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December 16, 2013

City's Education Councils Seek Reforms in a Message to the New Mayor

New York City -- Education Councils representing parents citywide have signed on to a letter to Mayor-elect de Blasio. In this unprecedented show of unity, the Councils have issued a statement to de Blasio raising concerns in numerous areas, including the decision-making processes put in place by the Bloomberg administration.

The statement calls for, among other things, reform of the Panel for Education Policy, a return to a Community School District structure, serious changes to the way that decisions are made concerning the space allocations to schools and future construction and educational programming, and reversal of the contested co-locations approved by Bloomberg's Panel for Education Policy late this year. The statement seeks immediate review of the City's assessment and delivery of special education services. In addition, the statement seeks parental and community input into the selection of the next chancellor, urges the City to follow state law concerning payment of rent for charter school co-locations, seeks engagement on the Common Core, seeks a moratorium on the use of standardized testing in high-stakes decisions, and asks the mayor-elect to protect student privacy.

"I am hopeful that Mayor-elect de Blasio will bring a new day to the public school system in New York City. After twelve years of being ignored and marginalized I look forward to working with the new Mayor as a real partner in education," said Shino Tanikawa, President of the District Two Community Education Council.

"Public schools work only when parents, teachers, school leaders and administration work together to develop and implement public education policy," said Tory Frye, elected parent member of the District Six Community Education Council "The public school parents who worked tirelessly to get Bill de Blasio elected look forward to this collaborative work in partnership with the new Department of Education."

As of December 16, Community Education Councils for Districts 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 12, 13, 14, 15, 17, 20, 21, 22, 25, 26, 28, 29, 30, and 31, as well as the Citywide Council on English Language Learners, Citywide Council on Special Education, and the Citywide District 75 Council and individual signatories from the Citywide Council on High Schools and Community Education Council 23 have signed on to the letter. Additional Community Education Councils and Citywide Councils are expected to be added throughout the month of December.

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