



EDUCATION COUNCIL CONSORTIUM (ECC)
Resolution on School Governance and Mayoral Control
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Approved at ECC meeting of September 14, 2018 and Amended at ECC meeting of December 15, 2018

The Education Council Consortium (ECC) is a group of parents and community members who have been elected or appointed to serve on District and Citywide Community Education Councils, representing 1.1 million public school students, including children who are receiving special education services and who are English Language Learners. The ECC was formed to address issues that affect schools and communities throughout all the boroughs and meets regularly with the Chancellor to help shape, advise, provide feedback and comment on educational policies, visions and goals.

The NY State Legislature by Chapter 91 of the Laws of 2002, Education Law 2590, significantly restructured the governance of New York City Public Schools, effective June 30, 2003, giving the Mayor and the Chancellor greater authority over the school system. This law was to sunset on June 30, 2009 unless amended or continued by the New York State legislature. The law was amended and continued in August 2009 and was to sunset on June 30, 2015, unless amended or continued by the NYS Legislature. The Law has twice been extended for one year, on June 30, 2015 and on June 30, 2016. The Law was set to sunset on June 30, 2017, when the NYS Legislature extended the law for two years, and is now scheduled to sunset on June 30, 2019, unless amended or continued.

The NYS Legislature has not taken into consideration any changes recommended by the ECC in its resolutions of May 23, 2015, November 19, 2016 and March 9, 2018, therefore, the ECC is presenting a new resolution that offers amendments to the current law.

The following resolution offers amendments to the current law, should it continue, and was developed with input from ECC members based on their experiences in their schools and their vast knowledge of the effects of mayoral control on their school communities.

WHEREAS, Mayoral control of the school system has severely curtailed parental empowerment and community participation, has not eliminated flaws in the contracting process, and has not created more accountability; and

WHEREAS, the ECC does not support the current structure of mayoral control as the governance body of the NY City public school system; and

WHEREAS, some changes to the present law will improve the system substantially to make it more democratic and provide for more meaningful participation of stakeholders; and now be it therefore

RESOLVED, that the ECC recommends that The Law be amended to put in place strong checks and balances that are enforced to assure transparency and accountability to the public, as follows:

PANEL FOR EDUCATIONAL POLICY:

- that The Law be amended to provide for the appointment of all the members of the Panel for Educational Policy (PEP) to **fixed terms**, with no limits to the terms they may be appointed; that the majority be currently parents of children in public schools; that in addition to the five borough president appointees, the Public Advocate and the Comptroller appoint one member each; and that the majority of members not be appointed by the Mayor, with the Mayor having the power to appoint the Chancellor, with meaningful input from all citywide and district education councils ;



DISTRICT AND CITYWIDE EDUCATION COUNCILS:

- that District Community Education Councils establish educational policy in their districts, in coordination with the District Superintendent and staff, including zoning; reconfigurations; approving co-locations - including charter schools; and approving the opening and closing of schools - including charter schools; and that the PEP must provide an explanation as to why they are not following the recommendations of the District CEC regarding any significant school changes;
- that District CECs be an integral part in the process of choosing a district superintendent, including interviewing and recommending of candidates to be chosen by the chancellor
- that the present undemocratic system of allowing only three PA/PTA officers to select members to the local district community education councils and only one parent from each district's presidents' council to select members to the Citywide Councils on English Language Learners and Special Education be amended to allow all parents and guardians of students in NYC Public Schools to vote to select members of the district and citywide community education councils;
- that all parents of high school students be allowed to vote for the two members representing each borough to the Citywide Council on High Schools;
- that the requirement that only one parent representative can be selected from a given school or district be eliminated and that two candidates with the highest votes from the same school or district be allowed to serve if one of the candidates has another child at another school in the district or, in the case of the citywide councils, in another district;
- that the terms for Citywide and Community Education Council members be changed from two years to three-year terms;
- that members selected to any Citywide or District Community Education Council be allowed to finish his/her term, even if an individual's eligibility status changes during his/her term;
- that parents of children who are former English Language Learners (ELLs) and received services at any time in the past be deemed as eligible to serve on the Citywide Council on English Language Learners (CCELL) and the ELL seat on the District Community Education Councils;
- that the Citywide Council on Special Education (CCSE) membership be increased from 11 to 13 to allow for two representatives from each borough and two appointees by the Public Advocate and one appointee by the Citywide Council on High Schools;
- that there shall be no term limits for Borough President Appointees to the CECs;
- that The Law be specific regarding training and resources provided to members of the citywide and district community education councils so they can function effectively and so that inexperienced and untrained members do not fall through the cracks.

MANAGEMENT/ADMINISTRATION:

- that the Chancellor and his/her appointee in charge of teaching and learning must be an educator who does not require a waiver to be appointed;
- that The Law, as set forth originally, clearly define the role of the District Superintendent, who must have extensive education experience, as the District Education Leader to assure his/her responsibility to hire, fire and evaluate principals, assistant principals and other district office staff within the geographical boundaries of the respective school district, so as to honor the integrity of the functions of the local school district, with adequate resources and support provided to assure compliance; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the ECC expects that the recommended amendments to The Law will be approved and implemented immediately so as to assure that public school students and their families are provided with meaningful opportunities to be involved in the development of policies that affect their education.