



Citywide Council on English Language Learners

28-11 Queens Plaza North, 4th Floor, LIC, NY, 11101 Tel: (718) 391-8596 Email: CCELL@schools.nyc.gov

Charlie Huang President	Lilly Chan First Vice President	Muneer Abualroub Second Vice President	Emily Li Treasurer	Calvin Wei Recording Secretary
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Division of Multilingual Learners: Mirza Sanchez-Medina **Deputy Chief Academic Officer**

Council Members: Bizhu Chen, Assietou Sow, Martha Rybicka, Chiara Sovegni, Elmahdi Oummih, Mitchel Wu

Citywide Council on English Language Learners (CCELL) Resolution # 45

Resolution on New York City School Governance

Approved at the CCELL meeting on 1 - 4 - 2022

The Citywide Council on English Language Learners (CCELL), was established by NYS Education Law 2590-B, 5. (a) (i) – (iii) with the power to advise and consent on any educational or instructional policy involving bilingual or English as a Second Language Programs, . . . and make recommendations, as appropriate, on how to improve the efficiency and delivery of such services.

The Community and Citywide Education Councils (CCECs) are composed of parents who have been elected or appointed to serve as stakeholders of NYC School Community Districts, and specific cohorts of students, representing NYC public school students and their families.

Whereas, Chapter 91 of the Laws of 2002 (**the Law**) and Chapter 123 of 2003 established a centralized, mayoral control system of governance for the New York City School District, and in April of 2019 the legislature extended the provisions of mayoral control for three years, until June 30, 2022; and

Whereas, in accordance with the Law, the CCELL is part of the Citywide and District Community Education Councils (CCECs) that are composed of parents and community members who have been elected or appointed to serve. The Citywide Education Councils are composed of parents of specific cohorts of students, representing NYC public school students and their families; and

Whereas, mayoral control has removed most of the power from CCECs, public school parents and the school communities that are served by the NYC Department of Education (NYCDOE); and

Whereas, the Panel for Educational Policy (PEP) has the power to enact policy, it has come to be referred to as a rubber stamp of the policies proposed by the mayor; and

Whereas, with each new mayor there was regular disruption and an upheaval of the public school system, resulting in head-spinning confusion felt in all aspects of the system; and

Whereas, the ideal solution to NYC school governance is to end mayoral control of NYC Public Schools. This solution requires passage of consequential amendments to the Law by the NYS Legislature so that the mayor’s power is reduced; and



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Whereas, NYC schools require a new form of school governance that will provide meaningful empowerment to parents and public-school communities in NYC Public Schools. Parent voices must be valued and be included in a far more collaborative way than the present method; and

Whereas, the present CCECs two-year term does not allow members to acquire the necessary knowledge and experience to effectively serve their school communities; and

Whereas, the election process for CCEC members can be clarified and improved; and

Whereas, the CCELL has been adversely impacted by not being included in the amendment that was approved for District Community Education Councils (CECs) in April 2019 when the NYS Legislature last extended the Law. The amendment calls for at least one position on the district community education council to be filled by a **parent of a current student who is or has been at any time an English Language Learner**. However, there is no mention that the same provision should also apply to eligibility of parents to serve on the CCELL; and

Whereas, another amendment that did not include the CCELL, concerns the change of eligibility status of members of the CCELL, as well as the Citywide Council on Special Education (CCSE). Presently a member is required to leave the respective council before the expiration of the term to which they were elected. This creates a vacancy that is often difficult to fill in the middle of a term, leaving councils short of a full membership and unable to capably fulfill their responsibilities; and

Whereas, there needs to be more intensive outreach to families of students who are ELLs so that they will be aware of opportunities to participate in the education of their children, such as serving on CCECs. The diversity of these communities is not always represented; and

Whereas, the citywide council presidents were not included as a part of the process for selecting the CCEC parent member representative to the PEP; and

Whereas, CCECs are staunch advocates for students and families in that they are in contact with NYCDOE officials, including the Chancellor and Superintendents, and hold regular monthly public meetings that inform the public about policy, curriculum, budgets, challenges, progress and more; and



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Whereas, CCECs are consistently in contact with their communities regarding available resources and are accessible through meetings, phone calls, email and telecommunications. CCEC members give an inordinate amount of volunteer hours in support of their communities; and

Whereas, every effort must be made to gather support from all stakeholders to advocate for a structure of school governance that calls for checks and balances on the power of the mayor; and

Whereas, it is necessary to form a Task Force to conduct a comprehensive study on school Governance in NYC. A more democratic form of School Governance is needed – one that will allow for a greater parent voice, transparency and accountability. The Task Force will be required to submit recommendations on a transition plan for New York City school governance; and be it therefore

Resolved, that the composition of the PEP shall be an odd number of members, as follows:

- 5 members, who are current public-school parents, appointed by the Borough Presidents
- 1 member appointed by the Public Advocate
- 1 member appointed by the Comptroller
- 1 member, who is a current public-school parent, selected by all the members of the Citywide and District Community Education Councils
- 1 member appointed by the Citywide Council on High Schools
- 1 member appointed by the Citywide Council on Special Education
- 1 member appointed by the Citywide Council on English Language Learners
- 1 member appointed by the D75 Citywide Council
- 5 members appointed by the Mayor - the Mayor will appoint the Chancellor, with the approval of the PEP. The Chancellor who is appointed must have experience as an educational leader, with no waivers allowed.
- Total of 17 PEP members, who serve at the pleasure of their appointers, but can only be removed after a 30-day period of discussion as to the reason for their removal; and be it further

Resolved, that the CCEC elections be turned over to the Board of Elections. The Department of Education is here to educate children, not to run elections; and be it further



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Resolved, that in the next cycle of CCEC elections, appeal campaigning, endorsements, cross endorsements and slates shall be allowed in the languages that are spoken in these communities. These efforts will increase equity and diversity in the elected councils; and be it further

Resolved, that district community education councils' (CECs) members (composed of parents and community members) shall be further empowered. In addition to the power of zoning, CECs shall be an integral part of the process of interviewing and selecting candidates for district superintendent, who shall be the clearly defined educational leader of the geographical school district. In addition to actually evaluating the superintendent CECs shall establish educational policies, in coordination with district superintendent and staff. CECs will have the final approval or disapproval of co-locations and opening and closing of schools (including charters); and be it further

Resolved, that the law be amended to allow members of the Citywide Council on English Language Learners and the Citywide Council on Special Education to serve out their term following their change of eligibility status, and be it further

Resolved, that the amendment language that provides for parents of current students, who are or have been at any time an English language learner, shall be eligible to apply to serve on the District Community Education Councils, shall also apply to the Citywide Council on English Language Learners (CCELL); and be it further

Resolved, that the terms for Citywide and District Community Education Councils shall be changed from two years to three years, thereby allowing for more training and experienced council members to participate; and be it further.

Resolved, that the NYS Legislature create a task force to conduct a comprehensive study on school governance in NYC that will increase parent voice, increase shared responsibility in school governance, add checks and balances for greater oversight and accountability, and increase structure and sustainability in Citywide and Community Education Councils. The task force membership shall include all NYC public school stakeholders, including parents, students, administrators, teachers, support staff, and community members who are education advocates. The task force will submit recommendations on a transition plan for school governance in NYC.