



Community Education Council 24

Public School 71 Forest

62-85 Forest Avenue, Room 110

Ridgewood, New York 11385

Telephone: 718-821-7772, Ext. 1101

CEC24@schools.nyc.gov / cec24.org

Community Education Council 24 (CEC24) – Meeting Minutes

Date: November 18, 2025 at Public School 71

Welcome to the November 18th Hybrid Calendar and Business Meeting

Roll Call: Matthew Crescio, Gina Liberta, Kate Barvels, Anna Karwowska, Manisha Jain, Elizabeth Fortunato, Brian Augustine, Julissa Mc Hugh, Aliya Bonar

Online: 40 guests

Attendees: Superintendent Anthony Rivera, Jose Jimenez, Rachell Lewis, John Harrington, UFT Representative, Principal Katherine Rodriguez from PS 16, Principal Linda O’Shaughnessy from PS 88, Donna Murphy, from FACE, Adrienne Williams, Charlie Varuska representative from Council member Bob Holden, Mercedes Jennings, representative from Senator Giannaris’ office, Theresa Cottone, representative from Council member Julie Won’s office; John Harrington, UFT Representative,

Parent Vacancy:

The candidate for the parent vacancy did not attend the scheduled meeting.

Police Officer Dilsia Bonilla from the 104 Precinct was present to discuss community and safety.

Matthew Crescio’s November Report

1. Hold Harmless Funding

- CEC 24—along with five other CECs—successfully advocated for the continuation of Hold Harmless.
- Schools will not be required to return funding due to under-enrollment this year.
- Some schools were facing potential losses of \$600,000+.

2. Bus Contract Issues

- Half of bus companies have signed contracts; others remain in negotiation.

3. Free T-Mobile Hotspots

- Families can apply for free 5-year internet hotspots via links on the CEC website.

4. Specialized High School for Queens

- The city is beginning discussions on building a new specialized testing high school in Queens, addressing long-standing inequity.

5. New City Council Representative

- Phil Wong, former CEC 24 President, won the District 30 council seat—expected to be strongly supportive of district initiatives.

6. Resolution No. 187 - In Support of Extending Hold Harmless Funding for NYC DOE Schools were approved unanimously by all CEC24 members.

Superintendent Anthony Rivera's November Report

1. Systemwide Priorities

- School safety and wellness

- Teacher support & professional development

- Family engagement

2. District Priorities

- Early reading proficiency

- Math instruction

- College/career readiness

- Inclusive family-centered practices

3. New Instructional Leadership Model

- Principals now meet in small groups to study real classroom challenges.

- The first collaborative school walk-through on NYC Reads implementation occurred earlier in the day.

4. Middle School Fair at IS 61

- Highly successful event with strong school participation, student involvement, and high family turnout.

5. Free After-School Program Expansion

- Multiple schools in District 24 received new fully funded after-school programs this year - PS 13, PS 28, PS 91, PS 110, PS 143, PS 330, DP 305, PS 239.

- PS 71 has been strongly advocating and is under active consideration.

6. Arts Grant Funding

- District 24 received \$80,000 in arts grants.
- PS 71 will receive funding for two arts residency programs (15-week and 12-week options).

7. Enrollment Decline

- District enrollment down 2%.
- 34 of 40 schools under-enrolled.
- Some schools reduced programming or staff to manage deficits.

8. Upcoming Events

- High School Enrollment Virtual Session – November 20
- District Leadership Team Meeting – November 22
- Superintendent’s Principals Advisory – December 10
- Parent Governance Support Sessions – December 4 and December 11
- Teacher Tenure Workshop – December 15

9. School Construction Authority (SCA) Presentation

Danielle Schaaff from SCA delivered a major presentation on the FY 2025–2029 Capital Plan Amendment.

1. Total Capital Plan Budget: \$20.9 Billion

Includes:

- \$6.13B – New capacity/new seats
- \$1.4B – Electrification (healthy schools)
- \$1.25B – Technology
- \$800M – Accessibility upgrades
- \$150M – Cafeteria upgrades

2. District 24 Capital Projects

- New school at 46-10 70th Street (formerly Queens Boulevard site):
 - o 451 seats and expected opening, September 2026

3. Capital Improvement Work in D24 includes:

- Exterior masonry repairs, New windows, Roof replacements, Ventilation upgrades, Library renovations, playground projects, ongoing sensory-room project at PS 71

4. Reservoir (Reso A) Funding Overview Annual process involving:

- Elected official allocations, Principal proposals, SCA Project Design
- Funding timelines from May– June (budget approval) to spring of following year (project authorization)

5. Minority/Women-Owned Business Participation

SCA shared progress toward increasing MWBE contractor involvement.

6. Capital Eligibility Rules to be SCA-eligible, a project must:

- Cost at least \$50,000
- Have a minimum 5-year useful life
- Meet structural or major-systems criteria Examples of eligible projects: Playgrounds, auditoriums, gym upgrades, full-floor replacements, new HVAC, PA systems, etc.

7. Clarifications & Q&A Highlights

- Leaks, HVAC failures, and roof problems should first involve Custodian → DSF → SCA when appropriate.
- Schools cannot simply “save” money; allocations must be tied to specific approved projects.
- Phone system failures with obsolete parts may qualify for capital replacement depending on severity.
- SCA encouraged CEC members to email for guidance prior to project submissions.

X. Closing & Next Meeting

- Next scheduled CEC 24 Meeting: December 16, 2025 at PS/IS 113.
- The December 10 DSF Headquarters event is expected to give major insights into district-wide project priorities.

- **Business Meeting:**

Roll call

The October 28th Minutes were approved by the members.

The Treasurer's Report the current balance is \$16,556.50.

School Visit Reports:

Council members shared updates from school visits conducted across the district. Key issues raised included:

PS 28 Early Childhood Program

Newly completed playground work has multiple defects:

Missing planters, cracking asphalt, cracking rubberized track, wrong soccer clearance equipment delivered over ten months ago.

MS 311

Continuing roof leaks not being fully addressed by custodian or DSF

Water intrusion spreading into areas of the gym

Will seek update during the December 10th DSF/SCA Meeting

PS 290

Principal Brownstein provided a tour of the issues observed:

Staff bathroom door broken

Pre-K sink awaiting parts

Wheelchair-accessible bathroom out of service

Sound system malfunctioning

Missing remote for gym blinds

Water fountain broken

Overall positive school culture noted

Other School Visit Highlights

Reports of several schools mentioned:

Playground leaks, HVAC problems, Scaffolding and roof repairs underway, PS/IS 113 and PS/ IS 49, Boiler issues at PS/Is 49, (CEC24 intervention pushed repairs forward)

Members will continue submitting formal reports and follow ups to DSF and SCA.

Committee Updates

Committee chairs were instructed to schedule their first official meeting.

Attendance and absentee issues were minimal.

December 10 Division of School Facilities Headquarters Event:

DSF will select 10 priority projects to fast-track within six months. This is the first time in NYC history that DSF will guarantee timelines.

Student Member Discussion

Discussion revisited earlier proposals to:

Allow juniors instead of seniors to serve as student members

Extend term from 1 year to 2 years

CEC24 Leaders clarified:

Student membership rules are state law, requiring action from State Senators, Giannaris and Liu

Superintendent Rivera can only select student members, not change the law

District-wide effort underway to improve awareness so more eligible students apply

Strengthen School Visit Procedures

Expectations on School Tours

Custodial engineers should be present

SLT and PTA leaders should be invited whenever possible

Members should report not just structural issues, but:

- . Family Engagement spaces
- . Bulletin Boards
- . School Environment/welcoming displays

Role of CEC Members

- Members do have power through public advocacy and escalation.
- Not all problems are immediately solvable, but CEC pressure often accelerates delayed work.
- Members requested guidance on properly documenting and escalating issues.

Meeting Adjourned.