**
 - Feedback Emphasis:
 - Strong call from CEC31 for parent and community engagement in the public comment process.
 - Noted Staten Island schools are historically underfunded and need stronger representation.



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• **Concerns Raised:**

- Need for increased parent engagement funding; request to dedicate a specific budget line rather than bundling it into discretionary or Title I funds.
- Concerns Raised
 - Transparency and accessibility of school-level budgets.
 - Future of Title I funding.
 - Equity of class size funding allocations.
 - Space constraints impacting class size compliance.
 - Options for students in overcrowded schools lacking space.
 - Clarity on after-school and summer programming funding.

• **Hiring Process & Teacher Recruitment:**

- District is working with CSI, NYC DOE, and out-of-state schools (e.g., NJ) to recruit up to 500 teachers.
- Hiring is principal-led; no central email for general applicants, but interest is high, especially on Staten Island's South Shore.

Application processes, Specialized high schools, Transfers, Required forms Conclusion

Paul Helfman concluded by emphasizing the office's commitment to supporting students and families, aiming for safe and appropriate placements wherever possible. He opened the floor to council member questions.

Meeting Adjourned / Q&A Followed

• **President's Report**

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- **ICE Detention of NYC Public School Student:**
 - Second known case of ICE detaining a NYC student (Dylan Lopez Contreras, 20, from Ellis Prep).
 - DOE affirms schools remain safe spaces for all students.
 - While not a District 31 case, CEC 31 has a resolution prepared for any such local occurrence
- **Class Size Reduction Efforts**
 - 800 schools applied for class-size reduction funding.
 - 750 plans approved.
 - Thousands of new hires expected on top of regular annual teacher attrition.

● **Superintendent's Report**

- **Celebration Season:**
 - Celebrating Pre-K, 5th, 8th, and 12th grade graduations.
 - Superintendent attending events across the district.
- **Family Welcome Center Relocation:**
 - New address: 365 Bay Street (formerly at Petrides Campus).
- **Mental Health Symposium**
 - Held at Hilton; well-attended by parents and staff.
 - Focused on student mental health and trauma.
 - Plans to expand:
 - High school wellness ambassadors
 - Positive behavior intervention supports (PBIS)
 - Restorative justice (RJ) in elementary and middle schools
 - \$3.7M in funding secured in partnership with Borough President.
- **District 31 Science Expo Recap:**
 - Held June 3 at Borough Hall of Science.
 - Innovative student projects included earthquake-response building models, autonomous recycling robots, and creative biological organisms.
 - Strong participation from multiple schools across grade levels.
- **Cell Phone Policy Update**
 - DOE to implement bell-to-bell cell phone ban.
 - Chancellor's Regulation A-413 under review; PEP vote pending.
 - Policy to be implemented at the school level with guidance to follow over the summer.
- **Upcoming Events**
 - Juneteenth Celebration: Friday, June 13 at PS 57, 10 AM
Featuring Alvin Ailey Dance Company.
 - Restorative Justice Family Summit: Saturday, June 14 (9 AM–4 PM)
Details on District 31 app and website.
- **Leadership Announcements:**



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- New PS 21 Principal: Valerie Panzella
- PS 21 teacher Valerie Portella awarded 2025 Big Apple Teacher Award.
- **Reminders & Reflections:**
 - Father's Day: Special recognition for fathers and father figures.
 - Last Day of School: Wednesday, June 26.
 - Theme for 2025–26: Coherence—aligning district initiatives and improving parent engagement.

● **Committee Reports - None**

● **Public Speaking -**

Speaker: Cheryl McMillan

Expressed gratitude for CEC's work, highlighting unity and growth.

Inquired about public access to the meeting recording.

Response: Recordings to be uploaded soon; delays due to staffing.

● **New Business**

Jimmy Desiderato

● **Co-located Schools:**

- Requested collaboration with District 75 to improve equity in shared school campuses.
- Suggested mirroring District 75's Resolution 18.
- Discussed past efforts and the need for accountability and transparency.

● **9/11 Resolution Follow-up:**

- Asked for concrete planning to honor and memorialize the event annually.

● **Mental Health Speaker Proposal:**

- Recommended inviting **John Halligan**, speaker and author of *Ryan's Story*, for a district-wide event to address student mental health and suicide prevention.



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● **PS 8 Concerns:**

- Requested follow-up on unresolved school issues and was informed meeting with Chancellor's Team, District, School and Families was facilitated.
- Asked for presence from the Chancellor's Office at future CEC meetings.

Joseph Bird

● **Petrides Campus Scheduling Conflicts:**

- Raised concerns about equitable use of the shared athletic field for school carnivals.
- Urged coordination to avoid exclusions for students during overlapping events.

Christine Loughlin (Executive Director)

- Confirmed coordination efforts and traffic pattern improvements at Petrides.
- Scheduled to attend a building council meeting to ensure cooperation continues.

● **Old Business**

None

● **Closing Remarks**

- Recognition of all graduating students and outgoing CEC members.
- Gratitude expressed to families, community members, and leadership.
- Reminder of summer events and back-to-school efforts.
- The meeting adjourned with well-wishes for summer and continued collaboration.

● **Motion to Adjourn**

Motion 1st: *Melissa Cosentino*

Motion 2nd: *Teresa Cirelli*



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- Meeting Adjourned 9:37 pm

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