

April 13, 2026

CEC 30 Calendar and Business Meeting Minutes

Location: 28-11 Queens Plaza North, 5th Floor Conference Room, Long Island City (Hybrid)

Calendar Meeting

Call to Order: 6:39 PM

Roll Call:

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
Xochitl Cohen-Garcia: Present
Kayla Spence: Present

Resolution 204 – Appointment of a New Member

A resolution was introduced to appoint a community member to fill a vacant seat. After posting the vacancy and holding a candidate forum, only one candidate remained.

Roll call:

Linda Chung-Leung: Not In Favor
Alexis Kaloyanides: Not In Favor
Danielle Lopresti-Lee: Not In Favor
Victoria Medelius: Not In Favor
Estela Nguema: Not In Favor
Marlene Rossi: Not In Favor
Nadeea Saeed: Not In Favor
Laura Simpson: Not In Favor
Whitney Toussaint: Not In Favor
Xochitl Cohen-Garcia: Not In Favor
Kayla Spence: Not In Favor

The co-presidents announced they would reopen the application period and renumber subsequent resolutions; the preschool special-education service resolution became Resolution 204, and the charter-school rent reimbursement resolution became Resolution 205.

First Public Comment

District 30 Book Club – Peteris, a teacher at PS 148, explained that he and Dr. Damon La Rock co-host the district 30 Book Club and currently have 174 students from 16 schools reading *My Side of the Mountain*. They hope to involve students from all 40 schools and noted that the club recently received a proclamation from State Senator Jessica Ramos. Congressional Liaison – Tiffany, Western Queens community liaison for Congresswoman Velázquez, promoted a STEAM event on April 18 for middle- and high-schoolers and highlighted participation from organizations such as NASA, the Hall of Science and Queens Public Library.

Court Square School site – Jackie Daly criticized a proposed Court Square school location, arguing that it was a warehouse with no outdoor space and urging the Department of Education (DOE) to find a more suitable site.

Support for the Court Square site – Katherine Beziz (Court Square area parent) supported the site, noting limited seats and the principal’s commitment to safety.

Trans Kids Joy Fest – Celia Durbin invited families to the May 17 Trans Kids Joy Fest at the World’s Borough Bookshop in Jackson Heights and requested the council’s endorsement.

Whitney (Co-President) spoke about the extensive advocacy efforts to secure new school seats in Long Island City, noting that this has been a multi-year process involving developers, elected officials, and ongoing community pressure. She emphasized that while progress has been made, the district still needs additional seats, including the long-promised Vernon Boulevard middle school, and highlighted overcrowding concerns across District 30, including conditions in East Elmhurst.

Lisa Hidalgo (Superintendent) responded by affirming that the selected site (11-14 44th Avenue) is the result of a thorough community engagement process conducted over at least two years. She stated that outreach included surveys, public meetings, and multilingual communication efforts, with over 700 responses and approximately 57% participation. She emphasized that the site reflects community preference and that the district must move forward given space constraints.

Julie (School Construction Authority representative) from the School Construction Authority confirmed that the building was designed for UPK use, transferred in 2024, and is free of lead and asbestos following renovations.

Julianne (Office of District Planning) explained that her team worked closely with CEC leadership, attending approximately 8 to 9 meetings and hosting community conversations

to gather input. She noted that feedback from surveys and meetings informed the decision, including concerns about alternative sites such as the PS 150 annex.

Carmin (Director of Facilities for Queens) detailed building safety and compliance, confirming that all systems are operational and up to code, including sprinkler systems, fire safety protocols, water testing, and asbestos monitoring. He stated that the building is in excellent condition, fully furnished, and ready for student use.

Council Member Julie Won (Long Island City representative) highlighted that the process began as early as 2018, with nearly 800 participants in the survey process and over 400 selecting the current site. She emphasized that the process followed standard procedures, addressed community concerns, and ensured broad participation. She also addressed misinformation, stating clearly that the building is safe, free of lead and asbestos, and suitable for children. She noted the site is temporary and expressed support for the future permanent school, while encouraging continued advocacy for funding additional seats.

School Spotlight Presentation – P255Q (District 75 School)

Principal Megan Kovach, Assistant Principal and Parent coordinator Elizabeth Durang presented an overview of P255Q, a District 75 program with 10 sites (three in District 30). P255Q serves K-12 students with disabilities in 6:1:1 and 8:1:1 class. In September 2022, the school opened a site at PS 11Q and expanded to 12 classes.

The school emphasizes inclusion and belonging; they collocate with general-education schools and use signage and branding, so students feel part of the host community.

Students receive related services (speech, occupational and physical therapy), behaviour support plans and social-skills instruction. They work with families to find placements near home to reduce long bus rides.

Nonspeaking students use augmentative communication devices integrated into the NYC Reads curriculum.

Assistant principal Vanessa Graham described inclusive activities with PS 11, including unified PE classes, reading buddies, autism awareness projects and joint field days.

Parent coordinator Elizabeth highlighted workshops on IEPs and siblings, an Autism Resource Fair and a Winter Wonderland event; she thanked a council member for funds for a makeshift gym.

Council members praised the program's inclusive culture and parent engagement.

Comments:

Parents are concerned about the heater being on during the end of the year and can affect students' ability to take state tests.

-Carmine (Director of Facilities for Queens) will communicate with DDS regarding this concern.

Presidents Council Report

Becca Staley, Vice President of the District 30 Presidents Council, reminded PTAs/PAs there is a monthly meeting on April 14 at 6pm. Also, reminders to all parents that executive board elections must be completed by mid June and encourage parents to attend and run for positions. The last Meeting of the Year is June 23 at 10 am.

ASD Nest & Horizon Program Information

Michelle Metzler and Kate Dolan Chaney from NYCPS presented specialized programs (Nest, Horizon, AIMS) including staff training, in-class coaching, interdisciplinary team meetings and strong home-school connections.

District 30 houses a Nest program at PS 76 and PS 204, a Horizon program at PS 171 and PS 152, and new Horizon and ACES middle/high school sites. Superintendent Lisa Hidalgo announced that MS 126 would open a Horizon Middle School program.

Presenters emphasized a neurodiversity-affirming lens: autism is a difference rather than a deficit; behaviors are communication, and parents are experts.

Traits such as alternative communication and specific interests were discussed to increase understanding among general education peers.

Following the ASD Nest and Horizon presentation, a participant asked how schools can better promote the programs to families. The response emphasized that outreach requires direct engagement, including support from parent coordinators and individualized guidance to help families understand and complete the application process. Overall, discussion was brief and focused on improving awareness and access for families.

District 30 Superintendent Lisa Hidalgo Report:

Chancellor Visit – Chancellor Kamar Samuels visited PS 361 and praised instructional practices and student leadership.

State of the District & Events – Over 200 families attended the midyear State of the District; the first district girls’ basketball tournament was held; and the Science Expo showcased projects from 35 schools and 220 students.

NYC Kids Rise –Save for College Program– District 30 scholarship accounts total \$3.99 million with \$180 k unclaimed.

Programs & Announcements – She promoted Gen Connect programs for multilingual families; reminded families that Summer Rising offers would be released April 21; invited the community to District 30 night at Citi Field; and highlighted social media channels.

Comments:

Jackie Daly, a parent, raised concerns about overcrowding and lack of local school seats, stating families are being forced into difficult placements and that the proposed site is not an appropriate solution.

**Resolution 204 -Resolution to Ensure NYCPS Addresses Systemic Failures in
Preschool Special Education (CPSE) Service Delivery**

Author: Kayla Spence

Co-Sponsors: Whitney Toussaint, Alexis Kaloyanides, Victoria Medelius, Estela Nguema

The Council introduced Resolution 205, addressing ongoing delays and inequities in preschool special education services. Families in District 30 reported challenges including delayed evaluations, inconsistent delivery of mandated services, and difficulty navigating the CPSE process. Data cited in the resolution shows that many students do not receive services in full compliance with their IEPs and face significant delays in service initiation. The resolution calls on NYCPS to ensure timely service delivery, improve transparency and communication with families, address provider shortages, and increase funding and support to ensure all preschool students with disabilities receive appropriate services.

Members shared personal experiences with early intervention delays, emphasizing that DOE run preschool programs receive services more quickly than community based organizations.

After public comments (several parents described long waits for evaluations and difficulty finding therapists), the council held a rollcall vote. All members voted in favor, so Resolution 204 passed unanimously.

Linda Chung-Leung: In Favor

Alexis Kaloyanides: In Favor

Danielle Lopresti-Lee: In Favor

Victoria Medelius: In Favor

Estela Nguema: In Favor

Marlene Rossi: In Favor

Nadeea Saeed: In Favor

Laura Simpson: In Favor

Whitney Toussaint: In Favor

Xochitl Cohen-Garcia: In Favor

Kayla Spence: In Favor

**Resolution 205 -Resolution in Support of Ending NYCPS Rental Reimbursement
Payments for Charter Schools**

Author: Laura Simpson

Co-Sponsors: Alexis Kaloyanides, Estela Nguema, Whitney Toussaint, Kayla Spence, Victoria Medelius, Xochitl Cohen-Garcia

CEC 30 passed a resolution supporting state legislation to eliminate NYCPS’s requirement to reimburse charter schools for private facility rent. The resolution notes that NYC is the only district in the state and country with this mandate, creating a significant and growing financial burden, with costs reaching hundreds of millions annually. It raises concerns about inequitable funding, documented cases of inflated rents and self-dealing, and the diversion of public funds away from district schools. The resolution states that ending rental reimbursements would allow more funding to be directed toward public school facilities, programs, and student services, especially amid challenges such as class size mandates, special education costs, and enrollment changes. CEC 30 urges the State Legislature and Governor to pass and enact related bills to end this requirement.

Community member Tanisha Grant supported the resolution, calling the reimbursements “insane”.

The council moved to vote; during roll call every member voted in favor, and the resolution passed unanimously.

Linda Chung-Leung: In Favor

Alexis Kaloyanides: In Favor

Danielle Lopresti-Lee: In Favor

Victoria Medelius: In Favor

Estela Nguema: In Favor

Marlene Rossi: In Favor

Nadeea Saeed: In Favor

Laura Simpson: In Favor

Whitney Toussaint: In Favor

Xochitl Cohen-Garcia: In Favor

Kayla Spence: In Favor

CEC 30 Bylaws Update

Alexis Kaloyanides summarized the Bylaws Committee’s work:

Changes were minimal: references to “President” were updated to “Co-presidents,” and absenteeism rules were clarified to require better communication when members anticipate lateness or absence.

No public comments.

A motion to approve the amended bylaws passed unanimously during roll call. The amendments will be posted to the council’s website.

Roll call:

Linda Chung-Leung: In Favor

Alexis Kaloyanides: In Favor

Danielle Lopresti-Lee: In Favor

Victoria Medelius: In Favor

Estela Nguema: In Favor
Marlene Rossi: In Favor
Nadeea Saeed: In Favor
Laura Simpson: In Favor
Whitney Toussaint: In Favor
Xochitl Cohen-Garcia: In Favor
Kayla Spence: In Favor

Second Public Comment Period

There were no speakers in person or online. Tanisha Grant thanked the council for its work. Interpreters confirmed no additional questions in other languages.

New Business

Next CEC 30 calendar meeting is on Monday, May 11, 2026, at 6:30 p.m in person or join virtually.

The next Panel for Educational Policy meeting will be Wednesday, April 29 at 6:00 p.m. at MS 131 in Manhattan.

Members noted a recent rally protesting closure of a family shelter and planned to meet with the Department of Social Services; liaisons were asked to collect updates from affected families.

Q&A -Zoom

Rashida Brown-Harris requested a copy of resolution 205.

Tanisha –Supports the family shelter staying open.

Adjournment: 9:52 p.m.

Business Meeting

Call to Order: 10:12 p.m

Roll Call:

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
Xochitl Cohen-Garcia: Present
Kayla Spence: Present

Approval of Minutes

Members reviewed February and March minutes. One addition was made to the February minutes to capture comments from Kayla during the CPSE presentation.
Email all changes requested to CEC 30 AA

Speaker Series and Events

Speaker Series – Members agreed to invite Tanisha Grant to present a Family Miranda Rights workshop for parents. They plan to schedule the workshop separately from calendar meetings.
Know Your Rights- The council noted that if a school hosts an event but does not permit the council to handle registration to protect location privacy, the council will not promote it.

May Speakers

- Presentation from the District 75 Superintendent and
- Speaker Series –PS/IS 127
- Invite the NYC Solves math team to discuss the new math curriculum

Member Reports/ Committee Reports

District Day and Community Events

District Day will be held Saturday, May 16 (11 a.m.–3 p.m.). The council will send forms and registration links to liaison schools and parent coordinators. Table and chair rentals must be bid on through procurement.

Members reported on upcoming committees and resource fairs, including a PF 222 resource fair and a District 30 family event.

The DOE's FACE office reminds councils that committee meetings may be virtual only if committees are open to parents. Advisory committees (e.g., special education, academic advancement) must recruit parents or teachers from the district; mandatory committees such as zoning and bylaws must hold hybrid meetings.

Chairs and co-chairs decide which parents to appoint; volunteers cannot be members of the elected council.

Victoria and Alexis are planning to get the Empowerment, Engagement and Equity Committee books about inspiration for summertime and some resources parents can use.

Committee Meeting Schedule

If members would like to cover anything that wasn't discussed today, we can hold a Committee of the Whole next Monday.

New Business

Whitney circulated a draft letter to the Office of Management and Budget and the mayor urging funding for promised school seats in Long Island City. The letter notes that the 2017 "One LIC" plan promised 1,200 new seats for the Ravenswood/Long Island City subdistrict, but the promised middle school (Vernon Boulevard) and elementary school (45th Avenue) remain unfunded and unbuilt.

It stresses that tens of thousands of new residents are expected to move into the area and demands immediate budget allocations for a 600-seat middle school and 650-seat elementary school.

The council unanimously agreed to send the letter to stakeholders and to seek support from Council Member Juan, Assembly Member González and State Senator Kristen González

Members thanked Borough President Donovan Richards for his continued support and noted that he facilitated connections with Congresswoman Velázquez for the Court Square school site.

The communications and outreach chair reminded members to transition to an official council Facebook page and discontinue the unofficial page.

May CEC 30 Calendar & Business Meeting is on Monday, May 11, 2026 Hybrid

Adjournment: 10:28 PM