

The Council of School Supervisors and
Administrators (CSA)

Ernest Logan, President

Testimony Presented to
The City Council Education Committee

Hearing on
Special Education Reorganization

Thursday, January 29, 2009

Good afternoon, Chairman Jackson and distinguished members of the City Council Education Committee. My name is Randi Herman and I am the First Vice President of the Council of School Supervisors and Administrators (CSA). I thank you for this opportunity to present testimony on behalf of our members, the Principals, Assistant Principals, Supervisors, and Education Administrators who work for the Department of Education (DOE). I applaud you in recognizing the impact of recent special education reorganizations on our most vulnerable and needy students.

In this testimony, I will identify the strengths and weaknesses that exist in the current system and, more importantly, I will make recommendations for improving the current delivery of services to special education students in New York City. I want to commend the Chancellor for announcing on January 14, 2009, the decision to replace the special education data systems with a new web-based Special Education Student Information System (SESIS). This new system will enhance the evaluation, placement, and case management of students with disabilities. However, we must ensure that the money used to fund this system could not be put to better use in areas that have more of an impact on the classroom. We must also focus on the improvement of parental communication and support in the special education area; make certain that we have adequate levels of licensed staff to serve our special education population; and determine how to shoulder the cost burden that special education reorganization has placed on individual schools.

The Implementation of the Special Education Student Information System (SESIS)

I want to begin by addressing the importance of the new web-based Special Education Student Information System. SESIS will be a welcome change from the paper filing system that resulted in lost case information and delays in processing, as students moved from school to school. For the first time, the DOE can use an online Individualized Education Program (IEP) for every student with disabilities. The system will also contain other important information such as student referrals, evaluation reports, and physicians' prescriptions. In addition, this online tracking system will enable Principals and other school personnel to access student files quickly and securely. Finally, SESIS will allow the DOE to provide families of students up-to-date and accurate information.

We agree with Dr. Marcia Lyles, Deputy Chancellor for Teaching and Learning, when she says, "The Special Education Student Information System is another step in our continuing efforts to honor our obligation to improve our support for students with disabilities in ways recommended by an independent review of special education services."

Nevertheless, while we acknowledge the quality of the SESIS program, we must carefully consider the amount of money that its implementation entails. In this fiscal crisis, when we are confronting the possibility of direct classroom budget cuts, will SESIS have enough immediate and positive impact on students to justify the cost at this time? According to minutes from the Panel for Educational Policy meeting on January 26th, the program is currently projected to cost \$54.9 million over five years, with an additional cost to the DOE of \$23.7 million for a project team and consultant staff. As a special education expert, I must remind you of the serious compliance issues that are mandated for students with disabilities. It would be inappropriate and detrimental to student success if the DOE were forced to cut any special education services because money is being allotted to the implementation of SESIS. Although a large portion of this cost may be coming from the capital budget, the part that is coming from the operating budget may be better spent on reducing cuts to the classroom during this period of great economic challenges.

Parental Involvement and Communication

Although the SESIS program is a step in the right direction, it will not resolve all the needs of New York City's children with disabilities. We must continue to evaluate the current state of affairs involving special education, taking into account parental involvement and support, staff sizes, and the ability of individual schools to meet the most urgent needs of this population.

Above all, we cannot underestimate the critical role that parents play in the education of our special education children. In the past, prior to the reorganization, parents had developed a valuable working relationship with special education staff. In the current centralized system, parents often have difficulty finding the appropriate person to answer their questions. We need to keep parents involved in their child's education at all levels, and establish a level of trust and personal relationships between parents and educators that will foster the academic and personal growth of the child both at home and at school.

According to the March 2007 report by Public Advocate Betsy Gotbaum, nearly half of the requests by parents for assistance with special education fell on deaf ears because the DOE and the Committees on Special Education (CSE) were unresponsive. This lack of communication and assistance is unacceptable and abhorrent to all of us who advocate for children. In addition, the report cited many instances where CSEs are largely inaccessible to non-English speaking parents. More than 70 percent of callers requesting help in Mandarin Chinese were not successfully assisted. Many of the CSE staff are CSA members who are doing their best, with the limited resources available, to keep these parents informed and involved and would like to see this situation ameliorated.

When the Public Advocate's report was first released, Chairman Jackson said, "The findings of the Public Advocate's report mirror the complaints and desperate pleas for help that I receive in my community offices from frustrated parents. Without understanding the enormity of the task it faces, the DOE continues to fail our neediest students and their families."

Shockingly, we learned from the report that, "Only one in 100 calls (to 311) requesting information about special education is referred to the DOE's Special Education Call Center." This is a 99 percent failure rate. As Public Advocate Gotbaum states, "Parents of children with special education needs have a challenging enough time as it is. Rather than being forced to spend their time navigating the complex and ever-changing special education system that the DOE has patched together, these parents should be able to spend extra time caring for their children. Parents shouldn't have to hope that they receive the right answers from 311. Getting parents consistent and accurate information in a timely fashion should be a priority for the DOE." Prior to the system-wide reorganization, parents could contact their local CSE, and were supported and kept informed by a parent advocate. As I explained earlier, education is enhanced by personal connections between parents and educators.

Resources and staff must be made available to help educate parents about these organizational changes and demonstrate how parents can effectively navigate this new system. The parents of a special education child have the right to have their concerns and questions answered in a reasonable amount of time and in the language they understand best.

Staffing Shortages

In order to deliver high quality special education service to our students, it is essential that our school system be staffed with an appropriate number of licensed teachers and educated professionals. An August 2008 memorandum from Gary Barton, the Executive Director of Field and Information Service for the Division of Human Services, listed a menu of teacher shortages in specific license areas including: Deaf and Hard of Hearing, Limited Vision, Bilingual Special Education, English as a Second Language, and Speech Improvement, to name just a few. Teacher shortages in specific license areas can cause the students to have less instructional time per week than is needed, or worse, cause the child to go without services entirely. The city school system must provide services that allow the child to succeed and excel; therefore, we must have a plan for meeting the current shortage of trained professionals.

Cost Burden is Placed on Schools

The reorganization of special education has caused incidental costs to be absorbed at the local school level, making it especially difficult for Principals who serve many students with disabilities to provide all mandated services and continue funding other important programs. For example, Principals must make certain that critical supplies such as hearing aids, batteries,

and FM units are on hand for each student with an IEP mandate. When Occupational and Physical Therapists provide in-school services, the Principal must ensure that there are mats, bicycles, and other requisite equipment. In many cases involving younger children, the school is forced to pay for the cost of diapers and other supplies that certain youngsters require. This type of cost is supposed to be covered by Fair Student Funding that is supposed to follow each student; however, this funding is based on an average needs assessment. When costs for individual students exceed the projected average, which they often do, Principals are left scrambling to come up with the funds. A Principal should never have to choose between providing sufficient supplies and materials for each special education student or funding academic programs.

The challenges that I have outlined are critical, and we should use our current resources more effectively to meet them. The following recommendations are basic measures that can and must be implemented to raise the quality of special education in New York City.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Fully fund the SESIS program and implement it in a timely manner, as soon as it is determined that this can be done without cutting other special education or academic funds that go directly to the classroom.
- Provide additional resources and training for parents at the local level by working collaboratively with the Office of Parent Engagement.
- Retrain Absent Teacher Reserves in the license areas in which teacher shortages currently exist.
- Ensure that schools receive sufficient funding to fully provide the special education services and materials that are needed. Assist and support Principals in indentifying the most cost-effective methods of obtaining and providing special education services.

We must remember that certain Special Education services are often looked upon as educational frills that can be cut when economic times are tough, but, in fact, these services are essential investments in the future of a vast population of students who will be more successful adults if their needs are met now. CSA thanks the City Council for shining a spotlight on this issue, and stands ready to assist you. By carefully analyzing the cost of new initiatives, collaborating with parents, teachers, and school leaders, and providing the necessary resources, the Department of Education can continue to improve special education in New York City.

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January 29, 2009

Re: Inappropriate Reliance on Due Process

Encouraging collaboration between schools and parents saves money and builds relationships.

In our experience, opportunity for dialogue between parents and school staff has fallen. The previous Mayoral reorganizations eliminated the parents' opportunity to discuss concerns at multiple levels with people not directly involved in the dynamics of the situation.

Power is now concentrated in the hands of the principals. School staffs are all following the same directives and are all reporting to the same boss. When there is disagreement, there is little flexibility to reexamine the issue and consider a fresh perspective. With no informal options available, adversarial relationships and the use of due process grows.

In conclusion, whether any further reorganization of Special education takes place or not, it is imperative that the Department of Education place a greater emphasis on pursuing positive resolutions at the school level.

Jean Mizutani

**Comments to be Delivered to the New York City Council
Committee on Education
Impact of the Reorganization on Special Education**

By Lisa Isaacs of New York Lawyers for the Public Interest

January 30, 2009

Good afternoon. Thank you for this opportunity to comment on the impact of the Reorganization of the New York City Department of Education's Special Education Services.

My name is Lisa Isaacs. I am the Director of the Education Law Program of New York Lawyers for the Public Interest (NYLPI). Since 1981, NYLPI has had a contract with the New York State Commission on Quality of Care to provide legal and other protection and advocacy services for individuals with disabilities in New York City and across New York State. Over the years, we have worked on countless special education cases, conducted many parent trainings, worked collaboratively with other advocacy organizations regarding issues of special education policy reform, organized parents in support of inclusive education, and litigated cases of significant impact. This experience forms the basis of our report on the impact of the Department of Education's Reorganization of Special Education.

I would like to focus my comments today on concerns that changes at the DOE, including the most recent reorganization, have not led to meaningful improvements for children with special educational needs, and have in many ways made things more difficult for parents and advocates, with lines of responsibility frequently shifting, and

offices being reassigned, for example the ISC/CSE division of labor which has confused us all.

Although we applaud efforts of some high-ranking special education professionals to create systems and transparency through such efforts at the Standard Operating Procedures Manual and the Special Education call center, Special Education services are often overlooked and derided as the financial drain of the educational system.

We and many other advocates criticize the system for its dense bureaucracy, and its inability to accommodate students with IEPs in the city's most desirable educational settings like the new small high schools or specialized schools. We note the ineffective communications system, and the seeming intractable problems with student transportation.

We continue to hear stories of children spending hours on buses to get to schools in their own neighborhoods, and of students with severe disabilities being left on buses all day, forgotten. We have heard about medically fragile children forced to stay home because medically-trained personnel are not available for transportation and in the classroom, and of the handcuffing of very young children, who are then transferred to hospital emergency rooms for psychiatric work up.

Finally, we hear about principals excluding parents from classrooms and school buildings if they question an aspect of their child's education. Complaints of neglect by school personnel are routine, as are unchecked bullying and harassment by peers. Parents express fear and frustration over the DOE's own Office of Special Investigations which seems to operate in secret, giving advocates and parents the impression that the goal is to

cover up – and not uncover -- acts of neglect and even abuse at schools in which imperious principals have the heaviest hands.

The reorganization has only exacerbated some of the worst problems by endowing principals with discretion to address school based problems, while at the same time scrutinizing schools on performance measures, creating a skewed system of accountability that militates against corrective action.

In our office, we receive dozens of calls every month, and I would like to give you a snapshot of the active cases we opened last year. I believe it is a representative case load for a program our size, and illustrates the gamut of school problems not resolved by the reorganization.

In 2008, we helped 332 children with more than referrals or brief service. This is about half of the calls we received regarding education-related problems. Parents called primarily for assistance with the following issues:

- Implementation or compliance with or inappropriate IEPs
- Obtaining least restrictive settings and other placement issues
- Inability to obtain related services
- Availability of reliable, safe transportation

Only 12 cases were opened with the initial request for tuition reimbursement, though a slightly larger number of cases evolved into litigation for private school placement.

A quarter of the callers were guardians of children with diagnoses of Autism Spectrum Disorders. This is a growing population with significant complex unmet

educational needs. Another 21% were classified as Learning Disabled. Nearly 15% were classified as Emotionally Disturbed and a large number – more than 7% -- carried a diagnosis of ADHD but were classified in a variety of ways.

There are some strong themes: parents were told by school personnel that if they disagreed or had problems with the proposed IEP recommendations or school programs, they should file for an impartial hearing. The IEP process should be collaborative, with full parental participation. Instead, parents report, no one at the schools try to explain to the parent how their problems could be resolved amicably and quickly. They often experience a dismissive attitude, which has made it very difficult for parents to trust the school to do right by their children.

Evaluations are slow and inadequate. Parent are not being informed about what services their child is, or should be, receiving. Related service providers, even if offered, and difficult to find. A good number of families are forced to obtain private evaluations just to get a clear picture of their child's problems, either because the DOE tells them evaluations are not needed or provides inadequate reports from school personnel. Some parents report never obtaining a reevaluation from the DOE notwithstanding the requirement that triennials be done.

Another concern is the lack of easy access to language services. Many clients are foreign language speakers, and report never receiving a single document in their preferred language. One client reported that a teacher used a twelve-year-old child from her daughter's own class as an interpreter to talk about her child's lack of educational

progress. A Polish-English bilingual child with severe language processing impairment is sitting in a Spanish-English bilingual class which is often conducted in Spanish.

These are but a few examples of a system that has yet to refine its structure to favor the well-trained, caring professionals in the ranks of the DOE. We have seen improvements, to be sure, in the website and the call center, but these are minor in comparison to the alarming number of problems facing children we know to be poorly served by the DOE.

In closing, we hope that the DOE will focus on true reform. We recommend special attention to:

- Staff training to facilitate true collaboration with parents;
- Monitoring and oversight of schools and its leaders;
- Increased attention to skills development for teachers and paraprofessionals;
- Seamless transitions between placements, especially in transitional years.

Thank you for considering my comments.



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Testimony to be delivered to the New York City Council Committee on Education

Re: Impact of DOE's Reorganizations of Special Education

By Kim Sweet, Advocates for Children of New York
January 29, 2009

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Good afternoon. Thank you for this opportunity to discuss how the Department of Education's reorganizations have affected students with disabilities.

My name is Kim Sweet, and I am the Executive Director of Advocates for Children of New York. For more than 37 years, Advocates for Children has been speaking out for children with disabilities in the City's public schools. We work with several thousand parents a year, helping them to navigate a school system that many find both frustrating and daunting.

We are proud to be the founding member of the ARISE Coalition – a diverse group of parents, advocates, and others who are banding together to make sure that the needs of students with disabilities in New York City will be addressed.

In preparing for this hearing, I looked back at a report called *Too Little, Too Late*, which was issued by the City Council Committee on Education in August of 2003. The DOE under Mayor Bloomberg had just announced its first series of



Children First reforms affecting special education, and the Committee report assesses the proposal and identifies areas of promise and concern.

In reviewing this report more than five years later, I am struck by two things:

First, I am struck that that DOE has not yet addressed some of the Council's most critical concerns. There has been no concerted effort whatsoever to improve program and service options for students with emotional or behavioral problems. There has been no coordinated strategy to provide preventive support services that decrease the number of referrals to special education, or that address overrepresentation of children of color in special education classes. There is still substantial non-compliance with students' IEPs, and the number of impartial hearing requests has actually increased. We still do not have an adequate system for maintaining and using data on the delivery of special education programs and services, although I was pleased to see that the DOE has just finalized a contract that, we hope, will rectify the data problem.

Second, it is striking that the major reorganization of special education structures that is analyzed in this report – phase 1 of the Children First Reforms – has already been replaced by another reorganization. The Regional Administrators for Special Education, who were put in place as a pillar of phase 1 to ensure accountability for special education services, are now long gone. The organizational structure that supports special education has been wiped out and rebuilt twice in the

A past seven years, and it seems that Garth Harries has recently been appointed to engineer another structural overhaul.

Reorganization can be a good thing. Nobody says that the special education system does not need improvement. But too many structural changes, with too little aforethought, have been highly disruptive and confusing to parents and teachers. Moreover, if the DOE is concentrating once again on re-arranging the deck chairs, we believe they will continue to postpone a much needed focus on instruction for students with disabilities. Without a renewed focus on instruction, we do not believe outcomes for students will significantly improve from here.

Thank you for this opportunity to speak to you today. I would be happy to answer any questions you may have.



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Center for Independence of the Disabled, NY

**Testimony presented to the
New York City Council
Committee on Education
on the Impact of DOE's
Reorganization of Special Education**

January 29, 2009

Testimony by:

Linda Ostreicher, Director of Public Policy
Center for Independence of the Disabled, NY



A United Way Agency

Testimony on the NYC Department of Education's Reorganization of Special Education

The Center for Independence of the Disabled, NY (CIDNY) is a leading advocate for New Yorkers with disabilities. For thirty years, we have helped to break down social, physical and perceptual barriers that can prevent people with disabilities from participating fully in mainstream life.

CIDNY has a program that works with older children with disabilities to help them make a successful transition to life after high school. The program exists because of the unacceptable results of the education system in New York for these children. These results often last a lifetime.

Every day CIDNY counselors see adults who must live in deep poverty on welfare or Supplemental Security Income for their whole adult lives. They do so because they never learned basic reading, writing, and arithmetic skills, since their disability-related learning needs were never properly addressed. Many of them went through the special education system, fulfilled all the goals on their "cookie-cutter" IEPs, and graduated with an IEP certificate. They then discovered that the IEP is not a diploma, and is not accepted as such by employers, colleges, trade schools, or even the armed forces. They are not on track for a GED. They are not the focus of youth employment programs. Others are pushed out or drop out of school frustrated by the lack of meaningful assistance, having been taught to associate a devastating stigma with their disability.

Like our sister organizations, we are determined to bring the voices of children with disabilities to policymakers considering reorganization of Special Education. Our message is simple, "nothing about us without us." It is imperative that we be included in the deliberative process from the outset so that we can participate in a constructive way. Exclusion of the voices of children with disabilities from this process reeks of stigma—it suggests that people with disabilities are mere objects and are not able to be considered as effective actors in the policy process. Nothing could be further from the truth.

There are numerous reports detailing constructive recommendations for change. In 2003, the New York City Council itself issued an important report.

One of the most promising changes supported by advocates and the City Council in 2003 was the expansion of classroom space for District 75 students in general education schools. Unfortunately, while the expansion happened, it produced a side effect. Turf disputes can occur when a District 75 classroom is housed within a general education school. Because the general education principal has control of the physical school facility and the general education activities, he or she sometimes feels that the District 75 students are not entitled to the same activities and access to resources as the other children. Some principals evidently feel that they have the power to prevent children with disabilities from using school facilities, such as libraries and gyms, barred from

class trips or school performances. We have heard of a high school senior with a disability who attended her class graduation ceremony, with her family there to share her success. However, her name was never called and she never got to go up on stage to receive her diploma. That's not the kind of lesson we want children to learn in school.

Any new reorganization of the Department of Education must put Special Education front and center, not tack it on as an afterthought to the simple rearrangement of programs. The goal of a reorganization should be to take strong, measurable remedial action to improve the outcomes for children with disabilities, by providing the educational resources they have long been denied. It should be to ensure specific accountability. There must be rewards for those who ensure our children's success and stiff consequences for those who perpetuate failure.

These days, the newspapers are full of the harm caused by people losing jobs and having their retirement savings disappear with the falling stock market. This is what life is like all the time for people with disabilities who do not get an adequate education in special education. Our employment rate in New York State was 34% before the recession began. We make up over half of the people in long-term poverty in the United States.

A recession is no excuse to continue to delay and deny their fair share of education to children in special education. This is the time for the DOE to take responsibility for preparing the next generation of New Yorkers with disabilities to read, write and multiply their way to secure working lives.



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**Testimony to the Council of the City of New York Committee on Education
Re: Impact of the Department of Education's Reorganization of Special Education
By Maggie Moroff, the ARISE Coalition
January 29, 2009**

Good afternoon and thank you to the members of the Committee and Council
Member Jackson for chairing this committee.

I am Maggie Moroff and I coordinate the ARISE Coalition. We are a group of
parents, advocates, educators, and others who have come together to provide a
collective and powerful voice on behalf of students with special needs in New York
City. We seek to compel systemic reform to improve special education, promote
greater transparency and accountability of the education system, and most critically,
assure more positive outcomes and options for all students. A number of our
member organizations are represented in this panel and throughout the room today.

Given the Department of Education's recent announcement that it will undertake a
review of special education services across New York City this hearing is particularly
well timed. We applaud the City Council's willingness to look into the best ways to
meet the needs of youth with disabilities.

Over the past few months the ARISE Coalition has co-sponsored with Parents for Inclusive Education a series of speak-outs for parents and caregivers of students with special needs in New York City. The meetings were planned to give parents and caregivers an opportunity to air publically their experiences with the special education system in New York City during this administration and its re-organizations. The speak-outs gave parents an opportunity to voice their hopes for a better system. I'm sure you'll hear from some of those parents today, and some of the countless other parents of the 180,000 school-aged children with special needs in New York City. These concerned and active parents face an array of obstacles everyday in their efforts to obtain a decent education for their children. Those that make it here, or made it to our speak-outs, have the task of speaking-out for all the others who could not. Their individual stories together paint a picture of a system that still has a lot of problems to resolve.

At our speak-outs, parents, caregivers, concerned educators, and community activists came in large numbers, with several hundred attending in total. They reported about specific and on-going concerns. They told stories about their children being left out of school-wide activities and programs and failing to make acceptable progress. They expounded on how they were made to feel as second-class citizens. They described inexcusable segregation of youth with special needs from their general education peers. The speakers were convinced their children were being left behind while the general education population made strides.

The stories we heard in each borough were not always the same. For example,

- In Brooklyn, we heard how difficult it was to find an appropriate school and to get an Individualized Education Program that is tailored to help students progress;
- In Manhattan, we were made well aware of how few options there are for students with profound disabilities and just how hard it is to assure that services required are delivered in the schools;
- In Queens, a shocking number of the narratives focused on painful exclusion from proms, graduations and school plays;
- In Staten Island, parents described the sting of being treated as second-class citizens and told again-and-again how their expertise about their children and their strengths as well as their needs is too often discredited.
- And in the Bronx, we heard about the painfully low expectations for students with disabilities at some of the schools, and more stories about how parents' knowledge of their children has been repeatedly ignored by the system.

Every story we heard was unique. There was hope expressed and some positive stories about supportive and helpful educators, individuals and administrators.

However, each saga, as distinct and personal as it was, also illustrated much larger systemic troubles. The list of concerns that related to the entire system included, but was certainly not limited to:

- Special education supports and services never received or insufficiently individualized to lead to progress.

- No consistency of services for children as they advanced to later grades.
- Insufficient information about programs and resources for the students and their families.
- Physical inaccessibility of programs because buildings are not equipped for students and families with mobility needs, and because appropriate programming is often simply too far from home to benefit students requiring long bus trips to and from school.
- And hard-fought battles to get appropriate transportation services.

Over the years, many have put forth proposals for organizing and re-organizing special education. Consultants commissioned by the Department of Education and outside groups have done a number of studies. Their recommendations have focused on more flexible service delivery models, increased dissemination of meaningful, disaggregated data and accountability, staff development and training, preventive and pre-referral services, and increased capacity at community schools as well as within District 75 programs to meet the needs of all students with disabilities in a variety of settings. Two times now this administration has re-organized. Yet, we're still facing the same underlying problems. We urge the Department of Education to heed the past reports and current calls for reform and to assure this time that New York City children with special needs receive the same consideration, concern and attention as their general education peers.

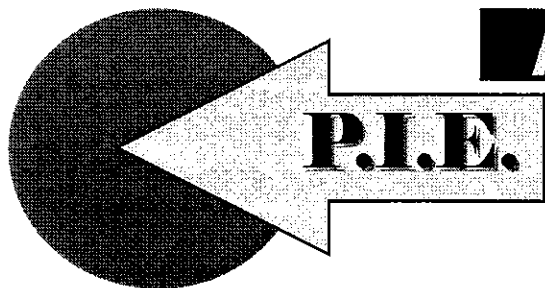
As such the ARISE Coalition is here today to implore that while another re-organization seems inevitable, a few goals must be achieved this time:

- The Department of Education must, as its first priority, address the on-going treatment of students with special needs as second-class citizens.
- The Department of Education must focus on the educational experiences of the students and the means to improve outcomes for students with disabilities.
- All students, with or without disabilities, in community schools and District 75 programs co-located in community schools, must have equitable access to all facilities - lunchrooms, gyms, libraries, and program activities, including after-school activities.
- Capacity must be furthered in every community school district to meet the needs of a variety of students with special needs in a variety of settings.
- Opportunities must be increased for interaction and integration of greater numbers of students with special needs - all along the spectrum of minimal to profound needs in community schools and District 75 schools.
- The Department should invest in pilot programming and replication of successful inclusion models.
- Lastly, there needs to be increased transparency of data - disaggregated - so that we don't really need to rely on the anecdotes of the already overwhelmed parents who came to our speak outs to share their stories and lend their voices to the move for system-wide change.

As my final point, I need to add my voice to the many I suspect you'll hear today.

Reform must be driven by instructional considerations and student outcomes, and not by budgetary concerns.

Thank you.



Parents for Inclusive Education

**Testimony of
Parents for Inclusive Education**

**Submitted to
The Council of the City of New
York
Committee on Education
Robert Jackson, Chair**

January 29, 2009

**Testimony to the Council of the City of New York Committee on Education
Submitted by Christopher Treiber, Parents for inclusive Education
January 29, 2009**

Good afternoon I would like to thank the Education Committee of the New York City Council for holding these hearings and for giving me the opportunity to discuss the important issue of special education. My name is Christopher Treiber and I am the Director of Advocacy Services for AHRC New York City and I am Co-Coordinator of Parents for Inclusive Education or (PIE). PIE is a group of parents, educators and advocates working together to make Inclusion a viable option for all students with disabilities in New York City.

PIE holds monthly meetings that provide education, information, and support to families struggling with the challenges that prevent their children with disabilities from being included in the school community.

Our Goals are to:

- Promote that all New York City schools be accessible to all students with disabilities
- Advocate for the Department of Education to promote a policy of inclusion throughout the school system
- Encourage training for all Department of Education employees on the effective methods of including students with disabilities
- Ensure that all Individual Education Programs (IEP) and allocated resources promote the goal of inclusion

I am speaking here today on behalf of the parents of PIE and their children. The testimony I will provide is based on information provided by parents at the City-Wide Special Education Speak Outs that were co-sponsored by Parents for Inclusive Education and The ARISE Coalition and from the input of parents who attend our monthly meetings.

I have tried to narrow my comments to four key areas which PIE believes are some of the most pressing issues facing special education in NYC. These are areas we have found to be systemic issues, issues presented by parents from all five boroughs.

The first is the issue of ensuring full and equal access for students with disabilities to all of the programs, events, and services offered to non-disabled students.

One of the primary objectives of the DOE reorganizations under the Children's First initiative was to provide the school Principal with authority over their school and by granting them autonomy. As part of this initiative, the DOE eliminated the position of special education supervisor. The intent of this policy was to have the principal take responsibility for all the children in his or her school. This is a goal everyone would agree with in principal, but the reality has been something that has alarmed parents and advocates. During both the Parent Speak Outs and at PIE meetings, parents reported that their children are denied access to programs, services and even areas of the school building by the school Principal. One parent spoke of her child being denied access to the new school library because the Principal told her that her child with a disability may rip a

book or damage something. Others reported that their children in self-contained special education classes were not invited to the assembly or allowed access to the gymnasium, or music room. Mothers from Brooklyn, Queens and the Bronx spoke about how their son's classes were denied the opportunity to participate in field trips with the rest of the school. A mother in Queens who is a member of PIE, spoke about the discrimination faced by her daughter, a District 75 inclusion student. She had completed all of the necessary work to graduate but was denied the right to participate in her graduation ceremony or attend her middle school dance. We heard about Principals who have banned parents from stepping foot inside their school because the parent advocated too much for their child. Across the city we heard stories of children are suspended for behavior related to their disability or, even worse, sent to a psychiatric emergency room after the school called 911 because the school staff could not handle the student. The alternative seemed to be parents receiving numerous phone calls from the school to come and pick up their son or daughter because the student is too difficult to handle. All of these incidents point to a much larger issue of the autonomy of principals to act and the inability of parents to hold them accountable. With the removal of the special education supervisors, parents lost the one individual who was the expert at the school on special education and in many cases the key advocate for the students with disabilities in the school. Parents feel increasingly powerless and report that they do not know who to voice their concerns to. PIE believes the Speak Outs provided the first opportunity for parents to express their anger and frustration and that is why they turned out in large numbers in all 5 boroughs.

PIE calls upon the Chancellor to make a clear and unequivocal statement that students with disabilities are to be given full and equal access to all the facilities, programs, and services offered to students without disabilities and that the practice of excluding students with disabilities is illegal and will not be tolerated. We also call for an immediate end to the practice utilized by some schools of calling 911 because a child is difficult to handle.

Second is the issue of the increasing adversarial climate that parents are experiencing when dealing with the DOE, specifically their child's school. The majority of parents seek a partnership with their son or daughter's school and they want to work collaboratively in the best interest of their child. However, parents report that anytime a request is made for increased services or additional support they are directed to file for an Impartial Hearing. This climate makes it very difficult for parents and advocates who try to negotiate in good faith and settle disputes without a due process hearing. The report dated December 23, 2008 from the NYSED to VESID Committee of the Board of Regent – **Dispute Resolution in Special Education – A Review and Analysis of New York State Due Process System** documents the consequences of this adversarial climate.

According to the report in 2007-2008 there were 6,075 requests for Impartial Hearings in New York State. 90% of the hearings requests came from New York City a total of 5,467 requests. There were 746 Impartial Hearings conducted in New York State that resulted in adjudication. 93% of those hearings came from NYC which is a total of 693.

Based on these numbers NYC had 5,467 IH requests and settled 4,774 cases. Only 693 went to full hearing.

Why does NYC have almost all of the Hearing requests in New York State and why are most of them settled before hearing? What is the cost in dollars of each filed hearing request? What is the cost in relationship with families?

The broader question to be answered is - Why were these cases not settled prior to the parents request for hearing if in most cases the case was resolved after the initial hearing request was made but prior to a full hearing? This would indicate that what the parent requested in many cases was reasonable other wise the DOE would have gone to a full hearing.

The third issue is transportation and PIE is aware that this is a huge issue and presents tremendous difficulty for families. We are limiting our comments to one specific new policy that creates a hardship for families. In order for a student with disabilities to receive any type of special transportation – minibus, air conditioning, or limited travel time due to a medical need the parent is required to submit a form completed by their child's pediatrician. In addition, the parent must sign a HIPAA release form authorizing the New York City Department of Health Physician to review the student's medical record. Parents are told by the IEP team that they can not complete the transportation section on the Individualized Education Program (IEP) until the forms have been submitted, reviewed, and approved by a physician who has never even seen the child.

After the forms have been approved the IEP team will meet again to add the special transportation accommodation onto the IEP. To complicate matters for families these forms are not available online and usually can only be accessed by going to the district office. Parents report that doctors are reluctant to fill out the forms and in some cases are charging families to complete them. Parents are concerned about signing a HIPPA release for their child's medical records to get special transportation accommodations.

The fourth issue is accountability. We know that others speakers here today will discuss this subject in greater detail therefore we will focus on one specific issue – The Special Education Service Delivery Report. This report initiated last year documents many things about special education service delivery in each individual school and was hailed as a new accountability measure for parents. Last year the Department of Education reported that based on the reports, compliance with mandated related services was very good. However, these findings are challenged by the numbers of families in all five boroughs who reported that their children were not receiving any or all of their mandated services. We have one question regarding these reports that may clear up this discrepancy. In the report under the section “Provision of Special Education Services” does the number of students receiving the services include only students who are receiving their full mandated IEP services or does it reflect students who are underserved and receiving only partial services?

I will conclude my remarks by telling you about a twelve year old student who I have been working with who has cerebral palsy and needs a wheelchair to travel. He attended

a school in the Bronx in general education. His mother told me that he was not allowed to use the gym until she fought with the principal and he was not allowed to go on field trips with his class unless she went on the trip and transported him herself because the school would not get him a bus. His words are more eloquent than anything I can say and speak to his experience attending school as a student with a disability. He writes “there are a total of 1500 students in my school. Out of all these students I am the only one in the wheelchair. Many times I’m in school with my head down because there are no other kids in wheelchairs in my school. This makes me feel out of place. In my class there are 30 students. Although, I like my teachers, the class size is very big and because of that I am not able to be part of the class. I also have to be kept away from everyone else because of lack of space. I’m put on records as a member of a class, yet I don’t feel included in everything that involves my class. I think my school is nice, I don’t think it’s a school designed for kids like me.”

I hope his words remind us that while we debate and argue about special education it is the children with disabilities and the families who love them who are suffering. We must get this right for the sake of our children. Thank you.

PIE Contacts – Christopher Treiber (212) 780-2534 or Lisa Isaacs (212) 244-4664.

Testimony
of

Carmen Alvarez
Vice President for Special Education
United Federation of Teachers

before the

City Council
Education Committee

on

Special Education in the
New York City Public Schools

January 29, 2009

Good afternoon Chairman Jackson and members of this distinguished committee. My name is Carmen Alvarez and I am the Vice President for Special Education at the United Federation of Teachers (UFT).

Thank you for the opportunity to present our views about the current state of special education in New York City. We are here because you listened to the “stories” of parents in Manhattan, Queens, Brooklyn, the Bronx and Staten Island who tried to navigate the special education bureaucracy in New York City to secure supports and services for their children. We are here because you read about the hundreds of parents who stood in line for days in the Bronx when school opened last September attempting to secure placements and the children who ride overcrowded busses, some of which routinely arrive late and leave early because of the length of the new bus routes. We are grateful that there are elected officials like you who treat the voices of the parents and school personnel with respect and who take on the responsibility for “righting” the system when things go very wrong.

As you may know, my office answers questions and attempts to resolve problems and complaints concerning special education. Most of these questions, problems and complaints are submitted on an online special education complaint form. While the majority of complaints are submitted by members, the services of

my office are open to parents. Every year we receive and attempt to resolve hundreds of complaints. These complaints concern a variety of issues including:

- Failure to provide copies of the Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) to the teachers and service providers responsible for implementing them;
- Teachers who are required to sign IEPs attesting to their participation in meetings they did not attend;
- Teachers who are told they cannot request that students be evaluated for special education or speak to parents about their concerns that a child may need special education services;
- Failure to properly staff collaborative team teaching classes;
- Failure to hire paraprofessionals for students who are recommended to receive one on one paraprofessional support;
- Refusal to hire substitutes for special education teachers who are on long-term leaves of absence;
- Routine under-servicing of students recommended to receive occupational and physical therapy in District 75;
- Failure to provide services in a separate location in accordance with IEP mandates

This year, with the help of Linda Wernikoff, the staff of the Office of School Improvement and the Integrated Service Centers, we have been able to address most of the complaints we have received. But the sheer volume of complaints demonstrates that there are significant systemic issues. These issues, in my view, can be traced to several factors including

- the elimination of special education expertise at the school level as a result of the 2003 reorganization;
- the “flexibility” given to principals regarding use of special education funds;
- the failure to report data regularly, in a user-friendly format and publicly regarding delivery of special education services; and
- the failure to hold schools accountable for implementing IEPs.

There is actually one phrase that captures all of the above: “principal empowerment.” A signature feature of the Children First “reforms,” “principal empowerment” has fostered an atmosphere of intimidation and “lawlessness” with regard to special education in many schools.

Perhaps the most important measure of how special education is doing in New York City is the graduation rate for students with disabilities. As revealed by New York State Education Department statistics and reported by our New York

Teacher staff, the graduation rates for students with disabilities are disturbing. In 2007, New York City graduated just 20 percent of its students with disabilities after four years, most with local diplomas, and only 24 percent after five years. Even depressed “big 4” upstate cities do better. And statewide, 39 percent of special education students graduate in four years and 47 percent after five years. These rates are still unacceptably low, yet they are far higher than the New York City Public Schools. The rising number of IEP Diplomas is especially disheartening. IEP diplomas nullify many entry-level options upon graduation including civil service and the armed forces.

We should not be surprised with the poor graduation rates for students with disabilities. As reported to the federal government, in the 2006-07 school year only three of 100 IEPs sampled in New York City met all compliance indicators for transition planning. Poor or non-existent planning leads to poor outcomes.

As you are undoubtedly aware, the Chancellor recently announced that he had given Garth Harries, a lawyer, who came to the Department of Education (DOE) from McKinsey and Company, the task of carrying out yet another reorganization of special education in New York City. Pardon me if I am suspicious about the timing. We are in the midst of a severe budget crisis and special education is one of the most high ticket items in our public schools. But

you don't have to share my suspicions because we have the rationale straight from the Chancellor's spokesperson, Mr. Cantor, who told Gotham Schools reporter Philissa Cramer that "the reorganization is 'most definitely related' to the current budget conditions because it is laying the groundwork for the department to eliminate positions." There you have it.

Can this reorganization be salvaged in the court of public opinion? What will it take for our members, parents, advocates, disability group representatives and other stakeholders to trust that the reorganization will make the provision of special education "better and more effective" in the words of Mr. Cantor, not just "more efficient" or less costly?

Anyone who knows me has heard me say that every challenge brings an opportunity. I really couldn't do the work that I do if I did not believe that in my heart. The opportunity for the Department of Education – and the way to salvage this reorganization - is to work in a new way with stakeholders. Mr. Harries admits that he has little knowledge of special education. But there is a vast amount of knowledge, experience and talent in this room and outside of this room. We need you, members of the City Council's Education Committee, to tell the Chancellor that you expect Mr. Harries to engage the entire special education community in this reorganization. We say to the Chancellor, take the leap: share

leadership. Build ownership: share responsibility. Use conflict to build trust and grow. From establishing core principles to guide the reorganization to planning and implementation, move forward through dialogue and consensus, respecting each participant's contribution and point of view. Let's make sure that this reorganization works, not just to cut costs, but to build community and improve outcomes for children with disabilities.

I will conclude by offering my thoughts on the core principles that should guide this reorganization:

- the needs of children with special needs and their families must truly be our first priority
- school personnel must have the opportunity to freely discuss children's needs, unconstrained by fears of retaliation and disciplinary action;
- schools must be held accountable for complying with special education laws and regulations and fully implementing children's IEPs;
- school personnel must have the knowledge, tools, and time - including time to collaborate with other professionals - to do their jobs effectively;
- schools must be accountable for using special education funds to support instruction and services for students with disabilities;
- quality transition planning must take place for every child with a disability beginning in middle schools and reviewed annually;

- the expectation for all students with disabilities who participate in regular assessments –with or without accommodations – must be a “real” diploma that will allow them secure meaningful employment, live independently and participate in our democracy;
- instructional programs must be evaluated regularly for their effectiveness both on an individual student level and on a system level;
- data that is regularly collected to monitor compliance and outcomes must be presented in a format easily consumed by end-users, and shared with the public on a regular basis.

It’s a long list. But it is all doable and we should expect no less.

Thank you.



Joel I. Klein
Chancellor

52 Chambers Street
New York, NY 10007

Testimony of Dr. Marcia V. Lyles
Deputy Chancellor for Teaching and Learning

Special Education
January 29, 2009

Good afternoon Chair Jackson and members of the Committee. My name is Dr. Marcia Lyles, Deputy Chancellor for Teaching and Learning in the New York City Department of Education. I am joined by my colleagues Linda Wernikoff, Executive Director for Special Education Initiatives and Bonnie Brown, Superintendent of District 75. We are pleased to be here today to discuss our progress in meeting the needs of our students with disabilities.

INTRODUCTION

As an educator in the New York City public school system for over 30 years, special education has been an issue that I hold near to my heart, and I can safely say the same for both Linda and Bonnie. Linda has been involved in providing special education services to students with disabilities for over 35 years with the Department, and has been a vocal advocate for the inclusion of students with disabilities in mainstream school culture with the ultimate goal of improved academic outcomes for all students. She has been at the forefront of our special education reforms and has made significant progress. Bonnie too is an exceptional leader in the area of special education – her entire 31-year career at the Department has been devoted to students with a variety of challenges. She started as a classroom teacher working with students with emotional challenges and has served as an assistant principal and principal. Her hard work and dedication did not go unnoticed, as Chancellor Klein appointed her Superintendent of District 75 three years ago. Under her leadership, District 75 has become a leader in the fields of Autism and Positive Behavior supports for the children of this city as the district partners with colleges and universities all over the country to develop state-of-the-art interventions. Children with special needs in this City have two outstanding leaders in these two women who everyday do incredible work focusing on what's best for our students with disabilities.

We have made great strides since the last time the Department appeared before you on the topic of Special Education. The Department of Education continues to strive to improve educational outcomes for students with disabilities and we have moved aggressively to make improvements in special education services.

OVERVIEW

As many of you know, we provide a wide range of services to our students with disabilities, and we emphasize now more than ever that schools are responsible for the educational needs of ALL of their students – those with special needs as well as general education students. We continue to integrate more students with disabilities into the least restrictive environment, which means they are spending the majority of the school day alongside their typically developing peers. More than half of all school-age students with disabilities (55 percent) are now educated in general education classes with special education supports, a historic high. The number of students with disabilities in Collaborative Team Teaching classes, a successful inclusive model, has more than doubled since the Mayor and the Chancellor announced reforms to special education in the spring of 2003 and standardized test scores for students with disabilities have improved annually.

Our collective efforts are focused on five key principles:

- Increasing student outcomes
- Increasing school autonomy over their resources and the types of services principals deem necessary to drive student outcomes
- Increasing school level accountability for special education
- Improving equity and access to special education services
- Assisting schools in building capacity to serve special education students

We have more than 160,000 special education students in our system, with a variety of needs and classifications (not including Pre-Kindergarten or charter schools). About 12 percent of those students with the most severe disabilities are served by District 75.

The attached chart spells out the process from when a family or principal makes a referral through evaluation to placement to the provision of services.

IMPROVEMENTS

INSTRUCTIONAL OUTCOMES

The critical piece of our special education reforms has been increasing school autonomy and accountability for student outcomes. Between 2003 and 2008, we've seen the largest student gains since State testing began in 1999. In ELA, we've seen a decrease of 33.6 percent of our students with disabilities achieving at Level 1 (as compared to 8.9 percent in general education). At the same time, there has been a 14.3 percent increase in students with disabilities achieving Levels 3 and 4 (the increase among general education students is 18.4 percent). In Math, we've seen a 39.3 percent decrease in Level 1 among our special education students (compared to 16.5 percent in general education), while there has been a 31.7 percent increase in Levels 3 and 4 (our general education students increased 34.1 percent). These results show that the Children First reforms are beginning to work for our most sensitive and vulnerable student population. New York City public school students with disabilities in grades 3 through 8 also outperformed their peers in the other Big Four cities on the 2008 State Math and ELA. This is no small feat, and we should all be proud of our students' progress.

Other indicators of the progress our students with disabilities are in the increase in the graduation rate and the decrease in the drop out rate, as well as the expansion of inclusion services for special education students. Collaborative

Team Teaching is demonstrating noticeable gains as evidenced by students' performance on standardized tests in grades 3-8.

COMPLIANCE

Our IEP teams are increasing their productivity. 90 percent of evaluations are in compliance with required timeframes, and the number of evaluations completed increased by 17 percent from 2002 to 2008.

The number of students receiving related services has also steadily increased in spite of a national shortage of staff in the areas of speech, Occupational Therapy and Physical Therapy. From June 2007 to June 2008, there was:

- A 6 percent increase, to 93 percent, of recommended students receiving counseling
- A 7 percent increase, to 90 percent, of students recommended for Speech
- A 9 percent increase, to 77 percent, of students recommended for Occupational Therapy

And,

- A 12 percent increase, to 84 percent, of students recommended for Physical Therapy.

While there is always room to improve, these kinds of gains demonstrate our commitment to ensuring students with disabilities receive the necessary supports to help them achieve.

POLICY DEVELOPMENT

The Office of Special Education Initiatives, under Linda's leadership, has developed a Standard Operating Procedures Manual that specifically spells out the procedures in the referral, evaluation and placement process of school-aged students with disabilities. Our goal is to be as transparent and clear about the process as possible, so that our educators understand their role and so that

parents are better served. This manual is rolling out this year. We've also developed a Practitioner's Guide, another manual that is focused on conducting instructionally relevant assessment with a focus on English Language Learners.

We also changed our policy so that principals identify a designee to serve as the district representative at Individualized Education Program (IEP) meetings. The purpose of this change is to provide principals with greater input and oversight of the instructional decisions made at IEP meetings.

INSTRUCTION AND CAPACITY-BUILDING

Professional development and training is critical to expand the capacity of our schools to appropriately serve our students with disabilities. To ensure we are providing quality services, we have conducted unprecedented levels of in-service training for our teachers and principals, as well as targeted assistance by our Special Education School Improvement Teams to over 250 schools. The focus of the School Improvement Teams is ongoing consultation to schools in order for them to build capacity to improve outcomes for students with disabilities.

PARENTS

Parents of children with disabilities have unique concerns and questions, and therefore require more specialized information than what is distributed to parents of general education students. We recognize their distinctive needs, and thus we created a training program for parent coordinators as well as other parent support personnel on special education rules, issues, and best practices.

District 75 has a team of parents that work with the district's instructional specialists to design and implement training sessions for other parents in each borough and support parents through their annual EPIC (Every Parent Influences Children) conference.

The Office of Special Education Initiatives, under Linda's direction, also established a Call Center to assist field-based personnel in successfully addressing issues raised by parents and parents transferred from 311. From July 1, 2007 through November 30, 2008, the Call Center handled more than 15,000 calls – 1,100 of which were from parents and the other 14,000 or so from staff. 98.9 percent of the calls were resolved, and the average resolution time was approximately 15 hours.

Last year Linda's office also developed a Special Education Service Delivery Report for each school, which is publicly posted on school websites. This report, which is updated twice yearly, provides valuable information on the schools' provision of special education services.

With our goal of making information more easily accessible and understandable for parents, we also drafted a Parent Guide for Special Education, which is currently under review by Bonnie's team in District 75, advocates and parent organizations, and our Integrated Service Centers.

DISTRICT 75

Serving 23,000 of the most fragile students in the department, District 75 provides a range of services which now carry over to the General Education community to support students at risk of being referred to a more restrictive environment. The district works with its general education colleagues to support 1,800 students in full inclusion and many in CTT classes with the goal of moving these students back to their community schools once they have stabilized and learned to self-manage their behaviors. Partnerships have been formed with Yale University, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, Rutgers, Hunter College and student advocacy groups in order to offer state of the art professional development to staff and parents. District 75 has been hosting colleagues from Japan, Belgium, Norway, and as far as Tasmania who have

seen our website and are seeking support in learning more about the education of children on the autistic spectrum or how to deal with those with challenging behaviors. At the present time, 13 percent of children leave District 75 annually to go to less restrictive environments.

NEW INITIATIVES

Improving our systems and points of access is important and part and parcel of the Department's overall reforms. With our special education improvement efforts, and also as indicated in the Hehir report, we recognized there was a clear need for a new special education data system. The objectives of the Special Education Student Information System (SESIS) are to:

- Improve management of special education referral, evaluation and placement process
- Provide real-time information to schools
- Reduce paper-based records
- Improve data integrity
- Align with the DOE's IT architecture

We are very excited about SESIS and its capacity to help further our progress in special education. SESIS features include a secure on-line IEP; robust reporting tools to facilitate case management; an electronic document management system; related service encounter attendance; and comprehensive training including on-line self-paced modules. We just presented SESIS to the Panel for Educational Policy earlier this week, and we look forward to its full implementation to help our improvement efforts.

We acknowledge that we need to do more, and so a new component of our ongoing efforts in special education is the creation of a new role of a Senior

Coordinator for Special Education. The Senior Coordinator's mandate will be to coordinate the Special Education leadership throughout the Department in developing and implementing integrated recommendations for the improvement of special education services. This new role is intended to support cross-functional problem solving and to help facilitate communication and connections among ALL the different parts of the Department responsible for the serving students with challenges, including instructional programming, educational service provision, evaluation and referral, placement, busing and budgeting. All existing special education leadership will maintain their role and seniority within the Department, and we are confident that this renewed focus and emphasis on coordination among all of our special education leaders will only stand to benefit families of children with special needs.

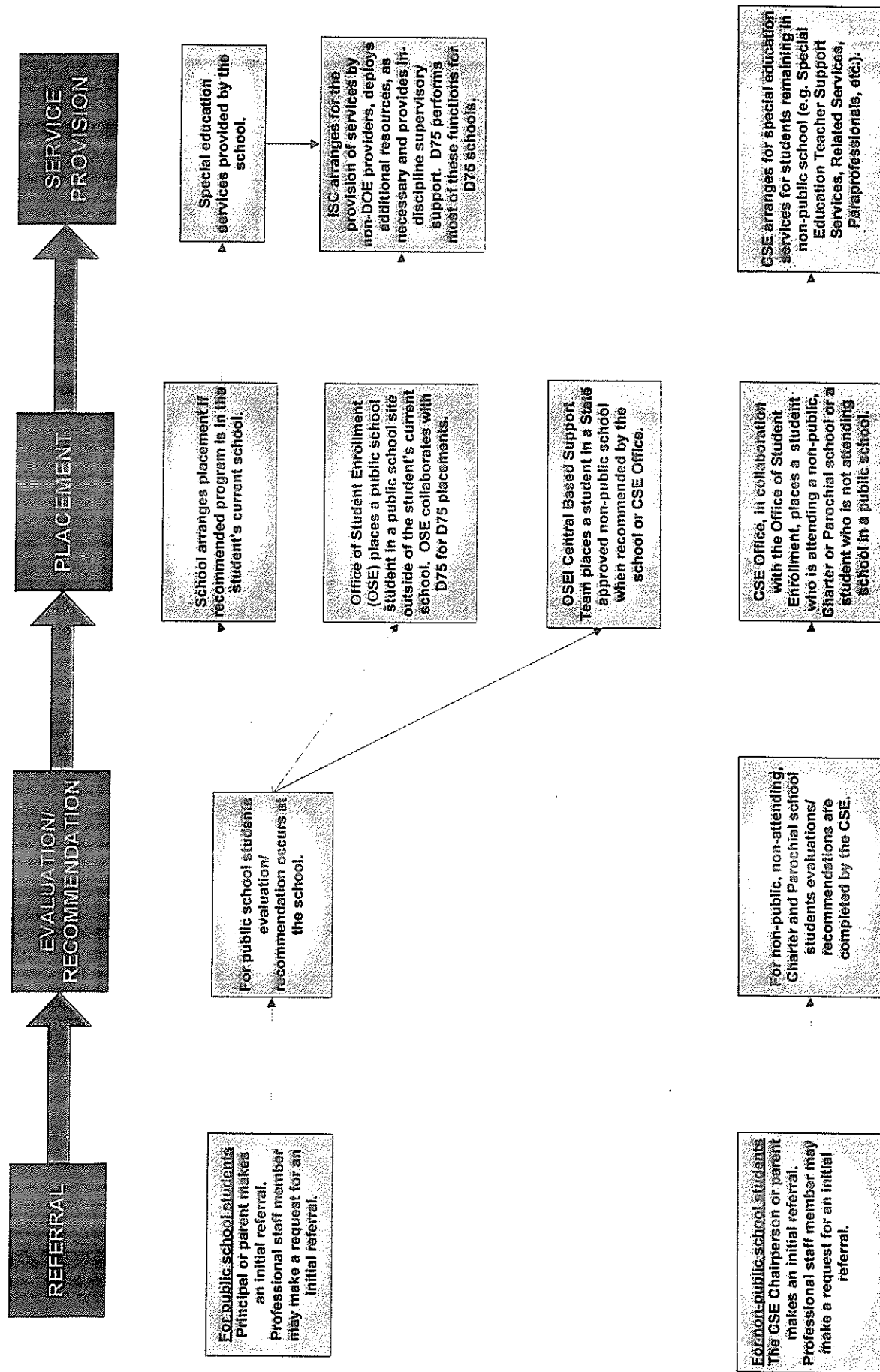
CONCLUSION

Our students with disabilities are our most vulnerable student population, but they deserve every opportunity to succeed along with their typically developing peers – in fact, it is their right. It is our responsibility, as the adults, to ensure that their needs are identified as early as possible, and that they receive appropriate and necessary supports in order to achieve. It is also incumbent upon us to ensure that parents have the information they need so that they are able to actively participate in and be stewards of their child's education.

More students with challenges are meeting State standards, and more are graduating. While we still have more work to do, our progress to date shows that we are moving in the right direction. We are encouraged by the tremendous gains made but be assured we are not satisfied. We know there is still much to be done.

Thank you for your time, and we are happy to answer your questions.

Special Education Process: Referral to Service Provision (Emphasizing School-Level Ownership)



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THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

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☐ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: 1-29-09

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Name: Maggie Moroff

Address: _____

I represent: 76 ARISE Coalition

Address: 151 W. 30th St, 5th Fl NY

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Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Jean Mizutani

Address: 8284 61 Dr Middle Village, NY

I represent: RESOURCES FOR CHILDREN w/ special

Address: 116 E 116 St 5th Fl NY 10003 NEEDS

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Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Carmen Alvarez

Address: Vice President Special Ed.

I represent: UFT

Address: 52 Bway

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Date: _____

Name: BERNARD (PLEASE PRINT)

Address: 160 Cabrini Blvd #84

I represent: myself & my family, of course

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Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

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Date: 1/29/2009

Name: Christopher Treiber (PLEASE PRINT)

Address: 83 Maiden Lane

I represent: Parents For Inclusive Educ.
HHRC NYC

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Date: 1/29/09

Name: Rachel Jean-Baptiste (PLEASE PRINT)

Address: 474 Marborough Rd

I represent: Parents of Blind Children of NY

Address: 33 Convent Ave

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I represent:

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ON PANEL w/ **THE COUNCIL**
Advocates **THE CITY OF NEW YORK**
for Children

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

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Date: _____

Name: Linda Osterreicher (PLEASE PRINT)

Address: _____

I represent: Center for Independence of the Disabled,

Address: 841 Bway #301, NYC 10003 NY

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☐ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: 1/29/09

Name: Kim Sweet (PLEASE PRINT)

Address: 151 W. 30th St., 5th Floor, NY, NY

I represent: Advocates for Children

Address: same

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Date: _____

Name: Linda Wernick (PLEASE PRINT)

Address: _____

I represent: DOE

Address: _____

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**THE COUNCIL
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Date: _____

Name: Dr. Marcia Lyles (PLEASE PRINT)

Address: _____

I represent: DOE

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Date: _____

Name: Bonnie Brown (PLEASE PRINT)

Address: _____

I represent: DOE

Address: _____

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☐ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: _____

Name: LISA ISAACS (PLEASE PRINT)

Address: 1810 34 Ave. Jackson Heights 11372

I represent: New York Lawyers for the Public Int.

Address: 151 W. 30, NY NY 10001

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms

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I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

☐ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: _____

Name: Elizabeth Perdo (PLEASE PRINT)

Address: 134 W.

I represent: Sinergia

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

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☐ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: _____

Name: Raphael Rivers (PLEASE PRINT)

Address: 27 Smith St Brooklyn NY 11201

I represent: BCIB

Address: 27 Smith St Suite 700

Brooklyn NY 11201

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

☐ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: 1/29/09

Name: Susan Crawford (PLEASE PRINT)

Address: _____

I represent: Right to Read Project

Address: _____

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____
☐ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: 1-29-09

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Patricia Connelly

Address: 443 45th St. #1

I represent: Citywide Council on Special Ed.

Address: _____

◆ Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms ◆