

**IMPORTANT QUESTIONS YOU SHOULD ASK NYC DOE ABOUT THE PROPOSED  
CONTRACTS FOR EXCELLENCE “PLAN” for 2015-2016**

The public can submit questions and comments to [ContractsForexcellence@schools.nyc.gov](mailto:ContractsForexcellence@schools.nyc.gov) until Nov. 6, 2015.

The list of CEC hearings in October are posted at [http://schools.nyc.gov/AboutUs/funding/c4e/Public+Comment Borough+Hearings.htm](http://schools.nyc.gov/AboutUs/funding/c4e/Public+Comment+Borough+Hearings.htm)

1. Why does the DOE not allocate any funds toward reducing class size in its Contracts for Excellence “targeted” or “district-wide” initiatives even though it’s the top priority of parents in the DOE’s own polls? Of the \$531 million in state C4E funds, only \$93 million is being used by schools to reduce class size.
2. What oversight does the DOE maintain to ensure that schools that say they’re allocating Contracts for Excellence (C4E ) funds for class size reduction actually do so?
3. Many schools are too overcrowded currently to reduce class size. Why did the city reject the recommendations of the Blue Book Working Group to align the school utilization formula with smaller classes if there is an intention to lower class size, as the Mayor has promised?
4. Why does the DOE hold hearings on its C4E plan after the funds have already been allocated? What is the point of gaining public feedback?
5. Why did class size increase last year for seventh year in a row, according to the DOE data, with more than 350,000 students attending classes 30 or more? Doesn’t that conflict with your legal obligation to reduce class size?
6. [The C4E law](#) specifically forbids “supplanting” – i.e. allowing state funds to substitute for city fund: “*the increases in total foundation aid and supplemental educational improvement plan grants [will be] used to supplement, and not supplant funds allocated by the district in the base year for such purposes.*” Yet DOE open admits it in presentation it is supplanting funds in its C4E plan; can you explain why is this allowed?
7. Why is the city using class size reduction funds to “minimize class size increases”? Does that really constitute class size reduction, as the law requires?
8. Where is the DOE’s state- approved C4E and/or class size reduction plan for the 2014-2015 school year? Can you provide us with a copy? It is available neither at the state or DOE website.
9. Online, the only mention of class size reduction in the DOE’s proposed C4E plan from last year (2014-2015) [was the following](#), in the response to public comment:

*For the 2015-16 School Year, NYCDOE will focus Class Size Reduction planning efforts on the School Renewal Program. The criteria for selecting Renewal Schools is [sic] aligned with C4E goals to target schools with the greatest needs. Further information about the School Renewal Program can be found [here](#).*

This is mentioned again in the current C4E presentation. Yet we have no evidence that class sizes have been lowered this year in the renewal schools; and have heard of renewal schools where class sizes have increased. In which renewal schools were class sizes reduced this fall, to what levels, and how was the list selected?

Prepared by Leonie Haimson, Class Size Matters, 10/12/15.

If you get an answer from DOE on any of these critical questions, please let us know us at [info@classsizematters.org](mailto:info@classsizematters.org)