

Community Education Council 24
Public School 71 - Forest
62-85 Forest Avenue, Room 110
Ridgewood, New York 11368
CEC24@schools.nyc.gov/ CEC24.org

July 22nd CEC24 Minutes at PS/IS 102

Roll Call

Matthew Crescio, Gina Liberta, Brian Augustine, Kate Barvels, Elizabeth Fortunato, Julissa McHugh, Aliya Bonar

Excused

Manisha Jain, Anna Karwowska

Absent

Diego Camacho

Annual Meeting

The 1st order of business will be chaired by a chair pro tem and will chair the election meeting until the President has been elected.

The chair pro tem. must be someone who is not running for office in the election. Since the 1st elections for President, the chair pro tem cannot run for President. Once the President is elected, he or she can take over whoever is running the meeting or allow the chair pro tem to continue. There were no nominations, and the members chose Matthew Crescio to lead the meeting.

Mathew Crescio will be leading the elections for this evening to elect the officers of President, Vice President, Treasurer and Recording Secretary.

Article 2. Section 2 of the Council bylaws require that officers be elected by roll call vote at the annual meeting. To be elected you must have seven votes.

Kate Barvels will read the responsibilities of the Officers.

Election of President

Kate Barvels and Matthew Crescio nominated Matt for President. Voting took place and Congratulations to Matt. You have been selected to serve as Council President for the year 2025-2027.

Election of Vice President

There were two nominations, Gina Liberta nominated herself and said a few words and Janet Kregler, the Administrative Assistant read an email from Anna Karwowska to run for Vice President.

Voting took place and Congratulations to Gina Liberta as the new 1st Vice President.

Election of Treasurer

Anna Karwowska nominated herself for Treasurer. There were no other nominations.

Congratulations to Anna Karwowska for Treasurer.

Election of Recording Secretary

Kate Barvels nominated Felicita McHugh. Felicita accepted the nomination, and Felicita McHugh nominated herself. Congratulations to Felicita.

Congratulations to the Executive Officers:

Matthew Crescio, CEC24 President

Gina Liberta, 1st Vice President

Anna Karwowska, Treasurer

Felicita McHugh, Recording Secretary

The Annual Meeting is closed.

Calendar Meeting

Roll call by Recording Secretary Felicita McHugh

CEC24 President Report – Matthew Crescio

It is a good start. At this time, I will open the CEC24 Calendar Meeting for July 22, 2025.

Good evening, everyone. Welcome to CEC24. This is the meeting of the new council that has been duly elected as this time. I will introduce myself. My name is Matthew Crescio and this is my 3rd time on the CEC24.

All members introduced themselves.

Welcome to the new members of the Community Education Council 24.

Matthew Crescio, President, and IEP Representative

Gina Liberta, 1st Vice President

Anna Karwowska, Treasurer and ELL Representative

Julissa McHugh, Recording Secretary and Queens Borough Appointee

Brian Augustine, D75 Representative

Aliya Bonar, CEC24 member

Elizabeth Fortunato, CEC24 member

Manisha Jain, CEC24 Member

Kate Barvels, CEC24 Member

The goals of the members are looking to have for CEC24 are:

I would like to see expansion of more horizon programs in the district. Aligning Horizon program expansion with the goals of Class Size Matters will not only address equity in special education but also help relieve overcrowding in general education settings by ensuring all students have access to appropriate learning environments. I recommend that the DOE assess school sites within District 24 that have available underground property or adjacent space suitable for development. These properties should be prioritized for annex construction.

We need to advocate for schools to meet full capacity, with the goal of keeping students in their current schools whenever possible, so the kids can stay in their own schools where families want them to be.

So those are a few of the issues I want to do as a council member this year. In the past this council has built lots of annexes. "We will look at each school in the district". These are some of the goals I have this year. You will see plenty of other issues coming up too.

Gina, like Matt. I have a very strong passion for the Autism Spectrum Disorder Programs and District 75. Expansion of those aims and, more importantly, a clear understanding of what aims, and ASD are. I think this is what I hear from my parent network that they don't really understand, or they don't know about these programs. A lot of parents don't even know the ASD programs are out there.

So, more parent access, that's kind of one of my goals as well, and training a lot of training, especially with parents. I think that's very important. I am actually going to establish the 1st horizon parent network at PS 91. It's with the horizon parents there, so that we can get together and talk about. You know everything that we're going through as ASD parents. It's a lot to navigate. If I can introduce this to other schools with ASD programs. I think it could go a long way with parents.

Kate,

I agree with Gina and Matt.

I came to realize was the access and information is not something that's readily available to most people. I know all these amazing offerings of clubs we have before school and after and parents do not know of these programs.

Felicita I really like what I'm hearing from Matt and Gina, because those are things are close to my heart as well for me and what our school is. It is a matter of information filtering down to the parents. It is sort of a big gap there between what we want us to give out and what we are allowed to give out. I am interested in finding ways to sort of breakthrough that barrier and make sure that parents get the information that they need and have the knowledge that they need to help their students. Their kids thrive because it's 1 thing for a kid to be okay. But every student should have the ability to thrive. And that's something that I'm very passionate about.

Thank you for that, you know, and I'm really looking forward to working with everyone on here.

I am Brian Augustine

Thank you for welcoming me into CEC24. I have a son, grandson not too far from there. I have a granddaughter who is also in the nest program. Thank you for giving me the opportunity to join the CEC.

Elizabeth,

I really joined the CEC to advocate more. I feel that the language barrier is important to me. I learned a lot more about the IEP programs because of my son. A lot of parents do not know what is out there.

Kate Barvels

I realize that my family is the exception, because I am at school and I'm involved. I know all these things, but as pretty much everyone here said access, access, access. However, I find there tends to be a breakdown between the philosophy of SLT meetings and PTA meetings as part of the CEC. To realize where we're winning and where we're losing and how we can bridge that gap so that everyone knows everything that's offered by the DOE. The neat thing is, I think it's actually going to happen. I was a regular attendee of past CECs. This CEC is going to work. I'm overly optimistic, as my husband will tell you. I don't call it. I really think we're all on the same page, and we all just want inclusion, and we want access, and we want things to be fair, and we want to help people as much as we can. I'm hoping we increase attendance at these meetings.

Aliya Bonar

I'm really excited to be a connector for the parents in our community, and really getting to know all of queens, how District 24 is so diverse. There's so many different communities that we represent. So I'm really looking forward to getting to know all the different community groups and things that are important across our district.

There are seasoned members, currently Anna is in Poland and Manisha is in India. They are the season members that will work with you and answer any questions. My phone number is available, I will always answer, I'm always around .

Approval of June Minutes

Approval of June Minutes was approved by the members.

Matthew Crescio, CEC24 President Report

At this time, I do not have much to report. We are still having meetings on ongoing tasks throughout the community. There's already a new school that is being designed. The building is built at 69th Street and Queen Boulevard. If you go to that area, you'll see a tower. The school is on 3 floors within that residential condo building.

We decided on a model for the school. Now, we're just reviewing the other circumstances, such as zoning or non-zone schools. A zoned school is open up to everybody in the district. The next important meeting is coming up. My opinion for zoning is, if you've ever been in that area. It's tough to get buses over there. There's nowhere to park buses. So, at the next virtual meeting the head of transportation, John Benson, will meet with us. This will make a determination of zoned or not zoned. We'll have more buses coming in from Corona, other parts of the district, and it's right on Queens Boulevard, and 69th Street, which is the main street of Woodside, and the area is very busy. We will discuss the issue of safety reasons at the next meeting.

It's a small school. It's only approximately 363 Seats. Council member Robert Holden, who represents that area. They were building this tower. They wanted some restrictions removed. This is why we only received three floors. If we did not have that position, there would be no school.

I.A. Superintendent Anthony Rivera's Report

Good evening, everyone. I want to 1st just thank everyone for being here this evening, and I would love to congratulate officially, all the new members from the CEC. Great way to start officially the school year.

Just listening to everyone's stories and listening to everyone's intentions for the work is exciting. One of the themes that clearly emerged is a real force and desire to support students with special needs across the district and I'm really looking forward to what that's going to look like in the next several months.

My report is not very long but did want to provide some insight into some of the things that are happening across the district. During summer Rising, we have 2 and a half weeks for our middle school students (August 8) and three weeks left for our elementary school students (August 15). Attendance has been great. I have received a ton of emails from families pushing for their students to be advanced on the wait list and pulled off. So, it's a good to have, not a great problem for families, but very well attended, and looking forward to a strong end to summer rising.

On July 10th, we had a principals meeting, and a few things were established. The 1st was a draft set of priorities that were shared with principals for the coming year.

The 1st is specific to our efforts to strengthen the NYC reads initiative and prepare us for to support and strengthen instruction in the English language arts and in mathematics. The 2nd is to strengthen principal practice without going too far into it using a rubric. The 3rd is to strengthen our school's capacity to support vulnerable learners, but also our learners who are ready for extensions.

The DOE has moved toward identifying these set of approved interventions for schools to use. We will be supporting schools and making sure that they're utilizing those improved interventions. These are things that are happening in pockets across the district, but not consistently across schools, and we want to make sure that our schools are supporting these diverse learners with those opportunities. Finally, we want to provide leaders and teacher teams with protocols to ensure something like that system is happening. It's working, it's moving.

The members on this board who I know have served on SLT, PA and their input in that process is going to be super helpful. Some of what we've already done is we've tasked schools to ensure that our Parent Associations have updated bylaws, if their bylaws are 3 years old or longer, need to be updated. We will empower our Parent Associations to empower our parent leaders.

We must do a better job as a district at highlighting and celebrating our families as partners in the work. We need our schools to send home information in all languages.

So that's the extent right now to those draft priorities. Those draft priorities were already shared with our principals, and we received a ton of feedback which shows pretty strong alignment, with not just what they need, specifically to what the needs are across the district.

In April 2025, the CEC24 passed Resolution 178 which called for the school district to move to advance a policy requiring paper, report cards and progress monitoring supports across schools.

I understand to move forward to have a paperless option. I understand the cost saving measure. But until we get that right, until that number is 100% and our families say, yeah, we utilize it, and we access it regularly. We have to have those options and alternatives available. The second is that families were unaware of report card in progress, report distribution dates.

Resolution #183.

Resolution #183 sponsored by Matthew Crescio and Co-Sponsor by Kate Barvels, Brian Augustine, Aliya Bonar, Gina Liberta, Elizabeth Fortunato, Julissa McHugh,

The proposed Cannabis Dispensary at 71-10 Grand Avenue, Maspeth, New York Across the street from Public School 58 has been approved and voted by the members at the July 22nd CEC24 meeting.

Old Business –

None

New Business

There's still time today to put in comments for the cell phone policy amendments. There are local opportunities to make revisions. I think that's something we should also share with schools' leadership teams.

Adjourn the Calendar Meeting.

Business Meeting

Roll Call

Matt brought up traveling to every CEC meeting at different schools has become a headache with parking, late from transportation., etc.

Matt suggested that the next two meetings will be held at the District office, IS 61 and they do have a parking lot. All members were in agreement. In September, we will decide where to have the rest of the upcoming CEC meetings.

We will discuss the committees, school liaisons, etc. at the August 26th meeting at IS 61.

Goodnight, meeting adjourned.

Janet Kregler, Administrative Assistant, CEC24