



Community Education Council For District One

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Mayor Bill de Blasio
City Hall
New York, NY 10007

October 19, 2016

Dear Mayor de Blasio,

New York City is the most diverse city in the world and it has an opportunity of historical proportions. While this country struggles to escape the problems caused by systemic segregation we can become a model of integration and make diversity our strength rather than our problem.

One easy and approachable step in this direction is the integration and diversification of our schools. This issue has been one of School District 1 priorities for quite some time. It not only promises more equitable access to public schools but also an education that is more in line with the need of a world that is becoming more diverse every day.

For the past two years, School District 1 in Manhattan, has been working on one possible approach to this diversification. Our district was able to secure a NY State grant to work on a Socio-Economic Integration Pilot Program that could transform the way enrollment is done in the district's schools and promote diversity. This grant, that has built in community participation, has been very well received in the district. The working groups for this grant is composed of school leaders, teachers, parents and community based organizations. These volunteers have worked many countless hours for months to ensure they come up with the best possible solutions for this growing problem in our schools.

In February 2016, Chancellor Farina came to District 1 and acknowledged our work with the SIPP grant, she said, "I want to see diversity in schools organically. I don't want to see mandates. I want to see how do different communities come up with different ideas." Our community walked away with the

understanding that as long as the community supports this district wide plan, we would be on pace to implement our new admissions plan for the '17- '18 school year as the grant was originally proposed. Since then, numerous schools within our district have passed resolutions in supports of the grant.

However, our district has found many numerous roadblocks in the city bureaucracy which are preventing the implementation of our grant from becoming a reality. We are concerned this slowdown by the NYC Department of Education is resulting in yet another postponement of the pilot. This has created a significant amount of frustrations amongst our community and many families are looking for solutions to move this process on schedule.

The community of District 1, is asking that in the name of a better, more just and diverse school system, you take all necessary steps to ensure that this pilot will be put in motion for the '17-'18 academic year for the incoming Pre-K and Kindergarten cohort.

Sincerely,

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