**Community Board 17**

**Education Committee Virtual Meeting**

**Tuesday, January 25, 2022**

**Present:**

Gail Grandison

Monica McKain-Brown

Nicole Julius

Ann Hudson

Muline Mickle

Rose Graham

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The **Education Committee Virtual Meeting** was held on **Tuesday, January 25, 2022 at 7:30pm**.

**Ms. Gail Grandison** called the meeting to order at 7:44pm.

As they start the New Year, she wants to change up a bit and do some meeting norms that they can utilize to help them establish agreed upon clear behavior among them. She wants them to respect each other’s opinions and treat each other with dignity. No one knows it all, but together, they know a lot, each one, teach one. There is a learning and teaching moment in each of them. Let’s share this year and take space, make space, means that they give each other the opportunity to speak and sometimes, they step back and let someone who really wants to speak, if they can’t get their voice heard and get on the platform to share their thoughts or opinions.

For the approval of the minutes, they do not have a quorum. There are 12 members on this committee and there are only 3 people here. They have not been able to approve minutes for September and October. For November and December, they did have meetings because a lot of people were not on the meetings. She will table the minutes again, unless other people join in later. They have 12 members and for a quorum, they need 7 members.

**Chairperson’s Report**

**Ms. Grandison** said not a lot has happened in the past couple of months and a lot of their priorities have gotten pushed back. She is hoping they will be able to move forward and they are able to **(INAUDIBLE)** meetings, which she thinks she is going to have to do is make changes to the committee attendance in order for them to do the Board’s business and the committee’s priorities.

**Roll Call**- Monica McKain-Brown, Nicole Julius, Muline Mickle, Ann Hudson

An email was sent to the members asking if they want to remain a member of the committee and she is going to have another one sent out. She wants to know exactly who wants to be on the committee and who doesn’t. They cannot have people attend in September and don’t show up again and decide to come back in January and don’t show up until the last meeting. This is a voluntary position. It is about people caring enough to sit on a committee that represents their community. She will not bash anyone for not being able to attend, because they all have busy lives and a lot of things are happening, however, there is part of a commitment that they say they want to be a part of the Board or a committee and there is a general part they have to play. It is hard for her to move forward with speakers or doing anything when she has just 2 or 3 people showing up. She thinks it is fair that if she has a few people that are showing up, showing out helping out and are here to talk through things, then that should be her core committee members and then they are able to vote on different things that come across their agenda. She can have speakers and alert them that they have a small committee of 2 or 3 people, but she needs to be able to work unsightly. There is a lot that she has not been able to get done in the past year and a half. She wants to know from the members whether or not they have a valid interest in joining and attending the meetings. She cannot have people that come to the meetings once or twice a year.

She does receive flyers for things that are happening. The **(INAUDIBLE)** Alliance and they have opportunities and programs for youth, and it is a paid 14-week work experience. They would have to contact them for the applications and the deadline is February 14th. It is for young adults, ages 16 to 24. She will send them the information to be shared with family and other colleagues.

The NYC Lifeguards are hiring again, and she will send the information and they can share that also.

The NYC College of Technology is offering tuition free academic programs, tuition free career programs, college preparation, English for speakers of other languages, high school equivalency. The tuition free programs is direct support for professionals, medical assistants, medical billing and coding and they are hiring in the spring. Share this information with colleagues.

Ms. Oakley, from the Brooklyn EOC is interested in attending a committee meeting to present on the programs and training they have. She is thinking of inviting her to the February meeting. She sent her an email and is waiting to hear back from her. She is looking for them to help her with outreach and she wants them to add the flyer to their website and social media platform and distribute it throughout the community.

At their last meetings, they talked about the strategic plans they came up with. They talked about inviting elected officials, Principals and other school administrations to their meetings and would like to start that in February. They talked about doing a needs assessment to understand the needs of the schools. She created a document she wants to send out to the schools to see if they can get a response from them. Hopefully, this will get some traction with the school personnel because over the years, they have talked about going into the schools, calling or contacting them and that has not worked well. She wants to go a little bit outside the box and with this time of COVID-19, she is not asking anyone to go to the schools to be in contact with anyone. She does not know how they would feel walking into a school setting like that, plus to go into the schools, they would have to be vaccinated. She is not looking for anyone to be required to be vaccinated if they are not or to put them in that setting. Her next plan of action is to get the needs assessment out. It could be as simple as a Principal asking them to attend some meetings or as complexed as a Principal saying they would like some funding to rebuild the gymnasium or to buy PT equipment or to fix the outdoor playground. They would not know what the schools need unless they ask and they try to come up with some solutions and they will not be able to fix or give everything and that is not what she is asking for or looking to do. If there are some areas where they have to bring in the elected officials to say, this is a problem and they need them to work with the schools to get certain things done, she is willing to do that. If there is a way that she can think of writing a letter to get some private funding for the schools, depending on what the issue may be, she is willing to do that. She is willing to take a look at what these needs are and prioritizing them as to how they are able to assist their schools.

**Ms. Muline Mickle** said she supports what Ms. Grandison is saying. If they do not know what they need, then they cannot help them. The right step is to start from their needs, then they work towards seeing how well they can help them in any way.

**Ms. Grandison** said as they begin to push this out and they have 6 months left in the school year and this helps them to get updates and reports from the schools. This has been tough process and she is hoping that any way they can move forward, is a way in the door. She will continue to work on that form. Part of this process is also the partnership with the elected officials and she is still going to invite them to the meetings and hopefully, they can send a representative and they can hear about what they are doing around funding for the schools. NYC got an influx of money from the Biden administration and there was an amount of money that went into the schools and they need to figure out and see how that money was moved around.

She was at an event and spoke to Celeste, the Superintendent for District 18, said that the money that came in for the schools, that it was not able to hire personnel. She wants to have a deeper conversation with her around that and she is going to reach out her to attend the February meeting. She does not understand why it cannot be used for school personnel, especially when they have school shortages due to some people not taking the vaccine and could not be in the classrooms. It was interesting to hear what was more centered around programs, which is a good thing, but why not personnel. She wants to dig a bit deeper into that issue and get her facts together before she makes any assumptions.

The other thing in the strategic plan was the engagement of children of families in various education spaces where they talked about the spelling bee. They were going to do the spelling bee in February on President’s Day, when everyone was available, but Omicron hit. They have to think of another date to do this. Is it after the State English and Math tests, which would happen in the beginning of June or do they take this into the summer? At this point, they can plan, but the virus is determining how they live and what they do. They should think about the next possible date they would be able to do this.

**Ms.** **Nicole Julius** said the math tests are from April 26th through May 4th and it is spread out wider. The English tests are from March 14th through June 10th and that does not make sense. It has grades 3 through 8, March 29th to March 31st for the paper base and the computer base is from March 29th through April 5th.

**Ms. Grandison** said they will have to think about maybe the end of April into May. She asked if Juneteenth is an official holiday in the State?

**Ms.** **Julius** said it is an official State holiday and is on June 20th. The holiday is June 19th, but they get off on June 20th.

**Ms. Grandison** asked what do they think about that date?

**Ms. Julius** said the only problem is they would have to cater to a younger group versus the older students, because they might be taking regents exams.

**Ms. Grandison** said they are going to have to think about this. What if she put out some dates and ask the schools what they think would be best timing around this, just to get some feedback or should they wait until after regents to do this? June 20th is a possibility.

**Ms. Mickle** asked do they usually invite the charter and private schools?

**Ms. Grandison** said she intends to invite everyone. There were one or two that have attended in the past. She has a broader list now and she is not going to specify that only the public schools are involved in the event, because all of these schools are in the community and their children goes to these schools. These are all their children, regardless to what school they go to.

They have to think of a date for the spelling bee and the essay competition. The essay writing competition is going to be held in partnership with the 67th Pct. Explorers. She has worked with this group every year except last year because of COVID-19. She is working with Det. Barry and she will have a conversation with her to go through all the details. Det. Barry works in all of the schools in the community and this is something she has been doing for a number of years and she thought it was good because they are reaching out to the same people and they come together as a committee with her Explorers and share the responsibilities of getting this essay writing competition off. In the past years, it has been a really great event **(INAUDIBLE)** real light because it was the 67th Pct. Explorers, but the children run the program. At the end when they have scored and chosen the winners, then there is a celebration held at Tropical Paradise where they are served dinner. There are presentations and also entertainment. This is student centered in everything of how it is done.

She and Ms. Graham have been talking about this awesome group of young people last year with Steam and Stem and they want to put together a Steam and Stem Expo, which will have to be virtual, unless they can do something outdoors. More details will follow, and she will follow up with her to talk about that. She thinks Steam and Stem is something they should promote more broadly in this community and show students the benefits of having Steam and Stem programs and curriculum. These are some of the things they have talked about and planned, and she is definitely moving forward with this. She wants their input on anything else, hear their comments and concerns.

**Ms. Julius** said while they have this window of acknowledgement, she thinks the should take advantage of reaching the parents in some form or the other, probably setting up a Zoom meeting and have some topics to discuss like parents/teachers night. Some people might not know what questions to ask. There are so many resources that parents don’t know about and if they are not part of that elite group, they don’t know. They can captivate and use this technology to reach out to a broader range and they should take advantage of it to reach the parents and the students.

**Ms. Grandison** said with such a small group, if they are going to do something like that, it does not necessarily have to be a parent’s night, but it could be something that is done and if they cannot get it on their regular meeting day, then perhaps it could be done on another day or evening, it does not have to be long. She does have a list of parents from the previous spelling bee and she is thinking how to get the parents there. It could be something they put on the website to advertise it, advertise it through the schools, give them a flyer and ask them to distribute it to the parents and then word of mouth.

**Ms. Mickle** said she was thinking they could come together with another committee, like the Social Services and Education Committees, mixed and try to reach the parents and let them know what is available for their children.

**Ms. Grandison** said most of the stuff they are going to do is going to be with the Youth Committee, because it is the same demographics. She does pull Ms. Graham into everything because they do serve the same demographics. They can also pull in the Block Association Committee to say they are having a parent’s night. She has to think through the marketing piece and bring in someone from the gifted and talented program, if it is still around. Mayor de Blasio wanted to get rid of that, but she does not know if Mayor Adams was thinking of keeping it. She will see what is happening there. She thinks it would be good to have someone with PTA experience to talk to parents about being on the PTA, the ELS team and team leadership and all the things that are happening and involvement.

**Ms. Monica McKain-Brown** said she agrees with what was said, but schools need to do their job and some Guidance Counselors and teachers don’t know much about some of the programs that are there, however, for them to do this, it is great. They are going to have to be able to follow up because they can tell the parents about the programs, however, they are going to have to know how the programs work and to help them with the steps and encourage them to participate if their children are able to go through the whole process and then they are going to have to help them along the way with the financial aspect of how to fill out the papers and they also have to willing if they are going to bring it to their awareness. With involvement, the parents need to know what benefits there are with being involved with their child’s school and find out what is happening and what is out there.

**Ms. Grandison** said the 5th grade school applications is open and the deadline to apply is March 1st. She gets a lot of information and what she struggles with is does the schools get this information also. In the beginning, they had talked about doing a newsletter and it would be good if they find a young person from the school who is creative in writing and they can do a monthly bulletin to get this information out as it comes into her email and send it out to the parents.

She also wants to partner with the Commerce Committee on the SYEP when it comes out. She wants to have a conversation with Mr. Bakiriddin on how they can get more businesses in this community to hire young people. He brought this up at a meeting and she thought that within the community the amount of businesses they have here and during the summer, they really don’t see young people in them like that. It could be a small West Indian restaurant on the corner employing them. Everything is business centered and has a learning moment. The best thing about this is it is not their money and the money comes through DYCD. She wants to work with the Commerce Committee to get SYEP marketable in this community and to get more business owners to buy into it. The application for SYEP open in April and they don’t have much time to get this information out to the parents. Even if they have to do a night on how to fill out the applications and how to get their working papers.

She asked if there were anything else to discuss?

**Ms. Julius** said the businesses can register on the SYEP website at www1.nyc.gov. This about mentorship and them investing in the youths and taking them under their umbrella and exposing them to their business and it is free labor for them.

**Ms. Ann Hudson** said the major problem is the businesses are not informed about the program and they would need to have some outreach to give them that information. The fact that they don’t have to pay out of their pockets, would be a major thing for them.

**Ms. Grandison** said that is why she wants to partner with Mr. Bakiriddin because he is very active with the business owners in the community. One thing she is going to recommend to him is if the business owners are interested in taking part in the SYEP program for the summer, is to have an informative night where they can walk them through the application process, what they need to do to submit the application, the timesheets, signing off and how the young people get paid. It is quite a bit for them to know and understand and they need to choose someone within their business to handle those different pieces.

She asked if there were any other issues to discuss? Having heard none, she asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting.

**Ms. Mickle** made a motion to adjourn the meeting.

**Ms. Julius** seconded the motion.