



**Department of
Education**

Carmen Fariña, Chancellor

**Testimony of the New York City Department of Education
Before the New York City Council Committee on Education**

March 19, 2015

Principal Michael Wiltshire, Boys and Girls High School

Good morning Chairman Dromm, and members of the Education Committee here today. My name is Michael Wiltshire, and I am the principal of Boys and Girls High School in Bedford-Stuyvesant, Brooklyn. Thank you for the opportunity to speak about the School Renewal program and the progress it is bringing to Boys and Girls.

For me, the Renewal story did not begin when I became principal at Boys and Girls last fall. It started in 2001, when I took over as principal of Medgar Evers College Prep School, then Middle College High School at Medgar Evers College. This was a low-performing school where only 14 percent of the students graduated with a Regents diploma and 61% of the students graduated in four years. I came to Medgar Evers College Preparatory School from a high-performing school district on Long Island where almost all the students graduated and went on to college or entered the work force. For me, the key question was: why can't we do the same thing here? Now, the graduation rate at Medgar Evers Prep is in the high 90s. The school offers an Early College Program with Medgar Evers College where many students receive not just a high school diploma but also an Associate's Degree upon graduating from high school. The school also offers 19 AP courses and our students graduate ready to attend great colleges and universities.

The question – and the challenge – has been the same at Boys and Girls. I taught at Boys and Girls nearly 25 years ago, when it was the Pride and Joy of Bed-Stuy. I returned because I was confident that, with my experience and Mayor de Blasio's and Chancellor Fariña's vision for supporting and lifting up our struggling schools, we could change the dynamics of this school.

We know that children in Long Island, at Medgar Evers and at Boys and Girls are no different. They all deserve a high-quality education and, while some need more support than others, they all deserve a path to college and meaningful careers.

Reeling from a decade as a struggling school, Boys and Girls – and its students – need that extra support and attention. That's what the Renewal program is for. And since Day One at Boys and Girls, that is what it is delivering. My staff and I have received the support and resources we need to change the direction at our school. As part of the Renewal program, we've added an extra 9th period of instruction each day and a new Saturday Academy where students learn in small groups and prepare for the Regents exam. We have developed an excellent relationship with Aimee Horowitz, the Executive Superintendent for the School Renewal Program, who has been there every step of the way with instructional and operational support.



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With the guidance of Aimee and our Renewal coaches, we assessed where our students were and where they need to be – and developed and implemented the interventions to get them from where they are to where they should be. We asked the hard questions about why students were not succeeding in the core Regents subjects they needed to graduate on time, and we re-programmed the entire schedule to ensure that students were taking the required courses. We took collective responsibility for the fact that our 12th graders were not being pushed to their full potential; now we have an individualized plan for every senior in the building.

In the spirit of becoming a full Community School – which is a central piece of the Renewal initiative – we are investing in resources and services that meet the whole needs of the students and the families we serve. Since I came to Boys and Girls in October, we've launched a mentoring program for our struggling students. We work closely with Good Shepherd Services – our partner CBO – to provide counseling for students, and we are deepening that partnership this summer and next school year as part of our full transition to being a Community School. We are bringing parents into the building for monthly Saturday brunch, where they can learn about the work the school is doing, ask questions, and raise concerns.

We've worked to strengthen our own craft as educators through frequent, intensive professional development. Leveraging our resources, in this case, with our partner school, Medgar Evers College Prep and our higher education partner, Medgar Evers College, we are conducting joint professional development with Medgar Evers College Prep School. Our teachers are receiving coaching and improvement strategies from their colleagues who have experience in leading high-achieving classrooms. On top of that, as part of our assessment and re-programming process, we added time for Boys and Girls teachers to collaborate on academic plans for their students.

With our focus on the transformation of Boys and Girls High School comes high expectations and accountability. As part of this transformation, all teachers must reapply for their positions at the end of the year.

With only a few months into my tenure and the Renewal program, we are starting to significantly change the dynamics at Boys and Girls High School. In October, when I came to Boys and Girls, 40 seniors were on track to graduate on time. Based on the corrective measures that we implemented, we now have 80 seniors who are on track to graduation and another 26 students who are almost on track.

At Boys and Girls, our students are not just getting more time through the new 9th period and Saturday Academy, the school's attendance is also improving. This is a leading indicator of academic success and one that I believe reflects our aggressive work to meet the whole needs of all our students and engage them in learning again.

January Regents scores are up. Several students have enrolled in AP courses with our partner school, Medgar Evers and over 100 students are participating in our early college



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program at Long Island University. I must also tell you that I am extremely proud and indeed excited to see many of our seniors receiving their college acceptance letter.

This is progress, but it's nothing to rest our laurels on. In fact, the work is picking up as we head towards the end of Year 1 and the beginning of Year 2 of our Renewal. There'll be more assessment and intervention, like re-programming and developing plans tailored to each student's needs. There'll be more work to turn Boys and Girls into a true community hub, a holistic program that meets students and families where they are with community-schools services. And there'll be more thoughtful professional development to improve teaching and learning in our classrooms.

This is unprecedented work for Boys and Girls. My staff and I are confident as we approach the work ahead, and we expect to be held accountable for its success. I look forward to working with Aimee, Chancellor Fariña, the Mayor, and our City – including the City Council – to make Boys and Girls once again the “Pride and Joy of Bed-Stuy.”

Testimony of the United Federation of Teachers
Michael Mulgrew, President

Before the New York City Council
Committee on Education

Regarding Governor Cuomo's Proposal To
Implement State Takeovers of Public Schools

March 19, 2015

Good afternoon and thank you, Chairman Dromm and members of the Education Committee for this opportunity to present testimony today. My name is Karen Alford, and I am Vice President of Elementary Education for the United Federation of Teachers. It is a privilege to come before you today on behalf of New York City's public school educators and the 1.1 million students we serve.

For more than 55 years, the UFT has fought to strengthen our school communities and improve outcomes for children, particularly those who face the greatest challenges. Thanks to willing partners such as Mayor de Blasio and Chancellor Farina, we are reversing the effects of years of neglect and mismanagement under the last administration.

This includes the work being done in the city's 94 Renewal schools that are now receiving the supports they have long asked for and needed. Those supports include adding important staff such as guidance counselors, establishing more academic interventions and bringing in additional services such as for students' health and mental health. Each school is developing an action plan in partnership with the DOE and the UFT to build partnerships with community organizations and increase the amount of instructional time. Assessments of each school are being conducted to provide data as well as to guide planning and instruction, and teachers at the schools are receiving more coaching, mentoring and professional development around the DOE's new Capacity Framework.

The idea behind all of these supports and services is simple: We are working to address the needs of students in a holistic manner, addressing the obstacles that stand in the way of learning both in and outside the classroom.

At Boy and Girls High School in Bedford Stuyvesant, for example, the comprehensive renewal plan includes the expansion of social services as well as a lengthening of the school day and establishment of additional programming on Saturdays. College-readiness programs are allowing students to take college-level classes, and a CTE program is giving students the opportunity to learn a trade. The school is already seeing better attendance, and 75 percent of its seniors are on track to either graduate or earn their GEDs later this spring.

Automotive High School in Williamsburg is another school where hard work and determination are making a difference. This school had struggled with high rates of violent incidents and suspensions, but the rates of both have dropped dramatically. Attendance is also up, and graduation rates are starting to rise. Teachers and administrators at the school want to help students even more and are pushing for additional programs and services, from vision and dental health programs to substance abuse and mental health services. Many students at

Automotive are also working towards certification in the school's automotive training program, putting them on track to gain both skills and credentials that will help them get jobs once they graduate.

Automotive and other schools such as Richmond Hill High School in Queens are also benefiting from coaches brought in to work with teachers to enhance the schools' writing and literacy programs. Teachers at both Automotive and Richmond Hill say this work has produced meaningful change by helping them to better pinpoint each student's particular weaknesses in that area and to build strategies for addressing these problems. The result is that students are learning to both think and write about more complex topics.

At another school, PS 284 in Brooklyn, teachers have taken it upon themselves to bring in more services and supports – including dance, karate and photography – to help their students grow in confidence and ability. These teachers have also brought in professional musicians who volunteer their time to help the students. And they are using extended time to provide additional academic supports to students.

It is also important to note that our new contract gives Renewal schools more tools for success, including dedicated time for parent engagement and professional development time for teachers. New teacher leadership positions, created under this contract, are also being established at many of the schools as one more way for teachers to enhance their skills by working closely with colleagues.

The Renewal schools were identified as such by the State Department of Education. Priority status was given to schools considered among the lowest-performing 5 percent of schools statewide. Schools also made the list through consideration of other factors, such as low four-year graduation rates. Under the Renewal plan, the schools have three years to set clear goals and improve outcomes for their students, and they will be held accountable for doing so.

Our members know all too well the major challenges that some of our children face. Some students come through our doors without a proper coat or school supplies. Teachers are usually able to make a quick collection among themselves to address these kinds of problems.

But it becomes more complicated when a child isn't eating regularly or hasn't seen a doctor. It is hard for children to focus on reading or math when they are homeless and don't know where they will be sleeping that night. It is difficult for students to pay attention to a science lesson when they are ill with an undiagnosed medical condition. Some students are in the grips of a major trauma at home – divorce, a death in the family or worse. Others have literally just arrived in this country and come to school knowing nothing about the language or culture.

Our teachers support children with these problems every day in our city. But Renewal Schools often have a higher concentration of children facing severe challenges. That's where the holistic approach comes in. Now, with the mayor's commitment to work with these schools and his strong \$150 million investment for additional programs and services, teachers in Renewal schools are beginning to receive the support necessary to properly help their students. For the first time in a decade, we have both a plan to actually turn around struggling schools and

partners at City Hall and the Department of Education who understand these schools' needs and are committed to meeting them.

The transformative work underway at Renewal schools stands in stark contrast to the approach proposed by our governor. You have no doubt read many headlines over the last few months about the governor's attacks on educators and public schools. Parents and educators across our city and the entire state have understandably been outraged by these destructive attacks and the sense that the governor has abandoned our state's historic commitment to public education.

In the same way that the governor has failed to accept responsibility for underfunding schools and botching the implementation of the Common Core standards, he has also abdicated his responsibility to properly support struggling schools. No wonder his poll numbers are dropping.

The governor has attempted to distract voters from his mistakes and mismanagement by pushing a series of discredited proposals that would hurt, not help, children. One of those failed proposals is to put schools into so-called 'receivership', which is really just a fancy way of saying state control. The governor's plan is essentially to strip away local control and turn a school over either to an outside entity of his choosing or to the state itself.

The history of state takeovers of schools is a history of failure. In Roosevelt, Long Island, an experiment in state control of the district led to complaints about basic issues such as a lack of books and sloppy record-keeping. Even with an influx of millions of dollars, the district ran a huge deficit. After 18 years of state control in Newark, a report said schools in that city still had huge dropout rates and that test scores that remained "abysmally low". And in Indianapolis, fights over money led to the water being shut off in some school buildings and to a threat by one independent operator to pull out unless it was paid an additional \$2.4 million.

Privatization of essential public services often means less public oversight and more problems. New Yorkers have experienced this firsthand. Debacles such as with Pearson and CityTime have been expensive reminders that the drive for profits often conflicts with the needs of our students and communities.

Turning over our schools to private companies or organizations would be exactly the wrong way to go. Collaborative models of school turnaround are the far better solution. That is why the UFT strongly supports the Council's resolution.

The governor's presentation of himself as wanting to roll up his sleeves to help schools is disingenuous. He showed no interest in providing schools with the supports they needed while Michael Bloomberg was mayor, and he has made no real effort to comply with the court-ordered Campaign for Fiscal Equity settlement by providing schools the billions of dollars in state aid that they are owed and need.

In reality, this is just another case of our governor playing politics with our schools. Many believe he is motivated by the big campaign contributions he has received from people who want more public money directed to privately-run schools. And, that has made many people angry.

The growing number of New Yorkers outraged by the governor's receivership proposal goes beyond parents and educators. More than 50 members of the state Assembly expressed their opposition to the governor's agenda in a letter to him just this week, stating "This proposal would wrest struggling schools away from local control and subject them to oversight by outside individuals or organizations, thereby interfering with the reforms municipalities are already implementing at the local level to strengthen schools and boost classroom achievement."

UFT members have dedicated their careers to helping children learn and grow. We have often had to do more with less as our schools have struggled with shrinking budgets and a lack of support. The problems have been particularly acute at our struggling schools. But thanks to a mayor and a chancellor who understand that the real solutions for these schools lie in collaborative effort, we are finally seeing progress.

Proper funding, more social services, smaller class sizes and teacher supports. These are the kinds of proven solutions that make a difference. Our communities demand locally-driven solutions that address the unique needs of their students and schools, not top-down power grabs that would undermine the chance for meaningful change.

State takeovers have been tried, and they have failed. The governor's proposal for state receivership would harm our schools and take us backward at a time when we are moving forward. We cannot afford to let Governor Cuomo sabotage the good work being done. His political agenda has no place in our schools.

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In the Record



THE COALITION FOR ASIAN AMERICAN CHILDREN AND FAMILIES

**New York City Council
Committee on Education
Hearing on Resolution for the State Legislature to
Eliminate Governor Receivership Proposal
in Executive Budget for New York City
March 19th, 2015**

**Testimony of support of NYC Council Resolution on behalf of:
The Coalition for Asian American Children and Families (CACF)**

Since 1986, CACF is the nation's only pan-Asian children's advocacy organization, and works to improve the health and well-being of Asian Pacific American (APA) children and families in New York City in three key policy areas: education, health and child welfare. CACF challenges the stereotype of Asian Pacific Americans as a "model minority" and advocates on behalf of underserved families in our community, especially immigrants struggling with poverty and limited English skills. We work with our membership of over 50 community based organizations to promote better policies, funding, and services for East Asian, South Asian, Southeast Asian, and Pacific Islander children, youth, and families. We would like to thank Committee Chair Dromm and members of the Education Committee in holding this hearing and proposing the resolution calling upon the State Legislature to Eliminate Governor Receivership Proposal in Executive Budget for New York City. CACF supports this resolution proposed by Council Member Dromm.

CACF also supports Mayor de Blasio's renewal school initiative. We support the development of community schools to have wrap-around services to cater to our most vulnerable communities. For Asian Pacific American (APA) youth in NYC, currently **1 out of 4 do not graduate high school on time or at all**. Many in the APA community come from immigrant backgrounds and face the issues of being low-income, as well as the challenges of language and culture in the school system. **50% of Asian children below poverty level live in linguistically-isolated households where parents do not have adequate English proficiency to aid or become involved in their children's education and 32% of Asian children in low-income households have limited English proficiency, compared to just 15% of children in low-income households citywide.**

Neighborhoods like Flushing, NY with approximately 65% Asian residents have one of the highest rates of severe overcrowding in the entire city and lowest rates of new affordable housing development. Flushing High School is one of the 94 schools on the renewal school list that needs more resources to increase graduation rates and serve many of the issues that families in Flushing face. In 2009, CACF along with another Asian-serving CBO Asian Americans for Equality (AAFE) launched a college/career readiness initiative called Project Collegebound based in 2 school sites in Flushing. It was located in Flushing High and Flushing International High School. We provided a host of services and programs for students, their families and the teachers. We operated college counseling, parent leadership and engagement programs, college trips, professional development for teachers, financial literacy programs for families, housing workshops, college/career fairs and immigration clinics. This was a 3-year funded grant, and at the end of our program, we had an increase in graduation rates, college and financial aid applications and acceptances, as well as parent engagement in the PTA and SLTs. We highlight this story to showcase an example where

using a community school model can work when the proper partnerships with community based organizations that have the knowledge and experience in working with the local community. To sum up, CACF supports the regulation to eliminate the Governor's Receivership Proposal, as we support the current New York City's renewal school program and community schools.

Thank you again for holding this important hearing.

The Coalition for Asian American Children and Families (CACF)



FOR THE RECORD

**MEMORANDUM OF SUPPORT –
PRECONSIDERED RES.**

**Calling upon the NYS Legislature to eliminate
The Governor’s receivership proposal in the
Executive budget for NYC**

March 19, 2015

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The Council of School Supervisors and Administrators, (CSA) strongly supports the Preconsidered Resolution calling upon the New York State Legislature to eliminate the Governor’s receivership proposal in the executive budget for New York City public schools.

It is not necessary for the Governor to designate receivership of low performing schools because the Mayor and Chancellor implemented a plan last fall to assist these schools called “Renewal Schools” to prevent them from closing. Over \$150 million in additional support by the city has been allocated to the Renewal Schools initiative. Research supports the structure of the Chancellor’s Renewal Schools initiative which includes providing sufficient funding, lowering class size, providing after-school programs and offering more professional development. The Renewal Schools are showing positive progress through better attendance and higher test scores. CSA strongly joins the City Council and public school advocates in pushing back against the Governor’s proposal.

If the Governor truly wants to help NYC schools succeed, he should follow the Court’s decision and provide the \$2.6 billion the State has owed the City for years from the Campaign for Fiscal Equity settlement. CSA and advocates ask the State to address equitably funding schools, as well as to let the Mayor and educators do their jobs.

March 18th, 2015

New York City Council
Education Committee
250 Broadway
New York, NY 10007

Re: **Governor Cuomo's Receivership Proposal in the Executive Budget for NYC**

Hello, my name is Kesi Foster, I am the Coordinator for the Urban Youth Collaborative. We are a coalition of organizations led by youth that come together to fight for racial justice in our public school system. We believe that if New York City is going to close the opportunity gap and provide all young people with high quality educational opportunities, we must invest in solutions developed by the community and based in equity. For the last twelve years, education reform has been imposed on our communities, with no input or engagement with young people attending our schools or the community. Schools were closed down with no regard for the impact that it was going to have on the students that remained or the community. We know young people that had to go to class in janitor closets, because they had to make room for new schools. Students that had to take music classes online, because their music teacher had to be let go. Students became collateral damage. Still, the narrative continues to be how successful closing failing schools is as a turnaround strategy. Of course, those imposing policies on us, never engage with the young people that get the short of the stick. Now we are being told we have two choices, continue to close schools, or turn schools over to private operators. We continue to invest in solutions that shut community and young people as part of the process and create a competition, creating winners and losers, and making system equity impossible to achieve.

The community school model, when done systematically to include rigorous, engaging, and culturally relevant curriculum, transformative community and parent engagement, positive discipline practices, and strategies to improve teaching and learning, has shown success districts across the country. Oakland Unified School District recently moved to transform all of their schools into community schools, beginning with a yearlong process that included community meetings and a visioning process that engaged with all stakeholders. As part of Governor Cuomo's plans for receivership, the receivers would potentially be tasked with doing just that, creating community schools. Essentially, what the Governor is proposing is the same idea as Mayor de Blasio's but to give control of the schools to private operators. Handing schools over to the state, to give to private operators or charter management companies, that do not have to answer to community, or have the community represented on their boards, or leadership, will not address the root issues that have created a system that perpetuates the racial inequities in our system. We understand the urgency to improve our schools. Where is the urgency to identify equitable solutions that don't create a lottery? Where is the urgency to address the 150,000 students that walk through a metal detector everyday and attends schools where we spend \$2000 dollars less than we spend on schools with out metal detectors?

Where is the urgency to address that our school system employs over 5000 school safety agents and uniformed school safety officers, and less than 3500 guidance counselors. Or to address the needs in schools where 20% of the young people who attend are homeless?

We should look no farther than Newark, where state control of schools has torn apart the community, where young people are occupying the state appointed Superintendents office, because their concerns continue to be ignored. If we want to look at how well receivership has worked, we can look to Detroit, where after years of failure, the Michigan Governor has just transferred the turnaround office control to the Department of Technology, Management and Budget.

Our education system is currently not providing all students with the same high quality educational opportunities. It has never provided all students with the same high quality educational opportunities. The achievement gap is an opportunity gap. If we are serious about improving the system for all 1.1 children that attend our schools, it is time for us to look past solutions that create a pathway for some and collectively embrace and invest in solutions that create a pathway for all students. Community Schools is a step in the right direction, solutions that do not include us at the table, is a step in the same old direction.

Kesi Foster,
Coordinator, Urban Youth Collaborative



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Testimony of Leonie Haimson of Class Size Matters before the NYC Council Education Committee, in favor of the resolution opposing the Governor's proposal on receivership

I am here to testify in support of the resolution against the Governor's proposal to expand state receivership of allegedly low-performing public schools. The state has no track record of improving schools in receivership. When the State Education Department took control of the Roosevelt school district in 2002, and ran it for over a decade, there was little or no improvement, as reported in a Newsday 2013 article:

Albany's intervention ends Monday, after 11 years and more than \$300 million in extra state spending. The period -- marked by limited scholastic progress and memorable mistakes by state officials and their appointees -- was the first and only time the state ever managed a local school system.

"I can tell you right off the bat that the state Education Department has no capabilities to run a school district," said Roger Tilles of Great Neck, who is Long Island's representative to the state Board of Regents. "We need other alternatives, if we're ever going to turn around other districts that are really not succeeding."¹

Moreover, the narrative of a "crisis" in failing schools that is being used to justify the expansion of state receivership is manufactured -- to encourage the hostile takeover of public schools.

As Michael Petrilli of the Thomas Fordham Institute, a big supporter of the Common Core standards just wrote:

Some education reformers and media outlets are already using the results of the new, tougher tests to brand schools as "failing" if most of their students don't meet the higher standards. Note, for instance, the Daily News's special report, "Fight for their Future," which leads with the provocative headline "New York City is rife with underperforming schools, including nearly two-thirds of students missing state standards." This line of attack closely resembles the talking points of Eva Moskowitz and Jeremiah Kettridge of Families for Excellent Schools, who both promote the notion that in New York, "800,000 kids can't read or do math at grade level" and "143,000 kids are trapped in persistently failing schools."

These statements are out of bounds, and reformers should say so. They validate the concerns some educators voiced all along: that we would use the results of the tougher tests to unfairly label more schools as failures.²

¹ John Hildebrand, "NYS takeover of Roosevelt schools failed, some say," Newsday, June 29, 2013.

The results of the new Common Core exams are essentially unreliable. They were designed to find two thirds of students failing, and did so, not just in New York City but in the rest of the state as well. The reports by Families for Excellent Schools claiming a “crisis” of failing schools were put out by an organization that has received considerable funding from hedge funders and Wall Street financiers, as well as more than \$700,000 over the past two years from the Walton Foundation, an organization that has an aggressive privatization agenda.³ The unreliable figures and claims of an education crisis cited by this organization were echoed in a report from the Governor’s office that has been described as “sometimes indistinguishable from the eight reports on struggling schools F.E.S. has sent reporters since the summer.”⁴ Not surprisingly, Cuomo himself has received huge sums from some of the same pro-privatization hedge funders and financiers.⁵

Yet Carol Burris, award-winning principal in the Rockville Centre School District, has shown how unreliable these figures are, based on cut scores imposed by the state that purport to show which students will be college and career ready.⁶ For example, while only half of the students in her district were said to be proficient in ELA and Math based upon their state test scores in grades 3-8, 100% of them graduate with a Regents diploma and 85% with an advanced designation. Over 92% of these students not only go to college, but persist and are still there two years after their high school graduation.

Another such district is Oceanside, Long Island where 96 percent of students graduate with a Regents diploma, 58 percent with advanced distinction, and 92 percent go onto college (70 percent to four year colleges and 22 percent to a two year colleges). Yet more than two thirds of the district’s 8th graders were labelled as not making the standards in math, according to the state’s Common Core exams.⁷

When Michael Bloomberg was running for re-election in 2009, the state test scores purported to show that two-third of the city’s students had achieved grade standards in English, and 82 percent in math.⁸ Now the state says only about one third of them do. Clearly the cut scores were set for political reasons then and are just as politically motivated now. They were pre-ordained to fit the ideological goals of those who are intent on dismantling and privatizing our schools.

² Michael Petrilli, “Eva et al. flunk the fairness test,” March 17, 2015, <http://edexcellence.net/articles/eva-et-al-flunk-the-fairness-test>

³ Robert Lewis, “Who Is Behind the Pro-Charter Schools Group Fighting de Blasio?” WNYC, Thursday, March 06, 2014.

⁴ Eliza Shapiro, “Charter, union messaging creates New York echo chamber,” Mar. 3, 2015. For example, “Cuomo’s report, sent Feb. 26, cited 178 failing schools across the state, the same number F.E.S. used in a report sent Feb. 25.”

⁵ Juan Gonzalez, “Hedge fund executives give ‘til it hurts to politicians, especially Cuomo, to get more charter schools,” NY Daily News, March 11, 2015.

⁶ Valerie Strauss, “The scary way Common Core test ‘cut scores’ are selected,” Washington Post Answer Sheet, April 29, 2014.

⁷ <http://schools.newsday.com/long-island/test-scores/Math/grade-8/>

⁸ Jennifer Medina, “Standards Raised, More Students Fail Tests,” NY Times, July 28, 2010.

A few years ago, Rick Hess, a conservative commentator at the American Enterprise Institute, revealed the motives behind the Common Core exams in an eerily prescient column called the **Common Core Kool-aid**:

First, politicians will actually embrace the Common Core assessments and then will use them to set cut scores that suggest huge numbers of suburban schools are failing. Then, parents and community members who previously liked their schools are going to believe the assessment results rather than their own lying eyes... Finally, newly convinced that their schools stink, parents and voters will embrace "reform." However, most of today's proffered remedies--including test-based teacher evaluation, efforts to move "effective" teachers to low-income schools, charter schooling, and school turnarounds--don't have a lot of fans in the suburbs or speak to the things that suburban parents are most concerned about....Common Core advocates now evince an eerie confidence that they can scare these voters into embracing the "reform" agenda.⁹

When Gov. Cuomo was running for re-election, he acknowledged that the state test scores that children received were not fair, and thus he promised that they should not be put on their transcripts. He ran a campaign ad, in which he promised "not to use Common Core scores for at least five years, and then only if our children are ready."¹⁰

If these scores aren't ready to be used to judge students, they aren't adequate to judge our schools or deem them "failing" either. They are certainly not reliable enough to ask the State Education Department to take over our public schools – which has had NO record of success in doing so.

⁹ Rick Hess, "The Common Core Kool-Aid," Education Week, November 30, 2012.

¹⁰ Josefa Velasquez and Jessica Bakeman,, "In ad, Cuomo cites 5-year delay on using Common Core scores," Capital NY, Oct. 20, 2014

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. 51

in favor in opposition

Date: 3/19/15

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Zahiyah Ansari

Address: 260 E. 93rd St.

I represent: Alliance for Quality Education

Address: 94 Central Avenue

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

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in favor in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Leone Harmon

Address: _____

I represent: Class Size Matters

Address: _____

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: 3/3/2015

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Michael Wiltshire

Address: Principal Boyd and Co. Inc.

I represent: MS, DO'E

Address: _____

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. 577-2015

in favor in opposition

Date: 3/18/15

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Kesi Foster

Address: 2287 5th AVE NY, NY 10037

I represent: URBAN YOUTH COLLABORATIVE

Address: 233 BROADWAY

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms

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I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. 577-2015

in favor in opposition

Date: MARCH 18 / 2015

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: KEMACK ARMEN

Address: 5531 8th ST, #3L BROOKLYN

I represent: (unofficially) Parents organizing other parents

Address: for test refusal, BNS/BCS PAC

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: March 19, 2015

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Karen Alford

Address: UFT

I represent: 52 Broadway, 14th Fl.

Address: _____

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: 3/19/15

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Natasha Chambers

Address: 86 Osborn St

I represent: Coalition for Educational Justice

Address: 233 Broadway

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms