



COMMUNITY EDUCATION COUNCIL DISTRICT 3

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Ilene Altschul
District 3 Community Superintendent

October 14th, 2016

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

Dear Chancellor Farina,

Re: Decision to Remove Frederick Douglass Academy II Secondary School from District 3 Jurisdiction

We write to express dismay that one of our schools, Frederick Douglass Academy II Secondary School, a 6-12 school in the heart of our district, has been unilaterally removed from District 3 jurisdiction and that of CEC3 and Superintendent Ilene Altschul, and instead placed under the jurisdiction of the Manhattan High School Superintendent. CEC3 is calling on you to reverse this decision immediately.

CEC3 and Superintendent Altschul have worked extremely closely with FDAII over the years to support the school in all ways, including to increase enrollment, to get increased funding and support, and to get the school removed from the NYSED Renewal School list. When FDAII was threatened with closure, and invaded by Success Academy Charter, CEC3 and the District 3 community stood up for the school and worked closely with the FDAII community to prevent its destruction. CEC3 and Superintendent Altschul have a close working relationship with FDAII principal Owusu-Afriye and with the entire FDAII community.

In addition, FDAII is District 3 middle school, and the school is an active participant in our D3 middle school recruitment processes and school fairs. District 3 is currently engaged in a comprehensive discussion about integration at the middle school entry point, and FDAII stands to benefit greatly from this community led focus on equity within the enrollment system. Removing it from District 3's governance directly threatens this on-going conversation, a process that will resume in the coming months.

The students, families and faculty of FDAII require and deserve more attention and resources, not fewer, as will be the case if they are moved under the jurisdiction of the Manhattan High School Superintendent, someone with no geographic or other connection to FDAII's unique issues, and someone who already is overburdened with an enormous case load of high schools throughout Manhattan. Additionally, transferring FDAII to the jurisdiction of the Citywide Council on High Schools, which lacks a cohesive parent community and has only 2 overburdened members covering all Manhattan high schools, essentially casts FDAII out to fend for itself.

Recently, the SLT of FDAII's sister 6-12 school, Wadleigh Secondary School for the Performing and Visual arts, chose to move from the jurisdiction of the Manhattan high school superintendent and join the close knit D3 team and community under Superintendent Altschul and CEC3. We, and the Wadleigh community, believe this to have been the best decision for Wadleigh and District 3. The decision to move FDAII in exactly the opposite direction, without input from the community came as a complete shock and threatens the efforts as described above. We reiterate our request that you reverse the decision immediately. If you will not reverse the decision unilaterally, we would ask that at minimum you give the FDAII community the same respect as Wadleigh and all of our D3 schools, and let their community decide whether they'd like to leave the D3 fold.

We trust we know what FDAII's decision will be, and also trust you Chancellor to do the right thing for the students, parents and faculty of FDAII.

Respectfully,

For and on behalf of Community Education Council District 3

cc: Superintendent Ilene Altschul
City Council Member Inez Dickens
NYS Assembly Member Keith Wright
NYS Senator Bill Perkins