

Youth, Education & Libraries Committee
Meeting Minutes
February 8, 2017

Committee Members Present:

Alexander Barrett, Deirdre McIntosh-Brown, Ken Miles,
Jen Silverman (public member)

Excused - Derrick Johnson

Meeting called to order by Committee Chair- Deirdre McIntosh-Brown at 6:44 P.M
Introductions were made by all present.

Presentation: HYPOTHEkids

Executive Director, Christine Kovich, with support from Aaron Neal(Hk Maker Lab Program Director)

The focus of Ms. Kovich's presentation was to outline the programs offered at HYPOTHEkids which is the K-12 STEM non-profit education initiative of Harlem Biospace. Harlem Biospace is a co-working lab space for NYC's leading biotech startup companies and is developed in partnership with the New York City Economic Development Corporation (NYCEDC). Ms. Kovich stated that HYPOTHEkids was created to meet a need for more science in our community. HYPOTHEkids offers Hk Summer STEAM program(Science, Technology, Engineering, Art & Design, Math) through their full-day summer enrichment program during children conduct science experiments, create projects , meet practicing scientist and engineers and have field trips to various institutions around the city. They also have days where they go swimming or participate in other fun activities.

Ms. Kovich and Mr. Neal also introduced the Hk Lab Maker which is the High School program which is funded by the NIH and Pinkerton. It's an intensive summer course in which 24 high achieving, low income NYC students are introduced to the engineering design process. The students in this program design and develop products during the 6wks summer program and go on to internships either at Harlem Biospace or Columbia University. The winner of last summer's science program was a CB9 resident named Sandra, she was also accepted at Yale University on Full Scholarship.

Ms. Kovich spoke about HYPOTHEKits a new progra being launched which will bring scince to places that ordinarily get science. They also facilitate a teacher training program, where teachers are instructed in Curriculum design.

Ms. Kovich informed us that 48 students received scholarships most of which were from the CB9. She also stated that Elementary Program is through and application process and that the WHDC provides funding that provides scholarship for children and the after school programs which are held at TCCS and PS36.

Ms. Kovich and Mr. Neal came prepared to fully explain the programs and applications process to our committee and the general public...Many questions were asked re: school being served and scholarship application process.

Presentation: Breakaway Hoops

Commissioner, Wilky Collin, with support from Sean Andrailis

Mr. Wilky Collin a former Men's Division Basketball player shared information on his organization. Breakaway Hoops is an indoor Basketball Developmental Clinic, where players of all ages and skill sets would be able to play enjoy the game of basketball in a fun and instructional atmosphere.

Adults ages 18+ are able to play year round basketball in fun and competitive environments through league play and open gym. Youths ages 6-17 are also able to foster friendship, camaraderie, and gain solid fundamental basketball instruction through Summer Day Camps, Clinics, Private Training, Tournaments, and League play (Fall, Winter, and Spring Seasons).

Summer Day Camps are directed under the watchful eye of Coach Colin and his staff. Coach Colin has over 20 years in the basketball business as a player and coach. Breakaway Hoops also offers an Academic program through Homework assistance. HA provides an opportunity for students ages 5-15 to gain academic assistance afterschool during the school by accredited tutors.

Community Presentations:

Morningside Heights Library, Beverly McLay (Library Rep.)

Ms. McLay presented highlights from September calendar

<http://www.nypl.org/locations/Morningside-heights>

Hamilton Grange Library, Maggie Craig (Library Rep.)

Presented highlights from the February calendar which included SAT & ACT help, the new video visitation program as well as Family Literacy Workshops.

<http://www.nypl.org/locations/hamilton-grange>

Update/Review on Response to the Proposed Colocation of TCCS to PS36

The committee discussed the DOE's proposal to collocate TCCS and PS36. Mr. Barrett briefly described the two hearings that were held earlier in the week. Everyone on the committee attended at least one of these hearings.

Ms. Canton, CEC5 chair, spoke first. She pointed out that the EIS includes the playground as usable space, though it has been closed off and deemed unsafe for use for years. She said Eric

Herman from the DOE said they would put together a specific plan on how the space would be used, but this document was not made available in Spanish, making it inaccessible to many PS36 parents. She spoke about the problem of TCCS parents sneaking into PS36 under false pretenses to see the building, suggesting that the TCCS PTA should have done a better job of preventing that behavior.

Ms. Canton said that PS36 parents are largely struggling, including some who currently live in homeless shelters. She pointed out the school's mental health and medical clinics as evidence of the needs of the community that school serves.

Ms. Canton pointed out that TCCS has known this problem was coming for over 6 years, and that the current plan still will lead to overcrowding in M916 (St Joseph), especially considering that TCCS is scaling up and the school will be used by older, bigger children. She said the current plan does not leave room for growth at PS36, which has already has to serve as an overflow school for PS125 across the street.

Ms. Canton concluded that this experience demonstrates that the DOE's process is broken. As an example, she pointed out that the hearings provided were a venue for community members to speak, but with no opportunity for question and answer from the DOE or for the DOE to explain how the colocation would work in detail.

Ms. Silverman said that the DOE has, in response to public pressure, said it would set up a Community Meeting, at which questions could be answered, unlike a hearing. The meeting would include families from both schools. However, Ms. Silverman acknowledged that there is not much to schedule the meeting, and that it was not clear to parents from the beginning that a hearing would not include the opportunity to answer questions.

Ms. Glover commented that originally TCCS was a more socioeconomically and ethnically diverse place due to requirements put in place by the original principal. Those are not being kept up. She said that testing as a requirement does not create a level playing field for incoming students.

Ms. Glover pointed out that the Blue Book only counts classroom space, not space required for all of the other services that must be provided at school. She expressed fear that after the proposal was approved and the colocation implemented, the DOE would look at the schools managing to coexist and see that as evidence that the colocation was successful, when in fact it was the result of a difficult process.

Ms. Howard from the Borough President's office asked about the possible fallbacks if the proposal did not pass, in particular the implications for the 6th grade at TCCS. Ms. Silverman responded that there was absolutely no room for the 6th grade in the current building. Ms. Canton offered that in another instance, a school that did not have room for a middle school had an arrangement in which students who would have attended the middle school were sent to

other middle schools until their original school could secure sufficient space. She pointed out that only 16 of the original 50 students in the rising 6th grade at TCCS remain at the school, as a possible justification for TCCS forgoing a middle school expansion this year.

Ms. Silverman proposed an amendment to the resolution to focus it more on the failed DOE process and ways to improve it going forward, using the experience of these two schools as an illustration.

Discussion on Collaboration Project around Student Educational Rights

The committee is meeting with Joe Rogers from Teachers College at the end of this week. Mr. Barrett solicited input from those present into what violations of legal educational rights should be raised at the meeting. He mentioned libraries and IEP services as two examples that had already come up in the previous discussion. Other suggestions that were offered included the physical infrastructure of schools, like their desks, electric and wifi capacity. Ms. McIntosh-Brown said that one of the other purposes of the meeting would be to talk about organizing parent activism around these issues.

Discussion about Community Benefits Agreement

In addition to all that had been previously covered, there was a brief discussion of the \$30 million earmarked for schools in the CBA. The conversation concluded that some of the funds had been spent renovating and leasing St Joseph for TCCS. Additional funds may have come out of in kind contributions from Columbia, such as undergraduates working with TCCS. Ms. Canton pointed out that TCCS was originally envisioned as a Title I school, so it would have received federal funds which did not materialize because the school population has not in fact been Title I eligible. Ms. Glover suggested that WHDC has invested the funds and their interest may mean there is more money available than the amount spent would suggest.

Agenda for next YEL meeting

Mr. Barrett suggested inviting the schools from the Ralph Bunche complex (PS125, CSS, and KIPP) to attend the next meeting and discuss how their colocation works in practice.

Others suggested a conversation about the need for new school space in upper Manhattan. Forthcoming high-rise buildings in the neighborhood could include schools if the CB negotiates with the developers. Someone suggested looking at a report released by former Borough President Stringer called "Crowded Out" looking at population growth in Manhattan.

Mr. Ballard spoke about the school his children attend, The School at Columbia, where he is on the PTA. He said the school has ethnic diversity but lacks economic diversity. The school officially draws from District 3 and District 5 but much more heavily from the former. He shared a report by the Vice Provost of Columbia from 2009, the last time it was issued, looking closely at

the School's recruitment and enrollment numbers from different neighborhoods. He asked the committee to pursue working with the school, and engaging elected officials to work with the school, to uphold its commitment to serving a diverse student body. Ms. McIntosh-Brown and Ms. Glover said that representatives of the school had visited the committee early in 2016 but had followed up on the committee's request for numbers showing enrollment by zip code, and agreed that the committee should contact them again.