

Tobi Bergman, *Chair*  
Teri Cude, *First Vice Chair*  
Susan Kent, *Second Vice Chair*  
Bob Gormley, *District Manager*



Antony Wong, *Treasurer*  
Keen Berger, *Secretary*  
Daniel Miller, *Assistant Secretary*

## COMMUNITY BOARD NO. 2, MANHATTAN

3 WASHINGTON SQUARE VILLAGE  
NEW YORK, NY 10012-1899

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March 28, 2016

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

Carmen Fariña  
Chancellor  
Department of Education  
Tweed Court House  
52 Chambers Street  
New York, NY 10007

Dear Mayor de Blasio and Chancellor Fariña:

At its Full Board meeting March 24, 2016, Community Board #2, adopted the following resolution:

### **Resolution In Support of Admissions Method(s) for 75 Morton Middle School that Reflect Community Preferences and Provide for Community Input and for the Release of Demographic and Test Data by Program for Three District 2 Middle Schools**

#### **Whereas:**

1. A new District 2 middle school and District 75 school will open at 75 Morton Street in Fall 2017 after ten years of advocacy by Manhattan Community Board 2 (CB2), Community Education Council District 2 (CECD2), parents, community activists and elected officials;
2. In an unprecedented manner, both the New York City Department of Education (DOE) and School Construction Authority (SCA) have been receptive to input from the community throughout the development of 75 Morton;
3. In the Spring of 2016, the DOE will establish the admissions method(s) for the new District 2 middle school to open at 75 Morton in Fall 2017;
4. The entering 6<sup>th</sup> grade class at 75 Morton will be a result of two drivers, the admission method(s) and the applicant pool:
  - a. Admissions Method(s):
    - i. CB 2 residents are part of Community School District 2 (D2) that extends from the tip of Manhattan to 59<sup>th</sup> Street on the west side and approximately 96<sup>th</sup> Street on the east side;

- ii. Within District 2, there is a middle school choice system whereby students must apply to middle schools, choose and rank schools they like and are accepted to one school;
  - iii. Within D2, there are three admissions methods:
    - 1. Screened, accounting for 65% of D2 seats, where schools select students based on combination of quantitative and/or qualitative screens;
    - 2. Zoned, accounting for 22% of D2 seats, where students living within the school zone are automatically admitted; and,
    - 3. Limited Unscreened, accounting for 13% of D2 seats, where a lottery matches students to the highest ranked limited unscreened school and students who attend a tour, open house or middle school fair receive priority.
  - iv. Elsewhere in New York City, other admissions methods include unscreened/100% lottery and diversity “set-aside” where a subgroup of students is prioritized for factors such as socioeconomic status;
  - v. The 23 middle schools in D2 are high performing, ranking 2<sup>nd</sup> in mean test scores out of 32 NYC districts; are racially diverse with a student population that is 33% White, 31% Asian, 20% Hispanic, 10% Black and 3% Other; are economically diverse with 44% of students qualifying for reduced or free lunch; and, serve students, 18% of whom have an Individualized Education Program (IEP) and 6% of whom are English Language Learners (ELLs);
  - vi. Within D2, three middle schools have multiple admissions methods and multiple tracks once the students are admitted, Baruch, Wagner and Sun Yat Sen, but test performance, socioeconomic and other data for these tracks is not publicly available;
- b. The applicant pool is a function of geographic location, qualitative and quantitative measures (i.e. test scores, quality review, demographics, etc.), perceived reputation, size of school, parental attitudes, school theme (if any) and the quality of school facilities;
5. To inform this process, CB 2, along with CECD2, 75 Morton Community Alliance (75MCA) and Manhattan Community Board 4 (CB 4)<sup>1</sup> hosted two envisioning meetings about the new school, in November 2015 about Educational Philosophy and School Theme and in January 2016 on Admissions;
6. In November 2015, more than 120 community members discussed what type of theme and educational philosophy the community wants for 75 Morton and the consensus was no theme and instead a focus on a rich learning environment that fosters academic, emotional and physical growth and an approach that allows students to explore their potential and take academic risks while preparing them for the challenges they will face in high school and beyond;
7. In January 2016, 160 community members discussed admissions explored through ranking preferences for school characteristics and a vote on six “Strawman” admissions methods:
- a. Participants discussed, ranked and marked their preferred point on the range for five school characteristics:
    - i. Diversity of the student population ranging from concentrated in a single demographic group to more representative of the demographics in D2;
    - ii. Academic Pace ranging from a wider range of depth and pace of learning to where all learning occurs at an accelerated pace;
    - iii. Student’s Test and Performance at entry, ranging from diverse learners with a broad range of test and report card scores to more homogeneous where learners are selected based on higher test scores and grades;
    - iv. Geographic Proximity ranging from local as measured by proximity via either walking or public transit to more dispersed across D2; and,
    - v. Ease of Admissions ranging from selective admissions based on a variety of screens to open access based on students’ interest in the school or residency;

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<sup>1</sup> CB 4 only co-hosted the January 2016 meeting.

- b. Participants discussed and voted on one of six theoretical middle schools with a combination of admission methods and programs or tracks:
    - i. Zoned Admissions Method with a Single-Track;
    - ii. Dual Admission Method of Zoned and Screened with a Dual-Track for admitted students;
    - iii. Screened Admission Method with a Single-Track and with a screen for students with advanced academic records;
    - iv. Screened Admission Method with a Single-Track and with a screen for a wider range of academic records;
    - v. Limited Unscreened Admission Method with a Single-Track; and,
    - vi. Dual Admission Method of Screened and Limited Unscreened with a Single-Track for admitted students.
  - c. Of five school characteristics, attendees top three priorities were #1 Academic Pace with answers clustered to the right of average, but not accelerated (i.e. not another D2 middle school that only admits students with top test scores), #2 more representative demographic Diversity and #3 a diverse range of Student Test/Performance, while Geographic Proximity and Ease of Admissions ranked #4 and #5, respectively, although there was a strong preference for a local school among a minority of attendees; and,
  - d. Of the theoretical school admissions models, there was a strong preference for a dual admissions model with a slight overall preference for a single-track academic program once the students are admitted;
8. In February 2016, the Department of Education (DOE) presented two zoning scenarios for the 75 Morton middle school:
- a. The rationale is to create a middle school zone for 75 Morton and provide a zoned middle school option for students living in the unzone portion of District 2, approximately 23<sup>rd</sup> Street to 59<sup>th</sup> Street west of 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue;
  - b. The two zoning scenarios are based on residential address, not elementary school of attendance:
    - i. Scenario A: D2 residents currently zoned for PS 3, 41, 11, 33, 51 and 11, and,
    - ii. Scenario B: Scenario A plus D2 residents currently zoned for PS 89, 234 and 276;
  - c. Under both Scenarios A and B, CB 2 residents currently zoned for PS 3 or PS 41 will be zoned for 75 Morton, but CB 2 residents currently zoned for PS 130 and PS 340 will not be zoned for 75 Morton, regardless of where they attend elementary school:
    - i. Kindergarten zones changed in 2014-15 and CB 2 residents west of Greenwich Avenue on the north side of West 12<sup>th</sup> Street were rezoned from PS 3/41 to PS 340, The Sixth Avenue Elementary School, a new school on West 17<sup>th</sup> Street that opened in Fall 2014;
    - ii. Students zoned for PS 340 will remain zoned for M104 Baruch and students zoned for PS 130 will remain zoned for M131 Sun Yat Sen;
  - d. The DOE continues to solicit feedback on these zoning scenarios and will present a zoning proposal to CECD2 for a vote in either late April or May 2016, that, if supported by at least six of twelve CECD2 members, would be approved;
  - e. Community members who reside in the PS 340 and PS 130 zones attended the March 14, 2016 Schools & Education Committee meeting and expressed the desire to be included in any middle school zone created for 75 Morton.
9. While it is highly likely that the DOE will create a second admission method for the middle school at 75 Morton, the DOE has not shared the timing, scope or process for determining this method nor if there will be more than one program or track, creating confusion about the admission method(s) for 75 Morton.

**Therefore be it resolved that Manhattan, Community Board 2:**

- 1. Urges the NYC Department of Education to establish admissions method(s) for the new middle school at 75 Morton Street that reflect the community's preferences identified at the January 2016 admissions meeting, for a middle school that combines strong academics with demographics more representative of District 2 and a diverse range of student academic performance at entry, as well as for a dual admission model, with a preference for a single-track academic program once the students are admitted;

2. Urges the Department of Education to provide clarity on other admission method(s) and programs or tracks being contemplated;
3. Supports the goal to create a zoned middle school option for all students living in District 2, but recommends that middle school zones need not be based on elementary school zones and that any middle school zone for 75 Morton shall include all residents of CB 2, from the south side of 14th Street to the north side of Canal Street and from the Hudson River to the west side of the Bowery/4th Avenue, if the NYC Department of Education proposes and CECD2 adopts a rezoning of Community School District 2 middle school zones; and,
4. Reiterates its request that the DOE provide demographic and test result data for each program at M104 Simon Baruch Middle School, M131 Sun Yat Sen Middle School and M167 Robert F. Wagner Middle School.

**VOTE: Unanimous with 34 Board Members in favor.**

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

Sincerely,



Tobi Bergman, Chair  
Community Board #2, Manhattan

TB/EM



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

- c:
- Hon. Jerrold L. Nadler, Congressman
  - Hon. Deborah Glick, State Assembly Member
  - Hon. Brad Hoylman, NY State Senator
  - Hon. Gale Brewer, Manhattan Borough President
  - Hon. Corey Johnson, Council Member
  - Shino Tanikawa, President, CECD2
  - Bonnie Laboy, Superintendent, CECD2
  - Elizabeth Rose, Deputy Chancellor, DOE
  - Sandy Ferguson, Deputy Chief Executive for Admissions, Office of Student Enrollment, DOE
  - Sara McPhee, Student Enrollment Admissions, DOE

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March 28, 2016

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

Carmen Fariña  
Chancellor  
Department of Education  
Tweed Court House  
52 Chambers Street  
New York, NY 10007

Dear Mayor de Blasio and Chancellor Fariña:

At its Full Board meeting March 24, 2016, Community Board #2, adopted the following resolution:

### **Resolution In Support of the Funding of Projects for Green Roofs, Walls and Outdoor Green STEM Curriculum**

#### **Whereas:**

1. Green roofs, walls and gardens provide hands-on, experiential learning in environmental sciences for students and the broader community and provide an outdoor classroom that teaches students about native habitat creation, stormwater management, climate change, urban agriculture and the relationship between nature and humans;
2. In 2013, the New York City School Construction Authority published the "[NYC Guide to Green Roofs on Existing School Buildings](#)" that explains the benefits of green roofs and provides guidance on cost and maintenance, following former Manhattan Borough President Scott Stringer's 2010 publication of "Green Roofs for Existing School Buildings;"
3. In 2015, Manhattan Borough President Gale Brewer published "[How our Gardens Grow: Strategies for Expanding Urban Agriculture](#)" that recommends expanding urban agriculture to Manhattan's schools, senior centers, and public housing facilities and announced up to \$1 million in capital funding for innovative school gardening programs in FY 2017;

4. The primary challenges to expanding urban agriculture are limited space, funding and resources to integrate gardening into school curriculum and the maintenance school programs during summer months;
5. There are many types of urban agriculture programs available for schools:
  - a. Extensive green roofs are 3-5 inches deep, and as a result have lower irrigation and maintenance requirements and are ideal for roofs with lower structural loading capacity. i.e. P.S. 41;
  - b. Intensive green roofs are best for roofs with greater structural loading capacity, up to 150 lbs per square foot and permit the growth of edible plants and herbs, native plants and habitat creation, but require greater irrigation and maintenance, i.e. Fifth Street Farm and City and Country School; and
  - c. Green walls are ideal for space constrained schools or where a retrofit of an existing school roof is not possible, i.e. City~As~School High School;
6. Green roof curriculum goes hand-in-hand with these programs providing a way for schools with green roofs and walls to integrate them into their exiting curriculum and to inspire other schools to install them;
7. Installing a green roof on existing school buildings requires significant up-front costs to retrofit the building and install the roof, and at a minimum requires the appropriate structural loading capacity, two stairwells that open onto the roof, extension of fire and public address systems to the roof, rooftop fencing and compliance with ADA requirements;
8. In May 2013, Community Board 2 passed a resolution calling for the renovation of 75 Morton and for this to include a “green roof with gardening;”
9. In May 2014, the SCA revealed renovation plans for 75 Morton and shared that there is space allocated for a green roof provided it can be separately funded; and,
10. In 2016, our elected officials received funding requests from CB 2, on behalf of 75 Morton, for a green roof at the new 75 Morton school; City~As~School High School for a greenhouse and vertical planters for its urban agriculture curriculum and to create partnerships with community groups, including nearby PS; and, PS 41, in collaboration with The National Wildlife Federation and The High Line, to create a K-12 curriculum guide for outdoor green STEM education.

**Therefore be it resolved that Manhattan, Community Board 2:**

1. Appreciates the allocation of green roof space as part of the 75 Morton gut renovation and reiterates the importance of this space for a state-of-the art middle and District 75 school;
2. Requests financial support from our elected officials so that the 75 Morton Green Roof project can be funded and completed during the currently scheduled gut renovation, avoiding additional costs associated with a post-construction retrofit and disruption to students, staff and faculty after the school opens in Fall 2017; and,
3. Requests additional financial support from our elected officials for:
  - a. City~As~School High School for a greenhouse and vertical planters for its urban agriculture curriculum and to create partnerships with community groups, including nearby PS 3;

- b. NYC iSchool for funding and support of a self-sustaining rooftop that enables students to explore, invent, experiment, and share adventurous learning combining outdoor and indoor experiences as well as reduces the building's energy use; and,
- c. PS 41, in collaboration with The National Wildlife Federation and The High Line, to create a K-12 curriculum guide for outdoor green STEM education.

**VOTE: Unanimous with 34 Board Members in favor.**

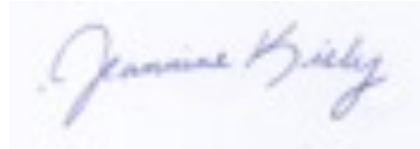
Please advise us of any decision or action taken in response to this resolution.

Sincerely,



Tobi Bergman, Chair  
Community Board #2, Manhattan

TB/EM



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

- c: Hon. Jerrold L. Nadler, Congressman
- Hon. Deborah Glick, State Assembly Member
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- Hon. Gale Brewer, Manhattan Borough President
- Hon. Corey Johnson, Council Member
- Lorraine Grillo, President and CEO, School Construction Authority
- Elizabeth Rose, Deputy Chancellor, DOE