

COMMUNITY EDUCATION COUNCIL DISTRICT 28

Annual/Business Meeting Minutes

August 6th, 2026

ATTENDANCE

Member	Position	Attendance
Quentin Mezetin	President	Present
Lauren Clavin	1st Vice President	Present
Jennifer Sobers	2nd Vice President	Present
Chantel Chambers	Recording Secretary	Present
Olessia Bauer	Treasurer	Present
Lu Zhao	Member	Present
Kenya Townsend	Member	Present
Annie Cok	Member	Present
Paquita Williams	Member	Present
Eric Gretch	Member	Absent
Cecily Xu	Member	Present

NON-MEMBER ATTENDANCE

Dr. Eric Blake	Superintendent	Absent
Tameka Nurse-Carter	FACE Specialist	Present

Calendar Meeting Minutes

Meeting was called to order by Council Member Quentin Mezetin at 6:32pm
Roll call was done by Recording Secretary Chantel Chambers and Quorum was met.

- President Quentin Mezetin opened the meeting, greeted and thanked everyone for attending. He asked Spanish Interpreters to provide instructions in Spanish.
- Recording Secretary Chantel Chambers announced that Member Eric Gretch is absent and Member Lorin Perkins is running late for calendar meeting
- 1st Vice President Lauren Clavin provided chat etiquette and instructions to sign up to speak during public comment.
- President Mezetin asked member Cecily Xu and Annie Cok to monitor chat and speakers list
- President Mezetin thanked fellow members and A.A for all the work they have been doing behind the scenes in the summer months. He acknowledged and thanked members, elected officials, and stakeholders for their continued advocacy and collaboration, noting that these efforts have helped establish the Council as one of the top councils in New York City. President Mezetin also encouraged members to prioritize safety and wellness throughout the summer,

with particular attention to child safety and the risks associated with children eloping or wandering, especially for families of children with autism. Members were encouraged to enjoy the summer, create positive memories, and share photos with the Council while continuing to support its advocacy efforts. President Mezetin also noted that the meeting agenda was brief and highlighted upcoming holidays and August Month awarenesses.

- Sen. Liu office gave greetings and provided updates
- Deputy Superintendent Angela Teutschman thanked the CEC for acknowledging her presence and expressed appreciation for the opportunity to participate in the meeting alongside Dr. Benoit and other members of the district team. She shared greetings from Dr. Blake, who was unable to attend due to being on vacation. Deputy Superintendent Teutschman expressed appreciation for the ongoing partnership with the CEC and looked forward to the start of the new school year, noting that preparations are already underway. She also looked forward to seeing everyone at upcoming Back-to-School activities.

Public Comments

- D28 stakeholder made a request to the CEC for support in addressing ongoing traffic and pedestrian safety concerns in front of Queens Gateway Health Science. She reported that traffic conditions have been unsafe, with multiple incidents involving students being struck by vehicles, including one student who sustained a traumatic brain injury. Parents and school staff have had to assist students in crossing the street due to vehicles speeding through the area. She requested that the CEC explore possible safety measures, such as speed bumps or other traffic-calming measures, to slow down vehicles and improve student safety.
- Council Member responded to the traffic safety concerns raised regarding Queens Gateway Health Science, she recommended that the issue be brought to the local Community Board, which is responsible for approving measures such as speed bumps. She also emphasized that gaining support from residents in the surrounding community would strengthen advocacy efforts and help demonstrate the need for traffic-calming measures. She offered to connect with speaker to identify the appropriate Community Board and determine the best way to address the safety concerns.
- D28 FLC, Sonia Rueda expressed appreciation for the members of Community District 28 and highlighted the district's strength and unity in embracing differences and working together toward a common goal. She shared information about upcoming PA/PTA professional development sessions, including a session on working with challenging individuals that was incorporated based on community feedback. The sessions are intended for new and returning parent leaders, as well as members who want to better understand leadership roles and accountability. Sessions will be offered in both morning and evening formats, with Spanish-language sessions also available upon request. The speaker encouraged community members to participate and emphasized the importance of continuing to grow together in service of families and students. She concluded

by thanking members for their dedication and advocacy and wishing everyone an enjoyable remainder of the summer.

- Dr. Benoit from District office gave greetings and wished everyone a happy summer
- Vikash Narine from District office gave greetings and wished everyone a happy summer
- D28 advocate representing the community presented their community-based program, which serves students in grades 3–5, 6–8, and 9–12. The program focuses on financial literacy, fitness, basketball fundamentals, leadership development, and building a strong sense of community. While the organization partners with schools during the week, it also offers free programming every Saturday and Sunday to students from public, charter, and Catholic schools across the boroughs, including free breakfast and lunch. The speakers emphasized the importance of teaching young people financial literacy, encouraging academic achievement, developing leadership skills, limiting excessive reliance on technology, and providing opportunities to explore college, trade schools, and career paths. The program also connects students with community professionals who volunteer their time to share career experiences and mentorship. The speakers stressed that supporting young people requires a collective community effort and encouraged Council members and families to visit and learn more about the program.

Member Reports

Council Member encouraged families to take advantage of the D28 Advocate program and shared information from the Borough President's Office regarding upcoming back-to-school giveaways, including backpacks and school supplies. She also discussed concerns regarding admissions to New York City specialized high schools, emphasizing the importance of equity, integration, and ensuring that all students have access to the opportunities and resources they deserve. Council Member expressed concern about the consistently low number of Black students receiving offers to specialized high schools and noted that the latest figures represented the lowest number since the data began being tracked in 2014. She reiterated their personal support for abolishing the SHSAT, expressing concern that current preparation and support systems are not adequately addressing the disparities in admissions. Council Member stated that they would continue to raise awareness of these concerns and thanked everyone for attending, wishing the community a safe and enjoyable summer and looking forward to seeing everyone in September.

- Council Member thanked the presenters for bringing valuable programs and resources to the community and agreed that the disparities in specialized high school admissions warrant further examination. Having attended Bronx Science, the Council Member shared that it was a very positive experience and suggested that a study could examine how admitted students prepare for the SHSAT, noting that some families may have greater access to preparation resources and information than others. She also provided updates on ongoing work with PS 55 regarding construction projects and installations, noting that after meeting with the contractors and principal, the current expectation is that construction will begin before the end of the fall. She also voiced that she has been in

communication with the office of Ty Hankerson and noted concerns that some elected officials may not have updated information about projects they have funded. As a goal for the upcoming year, the Council Member proposed improving communication with elected officials to ensure funding reaches its intended projects and to help the Council track previously requested, funded, and completed projects before making new recommendations in January. She also highlighted various summer events and giveaways taking place throughout the city and encouraged everyone to visit CEC28 website for more information.

- Council Member thanked the presenters for providing valuable information to the community and expressed appreciation for their participation in the meeting. The Council Member also shared that they were enjoying the summer and hoped everyone else was as well, before yielding the floor to the next Member.
- Council Member provided updates on several District 28 schools and construction projects. She noted it was a result of coordinated advocacy involving the state and city delegation, District 28 leadership, and the School Construction Authority. She said that the SCA has committed to fully funding and constructing a permanent annex at MS 217, as well as participating in the restoration and beautification of the shared city park space. She described this as a significant achievement for educational equity and stated that construction milestones will continue to be monitored on behalf of families. MS 217 also held an end-of-program celebration featuring a carnival, which was well received by students; although there were some busing issues, they were resolved. Council Member also provided a final update regarding PS 157Q at Halsey School, as a family-related conflict of interest will require another Council Member to assume the liaison role. She voiced that AC window units have been installed and are operational, while construction of three classrooms remains ongoing. Due to active construction, orientation for incoming sixth-grade students was scheduled to take place virtually via Zoom on August 7. She announced that she's the liaison for PS 287, PS 139, MS217 and Q167; initial outreach has been made to each school, with a first visit scheduled for September 16 at one of the schools, while the other two have not yet responded due to summer scheduling.
- Council Member addressed ongoing discussions surrounding specialized high schools and emphasized the importance of seeking common ground rather than engaging in divisive debate. He noted conversations with CEC members from other districts regarding a proposal to enhance and expand the DREAM program through the office of Donovan Richards, with the goal of increasing access to academic resources and preparation opportunities. Council Member emphasized that more resources and structured activities are needed for students, particularly older students who may lack supervision or enrichment opportunities after school, especially when parents work extended hours. Concerns were also raised about students who are below grade level and, conversely, students who are academically prepared for accelerated learning but may not receive sufficient opportunities in their regular classrooms. Council Member praised the D28 Advocate program as an example of a positive community resource that combines financial literacy, physical activity, social interaction, and leadership development. Council Member proposed continuing discussions with the program representatives, reviewing a potential resolution, and exploring opportunities for the Council to help promote and expand access to these resources.

- Council Member emphasized the importance of building resources and support systems that can grow from one generation to the next. If standardized testing is required, students and families should have access to the resources needed to prepare and succeed. She stressed that each generation should build upon the progress of the previous generation so that opportunities and support continue to strengthen within communities. Council Member emphasized the importance of providing students with greater exposure, opportunities, and foundational resources to help them succeed. The discussion also focused on how communities can retain and build upon these resources when students advance to specialized high schools, Ivy League institutions, or opportunities outside New York City, including whether successful individuals return and contribute to their communities. She stressed the importance of strengthening community connections and ensuring that support is available at every stage, with the goal of building a stronger community for future generations.
- Council Member reflected on the importance of voting rights and their connection to education, noting concerns about recent changes to the Voting Rights Act and the broader implications for communities. She also reflected on the history of Black Americans' voting rights and the significance of continuing to protect and build upon those gains. In addition, the Council Member recognized Jamaica's 64th Independence Day, sharing a personal connection to Jamaica through their family. Council Member also highlighted the upcoming Jamaica Independence celebration and parade in Flatbush as an opportunity for the community to celebrate and reflect during the summer.
- Council Member expressed concern regarding the low number of Black and Brown students admitted to specialized high schools and emphasized the need for meaningful action rather than continued discussion and review of statistics. She thanked the D28 Advocate representatives for presenting their program and highlighted the importance of making financial literacy opportunities available to all communities, noting that students and families can never have too many opportunities to learn about managing money. Council Member also shared plans to visit local schools and better understand their needs, with a focus on identifying smaller, practical improvements that can be addressed while larger School Construction Authority projects are still in progress. She acknowledged that major construction and facility projects can take significant time to complete but emphasized the importance of maintaining advocacy and applying appropriate pressure when necessary. Council Member encouraged schools to communicate their immediate needs and expressed a commitment to making school visits and supporting the community. She concluded by thanking everyone for their presentations and wishing the community a safe and enjoyable remainder of the summer.
- Council Member emphasized the importance of financial literacy for students and encouraged families to teach children how to make thoughtful decisions about saving, investing, education, and spending. She suggested that the CEC incorporate financial literacy into regular presentations and consider inviting guest speakers to provide students and families with information and resources. Council Member also highlighted the potential of AI tools to support student learning and help parents create structured educational activities, worksheets, and learning plans during the transition between school years. Council Member encouraged families to take advantage of the many free summer activities

available throughout New York City, including events in parks, SummerStage, Lincoln Center programs, and other community activities. She concluded by wishing everyone an enjoyable remainder of the summer.

- Council Member to previous member's report by highlighting the recent Queens Disability Pride Panel hosted by the Jamaica Hill Community Association, in which both previous member and he participated. He said the panel included representation from the Mayor's Office for People with Disabilities, he and Lorin Perkins. He also provided an update on ongoing D75 transportation concerns, noting that busing issues are monitored throughout the year due to the year-round educational needs of many D75 students. The Council continues to work with the D75 Superintendent's Office and President's Council to ensure buses have functioning air conditioning and heating, appropriate vehicles, and proper accommodation for students with disabilities. Families were encouraged to report transportation concerns so they can be addressed and elevated as needed. He also clarified that when members participate in outside events or organizations, they speak in their individual capacities and should not imply that they are representing the entire CEC unless specifically authorized to do so. Information from these outside engagements can, however, be brought back to the Council for discussion, advocacy, and potential resolutions. He concluded by expressing appreciation for the continued work of Council members and parent leaders and recognized the strength and dedication of District 28's community. He granted an exception for a D28 parent to give a public comment.
- D28 parent raised concerns about the limited availability of Summer Rising seats for students in the northern portion of District 20. She noted that 10 schools were assigned to the Summer Rising program at PS 303, which had only 120 available seats, creating a significant gap between the number of students seeking placement and the number of available seats. She emphasized that six of the participating schools are Title I schools, where many families rely on access to affordable summer programming, and asked how the Council can strengthen advocacy efforts to secure greater representation and additional Summer Rising seats for families in the district.
- President Mezetin asked the Spanish interpreters if they had any questions from the Spanish room. He wished everyone a happy holiday season. He made a motion to adjourn the calendar meeting.

Meeting Adjourned at 7:43 pm

BUSINESS MEETING MINUTES

ATTENDANCE

Member	Position	Attendance
Quentin Mezetin	President	Present
Lauren Clavin	1st Vice President	Present
Jennifer Sobers	2nd Vice President	Present
Chantel Chambers	Recording Secretary	Present
Olessia Bauer	Treasurer	Present
Lu Zhao	Member	Present
Kenya Townsend	Member	Present

Annie Cok	Member	Present
Paquita Williams	Member	Present
Eric Gretch	Member	Absent
Cecily Xu	Member	Present

The meeting was called to order by President Mezetin at 7:45pm
Roll call was done by Recording Secretary Chantel Chambers, and a quorum was met.

Recording Secretary Chantel Chambers made a motion to approve June Calendar and Business Meeting Minutes as is.
Seconded by 1st Vice President Clavin

Recording Secretary Chantel Chambers made a motion to approve July Calendar and Business Meeting Minutes as is.
Seconded by President Mezetin

1st Vice President Lauren Clavin made a motion to approve her own remote present for June Calendar and Business Meeting.
Seconded by President Mezetin
Motion passed with no objection.

1st Vice President Lauren Clavin made a motion to excuse Member Kenya Townsend absence for June Calendar and Business Meeting due to a preplanned work conflict.
Seconded by President Mezetin
Motion passed with no objection.

1st Vice President Lauren Clavin made a motion to excuse Member Annie Cok absence for July Calendar and Business Meeting due to a preplanned vacation.
Seconded by President Mezetin
Motion passed with no objection.

Council Members discussed CEC28 Bylaws Amendments amongst themselves. The Council discussed proposed language regarding limiting Council Member reports to three minutes per speaker, with questions and answers to follow. Members debated whether the three-minute limit should be treated as a strict requirement or simply a suggested guideline, noting that the Council has not historically enforced the limit through formal consequences. Second Vice President Sobers noted that the previous by-laws provided a three-minute time limit for public comments, while the proposed changes would reduce the limit to two minutes. She expressed concerns about reducing the amount of time allotted for public comment. Concerns were raised that changing the language could create unnecessary restrictions or prolong the discussion of an issue that has already been addressed. Members emphasized the importance of finalizing and voting on the bylaws rather than continuing to revisit the same point. The discussion became somewhat circular. The President called the group back to order and invited Recording Secretary, Chantel Chambers to speak before proceeding. The recording Secretary reiterated that the meeting had reached the voting stage for the proposed bylaws and that discussion and suggestions were intended to be addressed prior to the vote. Members were reminded that previous meetings had provided an

opportunity to submit and consider various suggestions, although not all recommendations could be incorporated due to differing proposals. It was emphasized that members who disagree with the current language could vote against it, and if the proposal does not receive sufficient support, the Council could return to the matter and revise the bylaws. The discussion was then turned over to the FACE liaison, Tameka Nurse-Carter, for additional guidance. FACE liaison noted that members would still could propose amendments to the bylaws during the voting process. Members may raise suggested changes for discussion before proceeding with the vote, allowing the Council to consider and make amendments to the proposed language if appropriate. The Council was called to order by the President numerous times as members continued discussing the proposed bylaws and the three-minute reporting provision. The President acknowledged that concerns regarding the time limit had been raised previously and that the provision was intended to help keep meetings organized and within a reasonable timeframe. It was noted that potential consequences for exceeding the time limit could be addressed through an amendment if necessary. The President emphasized that the current meeting was intended to proceed with a vote on the proposed bylaws and that if the bylaws did not receive sufficient support, the matter could be revisited through the Bylaws Committee. He also acknowledged the different areas of expertise and perspectives that members bring to the bylaw's discussion, including experience with legal matters, contracts, and parliamentary procedure. Before proceeding, it was clarified that members could vote **yes, no, or abstain** on the proposed bylaws. Each Council Member made a statement regarding the proposed CEC28 Bylaws Amendments before voting on the changes.

President Mezetin concluded the voting session by voting yes and stated that he like to provide additional context regarding the three-minute limit for Council Member reports. He explained that District 28 has approximately 40 schools serving about 30,000 students, and that the Council has received significant feedback about the length of its meetings. He noted that Council Member reports have, at times, taken 45 minutes to an hour and contributed to meetings exceeding their intended timeframe. President Mezetin emphasized that the proposed time limit is not intended to reduce advocacy for schools, students, or the community, but rather to promote orderly meetings, equitable participation, and a consistent framework for current and future Councils. He compared the proposed structure to other forums, such as community boards and the Panel for Educational Policy, where members are expected to work within established time limits. President Mezetin also highlighted the Council's website as a resource where members can share more detailed reports, presentations, and advocacy work beyond the meeting. He acknowledged concerns raised by families and stakeholders about the length of meetings and expressed a desire to find a reasonable compromise that maintains effective advocacy while improving meeting efficiency. President Mezetin concluded by reaffirming his **yes** vote and asked the Recording Secretary to proceed.

The Recording Secretary announced the vote for CEC28 2026-2027 Bylaws Amendments and conducted a roll call vote.

Roll call by Recording Secretary Chantel Chambers

7 in favor; 2 opposed; 1 absent; 2 abstain.

CEC28 Bylaws Amendments adopted

Council Members discussed CEC28 2026-2027 meeting dates amongst themselves

1st Vice President Lauren Clavin suggested to move the March meeting to the following week, as that would be the only available opportunity without a parent-teacher conference scheduled the following week. She noted that this was only a suggestion and offered to withdraw it if the council did not support the change.

Roll call by Recording Secretary Chantel Chambers

10 in favor; 0 opposed; 1 absent; 0 abstain.

CEC28 March 4, 2027, Calendar & Business Meeting moved to March 11, 2027, with no objection

Council Member Olessia Bauer left the meeting due to an emergency and was unable to participate in the roll-call vote.

President Mezetin asked members if they would like to discuss any new business.

Second Vice President Jennifer Sobers suggested several ideas for strengthening the Council's engagement and effectiveness, including establishing a monthly check-in with the Superintendent or district staff to address district-related matters outside of the regular monthly Council meeting and help alleviate time constraints; encouraging greater participation in committee meetings and increasing opportunities for the public to engage with committees on specific subject matters; compiling Community Board meeting dates and encouraging Council members to attend meetings to strengthen advocacy and representation for district families; and developing strategies to strengthen and maximize the Council's engagement with elected officials to better advocate for schools and families. She invited members to share additional ideas or continue the discussion at a future time.

Recording Secretary Chantel Chambers expressed interest in organizing a Gifted and Talented Committee meeting to develop a plan of action and noted that the matter had previously been discussed with President Quentin Mezetin. She indicated that she would like to organize the meeting soon.

President Mezetin reiterated that committees may hold meetings as needed and encouraged members to utilize committees to expand engagement with families and community partners. He noted potential partnerships with local hospitals to provide health screenings and other resources, as well as opportunities for organizations such as Autism Out Loud to support families of children with special needs through the Special Education Committee. President Mezetin also reported that Dr. Blake has expressed a commitment to improving communication with the Council and proposed holding monthly meetings with the Council even before our request, either in person or through a district representative. Members may provide proposed dates for these meetings. He also noted that the FACE liaison, Tameka, remains available to provide guidance regarding FACE regulations, Council roles and responsibilities, and other concerns through virtual check-in meetings as needed. Members were encouraged to utilize these district and FACE resources for ongoing support.

President Mezetin made a motion to adjourn meeting

Business Meeting Adjourned at [8:48pm]

Respectfully Adopted by

Chantel Chambers
CEC 28 Recording Secretary

APPROVED