Carter Booth, *Chair*
Daniel Miller, *First Vice Chair*
Susan Kent, *Second Vice Chair*
Bob Gormley, *District Manager*

Antony Wong, *Treasurer*
Valerie De La Rosa, *Secretary*
Amy Brenna, *Assistant Secretary*

COMMUNITY BOARD NO. 2, MANHATTAN
3 WASHINGTON SQUARE VILLAGE
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January 27, 2021

Hon. Bill de Blasio
Mayor
City Hall
New York, NY 10007

Richard Carranza
Chancellor, NYC Department of Education
52 Chambers Street
New York, NY 10007

Dear Mayor de Blasio and Chancellor Carranza:

At its Full Board meeting January 21, 2021, Community Board #2, adopted the following resolution:

Resolution in Support of Amnesty for School Budget Deficits

Whereas:

1. In 2021, many public schools are burdened with significant budget deficits because actual enrollment is well below what schools could have reasonably projected during the pandemic;

2. Through last fall, many families made difficult and personal decisions to leave the public school system to enroll in education programs that provide more in-person learning and/or safety when faced with the ongoing pandemic. Lack of clarity from the city about how and when schools would reopen, last minute reopening delays, health and safety concerns, blended learning options that typically provided only one to two in-person school days per week and changing rules for opting back into blended learning all contributed to families making alternative arrangements;

3. New York City public schools are primarily funded on a per student basis through Fair Student Funding;

    1. In late May, each school submits an estimated budget to the Department of Education (DOE) for the next school year based on enrollment projections;

    2. Each school is subject to ***midyear adjustment*** of funding based on how actual enrollment compares to enrollment projections from late May. If a school's student register exceeds its projection, the school will receive additional funds to support its operations; however, if a school's student register is below projections, the school must pay back funding for lost student enrollment;

    3. More than 90% of Fair Student Funding is used to pay salaries for teachers and support staff, making midyear adjustment extremely difficult for most schools;

4. Many schools are still not funded at 100% of the Fair Student Funding formula, in essence starting the school year with a deficit;

4. Under the DOE's Deficit Repayment Plan, schools with deficits greater than $100,000 typically "repay" funds over a several year installment plan, saddling schools with debt during the time they need more resources not less to invest in staffing and technology and address learning loss and social emotional trauma suffered during the pandemic; and,

5. In 2013, the DOE instituted an amnesty program in recognition of successive years of budget reductions following the great recession that made it difficult for schools to repay their deficits.

Therefore be it resolved that Community Board 2 calls on the City of New York, Mayor Bill de Blasio, and New York City School Chancellor Richard Carranza to institute amnesty for school deficits as well as provide additional funding for students living in poverty and temporary housing, so that our schools can emerge from this pandemic financially sound and best positioned to meet the learning needs of our city's students, particularly our most vulnerable students.

VOTE: Unanimous, with 43 Board Members in favor.

Please advise us of any decision or action taken in response to this resolution.

Sincerely,

Carter Booth, Chair
Community Board #2, Manhattan

Jeannine Kiely, Chair
Schools and Education Committee
Community Board #2, Manhattan

CB/EM

c: Hon. Carolyn Maloney, Congresswoman
Hon. Jerrold Nadler, Congressman
Hon. Nydia Velázquez, Congresswoman
Hon. Brad Hoylman, NYS Senator
Hon. Brian Kavanagh, NYS Senator
Hon. Deborah J. Glick, NYS Assembly Member
Hon. Yuh-Line Niou, NYS Assembly Member
Hon. Scott M. Stringer, NYC Comptroller
Hon. Corey Johnson, Speaker, NY City Council
Hon. Jumaane Williams, NYC Public Advocate
Hon. Gale Brewer, Manhattan Borough President
Hon. Margaret Chin, Council Member
Hon. Carlina Rivera, Council Member
Hon. Mark Treyger, NY City Council, Chair, Committee on Education
Yolanda Smith and Sarita Subraman, NYC Independent Budget Office, Education
Lindsey Oates, Chief Financial Officer, NYC DOE
Sayde L. Campoamor, Director of Community Affairs, NYC DOE
Marisol Rosales, Executive Superintendent, Manhattan, NYC DOE
Kelly McGuire, incoming District 2 Superintendent, NYC DOE
Hillary Casado, Principal, PS 3

Kelly Shannon, Principal, PS 41 Greenwich Village
Renny Fong, Principal, PS 130 Hernando De Soto
Jacqui Getz, Principal, MS 297 75 Morton
Isora Bailey, Principal, NYC iSchool
Daphne Perrini, Principal, Harvey Milk High School
Kate Burch, Principal, Harvest Collegiate High School
Jaivelle A. Reed, Principal, Chelsea Career and Technical Education High School
Rachel Seher, Principal, City-As-School High School
Melissa H. Silberman, Head of School, Broome Street Academy
Matthew Chook and Len Silverman, D2PC Co-Presidents

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January 27, 2021

Hon. Andrew M. Cuomo
Governor of New York State
NYS State Capitol Building
Albany, NY 12224

Hon. Andrea Stewart-Cousins
Majority Leader
28 Wells Avenue, Building #3
Yonkers, NY 10701

Hon. Bill de Blasio
Mayor
City Hall
New York, NY 10007

Hon. Carl E. Heastie
Assembly Speaker
1446 East Gun Hill Road
Bronx, NY 10469

Richard Carranza
Chancellor, NYC Department of Education
52 Chambers Street
New York, NY 10007

Dear Governor Cuomo, Majority Leader Stewart-Cousins, Mayor de Blasio, Assembly Speaker Heastie, Chancellor Carranza:

At its Full Board meeting January 21, 2021, Community Board #2, adopted the following resolution:

Resolution in Opposition to "Pandemic Adjustments"
in the NY State Education Budget
"What is Earmarked for Education, Funds Education"

Whereas:

1. In March 2020, New York State received $1.1 billion of federal emergency relief funds for New York school districts in the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act[1];

2. Dubbed the "pandemic adjustment" by Governor Andrew Cuomo, the state cut the New York state education budget by the same $1.1 billion, a cut of $720,547,802 for New York City[2]; and,

3. Meanwhile, our city's schools need more resources, not less, to invest in staffing and technology and address learning loss and social emotional trauma suffered during the pandemic.

[1] Education Law Center Brief, April 22, 2020, https://edlawcenter.org/news/archives/new-york/new-york's-pandemic-adjustment-depriving-resources-to-students-impacted-by-covid-19.html.
[2] Alliance for Quality Education, 2020 Pandemic Adjustment Cut, https://www.aqeny.org/2020-pandemic-adjustment-cut/.

Therefore be it resolved that Community Board 2 demands that any future federal emergency relief earmarked for New York school districts funds education and is not offset by any full or partial pandemic adjustment.

VOTE: Unanimous, with 43 Board Members in favor.

Please advise us of any decision or action taken in response to this resolution.

Sincerely,

Carter Booth, Chair
Community Board #2, Manhattan

Jeannine Kiely, Chair
Schools and Education Committee
Community Board #2, Manhattan

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January 27, 2021

Hon. Bill de Blasio
Mayor
City Hall
New York, NY 10007

Richard Carranza
Chancellor, NYC Department of Education
52 Chambers Street
New York, NY 10007

Dear Mayor de Blasio and Chancellor Carranza:

At its Full Board meeting January 21, 2021, Community Board #2, adopted the following resolution:

Resolution in Support of Eliminating Screens for District 2 Middle School Admissions For Fall 2021 and Using New York State Integration Grant Funds to Enhance These Changes for Subsequent Admissions Years

Whereas:

1. On December 18, 2020, Mayor Bill de Blasio and Schools Chancellor Richard A. Carranza announced changes to the middle and high school admissions process for NYC Department of Education (DOE) public schools for the 2021-22 school year[1];

2. For middle schools, the DOE will pause the use of all screens for admissions for this year, meaning that students applying to middle school will not be selected based on previously used screening criteria, including grades, student interviews, school-based assessments, behavioral evaluations, standardized test scores, and attendance. Instead, students will rank their choices on their middle school application as they always have; for schools with more applications than seats available for their sixth-grade class, students will be chosen through a lottery-based system;

3. Remaining in place will be a) any district priority for middle schools, as many families across the city have indicated they want their young children to go to a school close to their residence and b) any priorities in place for students from historically underserved communities;

4. The DOE will evaluate this one-year pause on middle school screens in the enrollment cycle for the 2022-23 school year, depending on the availability of data for next year's applicants and the outcomes of this new approach;

[1] Mayor de Blasio and Chancellor Carranza Announce 2021-22 School Year Admissions Process, December 18, 2020, https://www1.nyc.gov/office-of-the-mayor/news/874-20/mayor-de-blasio-chancellor-carranza-2021-22-school-year-admissions-process.

5. In District 2, 23 schools offer middle school programs, serving 2,780 students in the 2019-20 school year: four zoned middle schools, nine 6-8 or 6-12 schools, four K-8 schools and six schools that admit citywide;

6. In spring 2019, the last time the tests were administered, 78% and 80% of 4th grade students scored a 3 or a 4, passing the math and ELA exams, respectively, and, 57% and 47% of 4th grade students scored a 4 on math and ELA exams, respectively[2];

7. However, four schools – that account for 20% of 6th grade middle schools seats in District 2 – enroll students with the highest average test scores in a district where the vast majority of 4th grade students pass NY state math and ELA exams. These four schools disproportionately serve fewer students who live in poverty, who live in temporary housing, are English Language Learners and with disabilities and enroll disproportionally more white students and girls[2];

8. CB 2 rejects the notion that middle schools should be sorting our 10-year-olds, allowing some middle schools to cherry pick students with high test scores; and, we further reject the premise that students who attend screened schools work harder or are more deserving of tax-payer funded educational resources;

9. CB 2 also rejects the concern that formerly screened schools "won't know how to teach" lower performing students. For example, before it moved a second time to its new building in Union Square and added a high school, in 2013, The Clinton School educated students who passed state math and ELA exams at 77% and 61% rates, respectively, (slightly lower than current District 2 averages); while in 2019, 93% of students passed both state math and ELA exams[2]; and,

10. In October 2020, the New York State Education Department (NYSED) awarded $2,688,562 to District 2 for the New York State Integration Program (NYSIP) to support integrated schools and classrooms and support NYSED's commitment to racial, socioeconomic, and other types of student integration,[3] which will provide significant funding to enhance and refine middle school admissions changes in District 2.

Therefore be it resolved that Community Board 2:

1. Supports the city's decision to unscreen middle schools for the 2021-2022 school year;

2. Encourages the city to evaluate the impact of these changes and urges the incoming District 2 superintendent to use New York State Integration Program grant funds to enhance these admission changes and further integrate District 2 middle schools;

3. Urges the Department of Education, incoming District 2 superintendent and District 2 principals to toss whole language and balanced literacy, instead require its elementary schools to employ best practices for teaching reading and writing for all children at the earliest possible age that are science-based, systematic, explicit and multi-sensory and invest in professional development and training to effectively implement these curricula;

4. Supports continued funding of the Department of Youth and Community Development's *School's Out New York City (SONYC)* for middle school after school programs, particularly for working families and our most vulnerable students, who rely on free high quality after school programs; and,

[2] 2018-2019 School Quality Report for incoming test scores and 2013-2019 Test Results for average test scores, available at https://infohub.nyced.org/reports/school-quality/information-and-data-overview.
[3] New York State Education Department grant awards, http://www.nysed.gov/news/2020/state-education-department-announces-194-million-support-integrated-schools-and-classrooms.

5. Insists that the NYC School Construction Authority continue to invest in modernizing existing and constructing new school facilities so that all NYC students have access to high quality gymnasiums, auditoriums, science laboratories and music and art facilities.

VOTE: Unanimous, with 43 Board Members in favor.

Please advise us of any decision or action taken in response to this resolution.

Sincerely,

Carter Booth, Chair
Community Board #2, Manhattan

Jeannine Kiely, Chair
Schools and Education Committee
Community Board #2, Manhattan

CB/EM

c: Hon. Carolyn Maloney, Congresswoman
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Hon. Jumaane Williams, NYC Public Advocate
Hon. Gale Brewer, Manhattan Borough President
Hon. Margaret Chin, Council Member
Hon. Carlina Rivera, Council Member
Hon. Mark Treyger, NY City Council, Chair, Committee on Education
Bill Chong, Commissioner, NYC Department of Youth and Community Development
Lorraine Grillo, President and CEO, School Construction Authority
Adrienne Austin, Acting Deputy Chancellor of Community Empowerment, Partnerships, and Communications, NYC DOE
Josh Wallack, Deputy Chancellor, Early Education & Student Enrollment, NYC DOE
Linda Chen, Chief Academic Officer, NYC DOE
Sayde L. Campoamor, Director of Community Affairs, NYC DOE
Marisol Rosales, Executive Superintendent, Manhattan, NYC DOE
Kelly McGuire, incoming District 2 Superintendent, NYC DOE