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September 2, 2016

Carmen Fariña
Chancellor
NYC Department of Education
52 Chambers Street
New York, NY 10007

Dear Chancellor Fariña,

School District 3 has been undergoing a school re-zoning discussion for the past two years. The focus of that discussion covers schools that sit within my district – City Council District 6. My office has been deeply involved in those discussions; attending every zoning meeting, CEC3 hearing and ‘stakeholder’ conversations, meeting with public school parents and speaking with school administrators.

Those discussions and meetings have been fruitful and much progress has been made. However, while some communities have participated extensively in these discussions, we have yet to hear from others. I ask the DOE to ensure that, with the extensive proposals currently presented, outreach efforts are prioritized and significant resources are provided towards an outreach effort. The DOE and School District 3 are embarking on a significant decision and that decision should have the input of all potentially affected school communities.

A re-zoning plan is a necessary step to help address the over and under-enrollment within schools in our district. I believe a successful re-zoning plan must fulfill 3 main goals;

- It must be educationally sound,
- It must address diversity, and
- It must address Kindergarten capacity for current and anticipated need.

With those goals in mind, I have some outstanding questions that I would expect the DOE to address at the next CEC zoning meeting;

- What are the specific criteria used by DOE for including or excluding buildings within a zone?
- What is the breakdown of population data per building in Proposals A and B?
- Will Pre-Kindergarten seats be preserved in the current PS 191 building in Proposal A and B?
- What is the exact data being used to project Kindergarten capacity need and when will it be shared?
- Exactly how will Kindergarten capacity be addressed in both proposals – will any schools need to change their current grade configuration? If so, when? And how would that be determined?
- What is the specific proposal for the space vacated if PS 452 is re-sited? Will that proposal go through a CEC process? What is the timing for that decision? What is the budget for any such proposal?

Thank you for your attention to this critical decision for our school district. I look forward to the information you provide to these questions.

Sincerely,

Helen Rosenthal

Cc: Deputy Chancellor Elizabeth Rose
School District 3 Superintendent Ilene Atschul
School District 3 Community Education Council Members