

# Annual, Hybrid Calendar and Business Meeting 07/14/2025

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The July Calendar Meeting of District 30 Community Education Council was held on Monday, July 14, 2025, in person in the fifth-floor conference room at 28-11 Queens Plaza North, Long Island City, and via Zoom.

## 1. Annual Meeting - Call to Order

Victoria Medelius called the meeting to order at 6:09 pm.

## 2. Roll Call - Annual Meeting

- Nahounha Alexandre: Present
- Linda Chung-Leung: Present
- Alexis Kaloyanides: Present
- Danielle Lopresti-Lee: Present
- Victoria Medelius: Present
- Estela Nguema: Present
- Marlene Rossi: on her way / Present
- Nadeea Saeed: Present
- Laura Simpson: Present
- Whitney Toussaint: Present

## 3. Annual Meeting Elections

### **Pro-tempore Chair Election:**

- Laura Simpson was elected Pro-tempore Chair (10/10 votes)

### **Officer Elections:**

Alexis Kaloyanides nominated Whitney Toussaint for President.

Whitney Toussaint declined the nomination for President.

Whitney Toussaint nominated Victoria Medelius and Whitney Toussaint for Co-Presidents.

Victoria Medelius and Whitney Toussaint accepted the nomination for Co-Presidents.

No other candidates were nominated for the office of Co-President.

- Co-Presidents: Victoria Medelius & Whitney Toussaint (10/10 votes)

Whitney Toussaint nominated Linda Chung-Leung for Vice-President.

Linda Chung-Leung accepted the nomination for Vice-President.

No other candidates were nominated for the office of Vice-President.

- Vice President: Linda Chung-Leung (10/10 votes)

Whitney Toussaint nominated Laura Simpson for the office of Secretary.

Laura Simpson accepted the nomination for Secretary.

No other candidates were nominated for the office of Secretary.

- Secretary: Laura Simpson (10/10 votes)

Marlene Rossi nominated herself for the office of Treasurer.

No other candidates were nominated for the office of Treasurer.

- Treasurer: Marlene Rossi (10/10 votes)

## 4. Adjournment

Whitney Toussaint called the annual meeting to adjourn at 6:45 pm.

# 1. Calendar Meeting Call to Order

Co-President Victoria Medelius called the meeting to order at 6:45 pm.

# 2. Roll Call - Calendar Meeting

Secretary Laura Simpson completed the roll call.

- Nahounha Alexandre: Present
- Linda Chung-Leung: Present
- Alexis Kaloyanides: Present
- Danielle Lopresti-Lee: Present
- Victoria Medelius: Present
- Estela Nguema: Present
- Marlene Rossi: Present
- Nadeea Saeed: Present
- Laura Simpson: Present
- Whitney Toussaint: Present

# 3. Public Comment Session

## **Alejandra Roma (Remote)**

Q300 Teacher **Topic: HMH Curriculum Results**

Ms. Roma, a District 30 teacher with 13 years of experience, inquired about the results of the HMH curriculum implementation across the district. She noted this was the first year teachers were expected to follow the curriculum by unit with specific timing requirements. She asked if the CEC had noticed any district-wide improvements in literacy rates and reading levels, and whether the same expectations would continue in the upcoming school year. She also mentioned having some concerns about certain texts used in the classroom.

## **Katie Anskat (Remote)**

Long time D30 Educator **Topic: Support for Leah Lin and Ashley Rzonca**

Ms. Anskat, a long-time educator and union member, brought attention to the recent removal of two educators from their UFT positions: Leah Lin and Ashley Rzonca. She described Ashley as a district representative who served as "a lifeline" for the district, showing up when buildings had problems, pushing back against overreaching principals, protecting teachers from burnout, advocating for paraprofessionals, and helping families navigate the DOE system. Ms. Anskat expressed concern that removing such advocates is "not just wrong, it's dangerous" in the current climate of pressure, tight budgets, and fragile trust.

She noted that Leah Lin, while still chapter leader at 85Q, was removed from her UFT position as PM staff, eliminating the after-hours support she provided to hundreds of members. Ms. Anskat called for the reinstatement of both educators, emphasizing that those who stand up for staff typically also stand up for students and parents.

### **Angela Bitterhoff (Remote)**

D30 Educator - **Topic: Support for Ashley Rzonca**

Ms. Bitterhoff expressed agreement with the previous speaker's support for Ashley Rzonca. She praised Ashley's involvement with District 30 schools and her collaborative approach with principals to resolve issues rather than attacking administration. She emphasized Ashley's role in representing teachers and UFT members to facilitate cooperation between administration, teachers, parents, and secretaries. She called for Ashley's reinstatement to her rightful position and expressed love for District 30.

### **Cecilia Durbin (Remote)**

Parent - **Topic: D30 Facebook Group Concerns**

Ms. Durbin, a District 30 parent voting in CEC elections for the first time, raised concerns about the District 30 Facebook page. She reported that comments supporting certain candidates were deleted, while candidates favored by the group administrators received more attention and time. She noted that the page presents itself as public but operates with apparent bias. She expressed concern about the connection between "PLACE" candidates and Moms for Liberty, calling for attention to where these voices originate.

### **Allison Lisberger (Remote)**

Q300 Teacher - **Topic: Support for Ashley Rzonca**

Ms. Lisberger, a teacher and former chapter leader at Q300, spoke about her eight-year working relationship with Ashley Rzonca. She described Ashley's removal as unjust, stating it was not due to job performance failures but because Ashley "had the courage to speak up and hold views that differed from current UFT leadership." She praised Ashley's problem-solving abilities, relationship-building skills, and commitment to unity and purpose.

Ms. Lisberger characterized Ashley's removal as sending a message that "independent thought isn't welcome" and that "loyalty to leadership matters more than service to members." She asked the CEC to stand with them and help amplify the message that educators deserve fair and respectful treatment, especially those doing union organizing work.

## **Becca Staley (Remote)**

Co-President of President's Council - **Topic: Presidents' Council Welcome**

Ms. Staley, PTA President of PS 234 and co-president of the D30 Presidents Council, and member of the Chancellor's Parent Advisory Council, welcomed new CEC members and congratulated elected officers. She invited new PA or PTA presidents to contact the Presidents' Council at [d30presidentscouncil@gmail.com](mailto:d30presidentscouncil@gmail.com) and visit their website at [www.d30presidentscouncil.org](http://www.d30presidentscouncil.org).

## **4. Presentation: Office of District Planning**

**Presenters:** Julianne Bozzo and Rhea Cumberbatch (remote) - *See Attached Slides*

The Office of District Planning presented current enrollment and admissions data for District 30, focusing on planning for new school sites in Long Island City. Key topics included:

- Current enrollment trends and capacity analysis
- Proposed incubation sites for new schools
- Timeline for new school openings (2027 and beyond)
- Community survey to be released later this summer
- Discussion of temporary vs. permanent school sites

### **Q&A Session:**

- **Laura Simpson** asked about seats in incubated sites

- **Nadeea Saaed** asked about class size law considerations
- **Randi Dinh** commented on site preferences, noting the Annex as the best option for size and amenities, but supporting Court Square if only one site could be incubated due to distance considerations
- **Mely** asked about enrollment changes for Hunters Point Community Middle School and district-wide admissions policies

The presenters indicated that decisions about zoning and admissions for new schools would involve robust community conversations once clarity is achieved on temporary school sites. Send any feedback to [QueensZoning@schools.nyc.gov](mailto:QueensZoning@schools.nyc.gov) and [CEC30@schools.nyc.gov](mailto:CEC30@schools.nyc.gov)

## 5. Superintendent's Report

**Presenter:** Superintendent Lisa Hidalgo (remote) - *See Attached Slides*

### Welcome and HMM Curriculum Response

Superintendent Hidalgo welcomed new CEC members and responded to Alejandra Roma's question about the HMM curriculum. She confirmed that HMM will continue as part of the New York City Reads Initiative to advance the science of reading. She explained that the pacing guide provides parameters to ensure students aren't too far ahead or behind, while allowing for flexibility.

### Back to School Backpack Giveaway

Announced a district-wide back-to-school backpack giveaway event on August 26, 2025, at PS 151, planned in collaboration with sponsors, the CEC, principals, and teachers.

### Summer Rising Program

Reported successful implementation of Summer Rising with minimal issues (only 1-2 transportation-related problems). The program serves:

- Over 5,000 students across grades K-8
- 90 summer rising sites
- All schools implementing NSSI (National Summer School Initiative) Scholastic curriculum
- K-5 dates: July 2 - August 15
- Grades 6-8 dates: July 2 - August 8

## End-of-Year Academic Data

### **Acadience K-2 (Foundational Skills):**

- 2024-25: Started at 52% (BOY), reached 58% (MOY), ended at 64% (EOY)
- 2023-24: Started at 48% (BOY), reached 49% (MOY), ended at 55% (EOY)
- **Result:** 64% achievement rate, exceeding the 60% goal by 4%

### **iReady Reading (Grades 3-8):**

- 2024-25: Started at 36% (BOY), reached 44% (MOY), ended at 52% (EOY)
- 2023-24: Started at 31% (BOY), reached 41% (MOY), ended at 50% (EOY)
- **Result:** 52% achievement rate, missing the 55% DCEP goal by 3%

### **iReady Math:**

- 2024-25: Started at 23% (BOY), reached 38% (MOY), ended at 55% (EOY)
- 2023-24: Started at 21% (BOY), reached 34% (MOY), ended at 48% (EOY)
- **Result:** 55% achievement rate, meeting the goal with a 7% increase

### **Historical Kindergarten Reading Composite Score**

- 2022-2023: 46% end-of-year achievement
- 2023-2024: 57% end-of-year achievement
- 2024-2025: 66% end-of-year achievement

Superintendent Hidalgo expressed pride in the results, noting that teachers are successfully teaching foundational skills necessary for reading comprehension.

### **Q&A Session:**

Linda Chung-Leung asks about Heatwaves, Air Conditioning and schools offering a remote option. Supt. Hidalgo does not authorize schools to go remote, that decision lies with New York City Public Schools.

## 6. Second Public Comment Session

### **Caitlyn Kelly (in-person)**

**Chapter Leader at PS 398Q - Topic: Reinstatement of Ashley Rzonca**

Ms. Kelly spoke about the importance of strong union leadership for student success. She highlighted Ashley Rzonca's role in creating the District 30 dual language coalition, which provides dual language teachers with space to collaborate, advocate, and take action for bilingual education. She emphasized that Ashley's unjust removal has a ripple effect on District 30's ability to serve students effectively and called for her reinstatement.

**Alyssa Del Saldado (in-person)**

**Chapter Leader at PS 212Q - Topic: Reinstatement of Ashley Rzonca**

Chapter Leader at PS 212Q, Ms. Del Saldado described Ashley's stellar performance and incredible support, particularly for new chapter leaders. She praised Ashley's guidance in organizing, speaking up for rights, and protecting members. She emphasized that Ashley's leadership empowered the district to be stronger and more unified, and called the removal unjust, asking for community support in bringing attention to the issue.

**Ilsa Chahmar (in-person)**

**Dual Language Teacher at PS398Q - Topic: Reinstatement of Ashley Rzonca and Leah Lin**

Transitional bilingual education teacher, joined by the Dual Language/TBE Coalition, Ms. Chahmar expressed that her "heart aches" over the removal of Ashley Rzonca and Leah Lin from their positions without explanation. She described how Ashley listened when teachers expressed the need for connection among dual language educators and helped create the dual language/TBE Coalition. She credited Ashley with connecting educators to advocacy spaces and empowering them to advocate for bilingual education and immigrant rights. She also praised Leah Lin's advocacy through social media and clear communication that helps educators understand their rights.

**Veronica Sosa**

**Dual Language Teacher at PS398Q - Topic: Reinstatement of Ashley Rzonca and Leah Lin Teacher**

Ms. Sosa spoke about working closely with Ashley through the UFT Dual Language TBE Coalition. She described how Ashley helped the group understand how to be more powerful together by attending meetings, helping members organize, collaborate, and problem-solve efforts for improving bilingual education. She expressed concern about the "unjust divide" within the union and called for the CEC to help get both Ashley and Leah reinstated.

## Ashley Rzonca

### Teacher and UFT D30 Representative - **Topic: Personal Statement on UFT Removal**

Ms. Rzonca, the former UFT District 30 representative, provided a detailed account of her removal from her position. She described her seven years as district representative and her dedication to the union. She detailed a series of events beginning with the October 7, 2023 delegate assembly resolution regarding the Middle East, the removal of Amy Arundell (her former supervisor), and subsequent workplace harassment. She described a particularly disturbing incident where laminated pictures of Amy Arundell's face were placed in urinals at the UFT building with the words "piss on my face." Ms. Rzonca stated she was fired after posting a picture of herself with Amy and Leah with supportive words. She characterized the removals as retaliation against strong women in a union that is over 75% female but has predominantly male leadership.

## CEC Response to Public Testimony

Following Ashley Rzonca's testimony, CEC members took a point of personal privilege to respond:

**Whitney Toussaint (Co-President):** Stated the CEC would work on a letter of support pending an official vote. She shared that Ashley was instrumental in her success as the first Black woman president of CEC 30, helping her navigate and build community. She emphasized that District 30's CEC-UFT partnership has been a model for the city and expressed outrage at the treatment described, promising continued advocacy.

**Laura Simpson (Secretary):** As the child of union members, expressed anger on behalf of those affected and called the actions "disgusting" and "unacceptable."

**Alexis Kaloyanides:** Also the child of a union educator, credited Ashley with helping her understand the DOE system through social media. Having read about the situation in Chalkbeat, she committed to fight "with the fire I have in my belly."

**Victoria Medelius (Co-President):** As PTA president at PS 398, shared how Ashley provided immediate support during their school crisis, including early morning strategy calls. She committed to standing with Ashley, Leah, and the "UFT6."

**Marlene Rossi (Treasurer):** Thanked Ashley for her courage in sharing her story, noting the emotional impact and reality for women, and pledged 100% support.

**Estela Nguema:** Though new to the full story, assured Ashley and supporters "you are not alone" and that "your story officially becomes ours, too."

The CEC members collectively expressed their commitment to supporting the affected educators and working for their reinstatement.

## **Nick Masson (Remote)**

Co-President of President's Council - **Topic: Presidents' Council Support**

Mr. Masson, co-president of the Presidents' Council, echoed congratulations to new CEC members and expressed that the Presidents' Council stands in support. He praised Ashley Rzonca as "a great resource" and "a great friend," noting her availability for early morning and late-night calls. He also commended Leah Lin's educational videos and interaction with the community.

## **Comments from Q&A**

**Karen Diaz:** A special education teacher at PS 92 for 21 years, Ms. Diaz was unable to speak in person due to attending a Little League game but submitted written comments. She stated that teachers and school staff work best when they have support from three key areas: first, from parents with whom they form strong partnerships since they share the same goal of student success; second, from leadership [comment appeared to cut off in the transcript].

**Anonymous Union Member:** A proud union member who has personally witnessed Ashley's dedication, support, and advocacy from her early days as a substitute paraprofessional through becoming a teacher and now a chapter leader. The commenter described Ashley as "a consistent source of guidance, professionalism, and inspiration" and stated her dismissal is "not only unjust, it is a significant loss to our union community." They urged President Michael Mulgrew to immediately reinstate Ashley, stating "her contributions are invaluable, and our union is stronger with her in it."

**Mely:** Inquired about an update for purchasing District 30 apparel. Superintendent Hidalgo responded that new merchandise will be available, likely in the fall, possibly at the back-to-school backpack event.

## 7. Announcements

- Next CEC 30 meeting schedule pending business meeting vote.
- Panel for Education Policy meeting details (July 23rd, 6 PM, MS 131)

## 8. Adjournment

Whitney Toussaint called the meeting to adjourn at 8:22 pm.

# Business Meeting

Co-President Victoria Medelius called Business Meeting to order at 8:39 pm.

## 1. Roll Call

- Nahounha Alexandre: Present
- Linda Chung-Leung: Present
- Alexis Kaloyanides: Present
- Danielle LoPresti Lee: Present
- Victoria Medelius: Present
- Estela Nguema: Present
- Marlene Rossi: Present
- Nadeea Saeed: Present
- Laura Simpson: Present
- Whitney Toussaint: Present

## 2. Acceptance of June Minutes

**Motion:** Linda Chung-Leung moved to accept the June minutes. **Second:** Nadeea Saeed

**Amendment:** Whitney Toussaint requested to add the reason for her absence (death in family/funeral) to the June meeting attendance record. **Result:** Passed with amendment

## 3. Monthly Calendar

**Result:** Passed

## 4. Budget Approval

The initial budget schedule totaling \$25,000 was presented, including allocations for:

- Member reimbursement: \$18,000 (up to \$125/month per member, \$200/month for co-presidents)
- Equipment: \$200 (speakers for meetings)
- Meeting expenses: Water and supplies for meetings
- Technology: Zoom account (\$1,740/year) and website hosting (\$2,640/year)

- General supplies for council operations

**Result:** Passed

## 5. Committee Assignments

### **Required Committees:**

- Bylaws Committee
- Zoning Committee

### **Existing D30 Committees:**

- Communication & Outreach Committee
- Empowerment, Engagement & Equity Committee
- Academic Advancement Committee (curriculum focus)
- Special Education
- District 30 Family Day
- District Liaison Positions

*Council Members will review and submit their desired schools via email.*

*The council agreed to keep committees open to district parents (except Bylaws and Zoning committees, which are restricted to council members only).*

## 6. Liaison Assignments

*Council Members will review and submit their desired schools via email.*

## 7. Executive Session

The CEC entered Executive Session at 9:12 pm. The CEC ended Executive Session at 9:34 pm.

## 8. New Business

### **Letter of Support**

The CEC agreed to draft a letter showing support for Ashley Rzonca and Leah Lin.

## Upcoming Events and Initiatives

- **District Planning Workshop:** Virtual sessions with options for: July 24, 29, and 30
- **Parent Leadership Workshop:** To be hosted in collaboration with Presidents' Council and District
- **Legislative Brunch:** Proposed for October/November during recess period (potential Legislative Brunch committee to be formed)
- **School Supply Giveaway:** Noted that scientific calculators for middle school students were not included and should be considered for future events
- **Speaker Series:** Planning for virtual events
- **Equity Report:** Proposal of a consolidated view of equity of resources within the district
- **Establishment of Official D30 Facebook Group:** Will be proposed to Superintendent Hidalgo

## 9. Adjournment

**Motion:** Whitney Toussaint moved to adjourn the calendar meeting at 10:03 pm. **Second:** Linda Chung-Leung **Result:** Motion passed

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Respectfully submitted,  
Laura Simpson, Secretary

*The recording of this meeting will be available at [cec30.org](http://cec30.org).*