



Community Education Council 24

Public School 71 Forest

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Resolution No. 202

Sponsored by: Gina Liberta

Co-Sponsored by: Julissa McHugh and Manisha Jain

Resolution Recognizing Mental Health Awareness Month and Promoting Parent Awareness, Student Protections, and Bullying Prevention in District 24

WHEREAS, the month of May is recognized as Mental Health Awareness Month, a time dedicated to raising awareness, reducing stigma, and promoting access to mental health supports for children and families; and

WHEREAS, Community Education Council 24 acknowledges and appreciates the ongoing efforts of the New York City Department of Education and District 24 leadership to support student mental health through initiatives such as Respect for All, social-emotional learning, and increased access to school-based supports; and

WHEREAS, student mental health is foundational to academic success, attendance, and overall well-being, and is deeply impacted by school climate and peer interactions; and

WHEREAS, bullying, including physical, verbal, social, and cyberbullying, continues to affect a significant number of students, with reported incidents increasing in recent years and many more going unreported; and

WHEREAS, cyberbullying presents unique and evolving challenges, often occurring outside of school hours but significantly impacting students' ability to feel safe and supported in school environments; and

WHEREAS, students with disabilities, including those with Individualized Education Programs (IEPs), as well as LGBTQ+ students and other historically marginalized groups, are disproportionately impacted by bullying and may require additional protections, supports, and advocacy; and

WHEREAS, families are essential partners in identifying bullying, supporting student mental health, and working collaboratively with schools, yet often need clearer, more accessible information on how to navigate systems and access resources; and

WHEREAS, District 24 serves a large, diverse community of students and families, making culturally responsive communication and multilingual access to information essential; and

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that Community Education Council 24 recognizes Mental Health Awareness Month as an opportunity to reaffirm its commitment to safe, inclusive, and supportive school environments for all students; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that CEC 24 expresses solidarity with students, parents, and caregivers impacted by bullying and mental health challenges, and affirms the importance of partnership between families, schools, and district leadership; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that CEC 24 supports and encourages the continued implementation and strengthening of existing DOE initiatives, including Respect for All, while advocating for increased **clarity, accessibility, and consistency** in how these supports are communicated to families; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that CEC 24 calls for the expansion of **parent-focused workshops and trainings**, including:

- Understanding bullying and mental health warning signs
- Navigating the reporting process and follow-up expectations
- Cyberbullying awareness, including practical tools for monitoring, digital safety, and setting boundaries at home
- Strategies for supporting children's emotional well-being and resilience

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that CEC 24 encourages schools to provide **clear, visible points of contact** for bullying and mental health concerns, including Respect for All liaisons, counselors, and social workers; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that CEC 24 advocates for continued attention to equitable access to mental health supports across District 24, ensuring that all students, including those with disabilities and LGBTQ+ students, receive appropriate, affirming, and responsive care; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that CEC 24 calls for ongoing collaboration with families to ensure that policies and practices reflect the lived experiences and needs of the community; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that CEC 24 encourages continued efforts to ensure timely access to counseling and intervention services so students have safe spaces to express concerns, receive guidance, and build trust in school-based support systems before situations escalate further; and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, that this resolution be shared with the Chancellor of the New York City Department of Education, the District 24 Superintendent, school leadership teams, and local elected officials.

Appendix A: Parent & Caregiver Rights and Guidance

CEC 24 affirms that parents and caregivers in District 24 have the right to:

1. A Safe and Supportive Learning Environment

All students are entitled to attend school free from bullying, harassment, intimidation, and discrimination, including protections under Respect for All policies.

2. Clear Reporting Processes

Parents have the right to:

- Report bullying verbally or in writing to school staff
- Receive acknowledgment of the complaint
- Be informed of the general outcome of an investigation (within privacy limits)

3. Timely School Response

Families should expect schools to:

- Take all reports seriously
- Initiate investigations promptly
- Implement appropriate interventions and safety measures

4. Access to Mental Health Supports

Parents have the right to request support from:

- School counselors
- Social workers
- Psychologists
- External referrals when appropriate

5. Support for Students with Disabilities (IEPs)

Parents of students with IEPs have additional rights, including:

- Requesting an IEP meeting if bullying impacts their child's ability to access education
- Advocating for additional supports, accommodations, or services
- Ensuring bullying incidents are considered when reviewing placement and services

6. Protections for LGBTQ+ Students

Students have the right to:

- Be addressed by their affirmed name and pronouns
- Access a safe and inclusive school environment

- Be protected from harassment based on gender identity or sexual orientation

7. Cyberbullying Awareness and Prevention

Parents are encouraged and empowered to:

- Monitor online activity in age-appropriate ways
- Set clear expectations for digital behavior
- Partner with schools when online behavior impacts school climate
- Seek guidance from school staff on addressing digital conflicts

8. Language Access and Inclusive Communication

All families have the right to receive information in their preferred language and in formats that are accessible and understandable.

Vote: (CEC 24) – Roll Call (Check One Per Member)

Matthew Crescio: Support Does Not Support Absent Abstain

Gina Liberta: Support Does Not Support Absent Abstain

Anna Karwowska: Support Does Not Support Absent Abstain

Felicia McHugh: Support Does Not Support Absent Abstain

Kate Barvels: Support Does Not Support Absent Abstain

Aliya Bonar: Support Does Not Support Absent Abstain

Brian Augustine: Support Does Not Support Absent Abstain

Manisha Jain: Support Does Not Support Absent Abstain