



Community Board 12 - Manhattan Washington Heights & Inwood

530 West 166th St. 6th Floor, New York, NY 10032

Phone: (212) 568-8500, Fax: (212) 740-8197

Website: www.nyc.gov/mcb12

Shahabuddeen A. Ally, Esq., Chairperson
Ebenezer Smith, District Manager

February 1, 2018

Hon. Carmen Fariña, Chancellor
NYC Department of Education
52 Chambers Street
New York, NY 10007

Panel for Educational Policy
52 Chambers Street
New York NY 10007

RE: Resolution Opposing the Proposed Closure of the High School for Health Careers & Sciences at the George Washington Educational Campus.

Dear Ms. Fariña:

At the General Meeting, Tuesday, January, 23, 2018 Community Board 12 Manhattan, passed the following resolution with a vote of 36 in favor, 0 opposed, 2 abstentions strongly opposing the proposed closure of the High School for Health Careers & Sciences at the George Washington Educational Campus and making several recommendations that countered the biases of selective data analysis for such closure with other performance indicators or variable graduation rates that evolve and are nonlinear. The Board recommended and suggested the need for a better mix of learning levels from entering cohort classes based on improved promotional and recruitment efforts by each of the campuses four principals instead of reliance only on the Office of Enrollment for those purposes. Finally, given the fact that health care is a growing field for employment and three of our community's largest institutions are health-related it is highly appropriate that this school be based here.

WHEREAS: The New York City Department of Education (DoE) announced on December 18, 2017 its intention, based on a recommendation of the District's Superintendent, to close the High School for Health Careers & Sciences (HSHCS) at the George Washington Educational Campus (GWEC) in June 2018; and

WHEREAS: A well-attended Public Hearing was held on January 8, 2018 at which the Manhattan Borough President; the District's Councilmember, its NYS Senator, and Assembly member; many parents, students, and teachers of the school; representatives of unions and community-based organizations; and members of the public testified their support of the school and their strong objection to this proposal; and

WHEREAS: The primary basis of DoE's recommendation to close HSHCS was the claim of a continuous and cascading decline in the graduation rates of cohort classes which assertion was itself based on selective data analysis; and

WHEREAS: Significant factors of HSHCS's performance subsequent to its being designated a "Renewal School" in 2015 were ignored and a school's graduation rate evolves in a non-linear fashion; and

- WHEREAS:** 85% of HSHCS's student body speak a language other than English as their primary language yet the school held the highest graduation rates amongst the four schools on the GWEC during the 2014-15 and 2015-16 academic years with a cohort class rate of 70% and 65%, and a graduation rate is 62% for the 2016-17 academic year; and
- WHEREAS:** Another measure of HSHCS's performance and evolving improvement was officially reported on the annual "Quality Review Report 2016-2017" issued by DoE in which the HSHCS was rated as "*Proficient and Well Developed*" in the areas of "*Instructional Core*", "*School Culture*", "*Systems for Improvement*", "*Teacher Teams & Leadership Development*", "*Pedagogy*", "*Curriculum*", "*Positive Learning Environment*", "*Assessment High Expectations*", and "*High Expectations*" despite its high enrollment of Level 1 (least academically prepared) students; and
- WHEREAS:** The fate of a school should not be based solely on graduation rates while ignoring such other factors as enrollment or admissions rates so as to avoid selection bias from any predictive analysis or outcomes for a "failing" or "successful" Renewal School; and
- WHEREAS:** The disparities within the different schools' student enrollment levels (where one school is weighted with too many low performing students) and the need to make improvements in this area with different promotional and recruitment strategies was brought to the Chancellor's attention in March, 2017 by the District 6 Community Education Council at the Citywide Education Council meeting, which requested that these ideas be shared with the Superintendent, and which the Chancellor failed to do; and
- WHEREAS:** There is an established and consistent pattern of support from Community Board 12, Manhattan (e.g., advocacy for capital funding for the library, swimming pools, and biotechnology lab/program, etc.) as well as substantial funding from the Manhattan Borough President (the Computer Labs) and Cornell University's Cooperative Extension Program (Hydroponics & Aquaponics Lab) for HSHCS and other GWEC schools, and the Board has continued to advocate for the students' growth and achievement, more after-school programs, and involvement of other city agencies for additional support; and
- WHEREAS:** Health care is a growing field for employment and as three of our community's largest institutions are health-related, it is highly appropriate that the HSHCS be based in this community; now therefore be it
- RESOLVED:** Community Board 12, Manhattan strongly objects to the District Superintendent's recommendation and the Schools Chancellor's proposed closure of the High School for Health Careers and Sciences based primarily on a distortion of graduation rates and the lack of sufficient school performance evaluations during the year; and be it further

RESOLVED: Community Board 12, Manhattan demands the DoE's Enrollment Office and the principals of all four schools on the George Washington Education Campus have opportunities to engage in better promotional and recruitment efforts throughout the entire district.

Sincerely,



Shahjahan A. Ally, Esq.
Chairperson

cc:

Hon. Andrew Cuomo, Governor
Hon. Bill de Blasio, Mayor
Hon. Letitia James, Public Advocate
Hon. Carl Heastie, NYS Assembly Speaker
Hon. Corey Johnson, NYC City Council Speaker
Hon. Scott M. Stringer, Comptroller
Hon. Gale Brewer, Manhattan Borough President
Hon. Adriano Espaillat, Congressman
Hon. Brian Benjamin, State Senator
Hon. Marisol Alcantara, State Senator
Hon. Carmen De La Rosa, Assembly Member
Hon. Alfred Taylor, Assembly Member
Hon. Ydanis Rodriguez, Council Member
Hon. Mark Levine, Council Member
Hon. Betty A. Rosa, Chancellor, Board of Regents
Hon. Mary Ellen Elia, Commissioner NYSED

Hon. Mark Treyger, Chair City Council Ed Committee
Hon. Inez Barron, Chair City Council Higher Ed Cmte
Hon. Aldrin Bonilla, Deputy Manh. Borough President
Hon. Manuel Ramirez, Superintendent CSD6
Hon. Peter Calandrella - Staten Island Representative
Hon. Isaac Carmignani - Member PEP
Hon. Geneal Chacon - Bronx Representative
Hon. April Chapman - Brooklyn Representative
Hon. T. Elzora Cleveland - Member PEP
Hon. Deborah Dillingham - Queens Representative
Hon. Michael Kraft - Manhattan Representative
Aneiry Batista, Chief of Staff
Bich Ha Pham, Director of Policy
Angel Vasquez, Chief of Staff
Jose Louis, Chief of Staff
Mariel De La Cruz, Community Liaison CB12, M
Jessica Reynoso, Community Liaison, CB 12, M