

Appendix A: Fieldwork and Data Analyzed

Methodology

This study used qualitative methods to investigate the contribution of DEC funding, prior and current, to the efficacy of the Campaign for Better Schools, the dynamics affecting the formation and potential of the Campaign, the processes by which the member groups worked together to form a coalition and influence the debate on governance of the NYC schools, and the long term effects of the Campaign's efforts..

In order to understand the impact of DEC and the development of the Campaign, we interviewed members of DEC, representatives of all of the initiating groups, and many of the Steering Committee members. We selected Steering Committee representatives based on recommendations from initiating group members as ones that were active on sub-committees and also on assuring representative of the range of types of groups in the coalition. We observed all of the Coordinating Committee and Steering Committee meetings, as well as many of the sub-committee meetings, all of the major events, and debriefings after the legislation was passed. We also reviewed all relevant program documents and materials posted on the Yahoo groups and website.

To establish the initial framing of the mayoral control debate and who were seen as the important players in the debate, we conducted a set of landscape interviews prior to the beginning of the Campaign with education stakeholders. We returned to those after the new legislation was passed in order to see what impact the Campaign had. We selected as interviewees from among those who represent a range of viewpoints: media, academic, advocacy, and political. Selection was based on recommendations from DEC and members of the initiating group, as well as made through our own networks. We did a media scan and analysis to track the evolution of the debate on mayoral control and the visibility of various actors, including the Campaign.

Interviews were semi-structured, each taking between 30 minutes and two hours. Interviews were taped and transcribed.

Figure A-1 summarizes our data collection in both years one and two of the study.

Figure A-1 Fieldwork in Year One and Year Two		
	Year One Pre-Sunset Fieldwork May 2008-May 2009	Year Two Post-Sunset Fieldwork June 2009-March 2010
Interviews	58	33
Advocacy or Civic Leader	7	7
Academic	3	0
Business	1	0
Campaign Members	22	11
DEC Focus Group (4 members)	1	0
Lobbyist	2	1
Local Official	2	2
Media	1	3
Parent	12	0
State Official	5	8
Union	2	1
Observations	41	4
Campaign Meetings with External Advisors	1	0
Campaign Press Events	2	1
Campaign Retreats	2	0
Coordinating Committee Meetings	15	1
Public Debates, Forums or Hearings	5	0
Steering Committee Meeting	9	1
Sub-Committee Meetings	7	0
Presentation and Discussion of Year One Report with Campaign	0	1

Preliminary data analysis involved the writing of a series of analytic memos, each focused on an area of interest for this study, e.g. what the “landscape” interviews in NYC and Albany had to say about who they thought would be influential in the mayoral control debate, how they thought the decision would be made, and what the outcome would be, or what DEC, Coordinating and Steering Committee members reported was the important influences of DEC funding. We presented the preliminary analysis to the Campaign’s Coordinating Committee in June 2009, prior to completion of the Year One report, for their reflection and feedback. The Year One report was presented to the Steering Committee in December 2009 for their comments in December 2009. This iterative process of reflection on findings with those in the field expanded and enriched our interpretive process

Preliminary analysis allowed us to develop an initial set of thematic codes which we expanded upon in the second year of research, as new issues and patterns emerged. Ultimately, all the interview and observation data were coded thematically, using qualitative software (Atlas.ti). This allowed us to look systematically across our data set at issues we identified as critical to understanding the development, strategies and effects of the Campaign. Documents collected and reviewed throughout the course of the research, along with the media analysis, allowed us to further investigate issues and events important to understanding the Campaign and its outcomes (see Figure A-2). Early drafts of the report were reviewed by members of DEC and Campaign members. Their comments provided a member check on the credibility of our findings and contributed to the refinement of our interpretation of the data.

Concurrent with our qualitative fieldwork in years one and two, we also tracked and analyzed media coverage of the Campaign and NYC’s mayoral control debate. The media scan methodology is described in detail in this volume’s media addendum, *The Mayoral Debate and the Media: The Campaign for Better Schools and other Actors in the Public Lens*.

Figure A-2 Document Review

Documents collected from the Campaign for Better Schools

- Agendas, flyers, memos of talking points and tips for public events (including drafts)
- Campaign updates for constituent groups
- Coalition proposal for DEC funding and report after initial planning grant
- Drafts of the Campaign's platform
- Campaign research and analysis of test score data
- Endorsement letters and postcards for public advocacy
- Handouts, background documents and notes from Steering Committee, Coordinating Committee and Subcommittee meetings and retreats
- Journals detailing nine days of organizers' activities
- Newsletters and alerts announcing groups' membership in the Campaign and updating members about the Campaign's activities
- Table comparing Campaign priorities to the new legislation
- Press release following Senate vote

Documents collected related to DEC

- Articles about DEC
- DEC funding goals and guidelines
- Earlier evaluations of DEC grants

Documents from external actors

- Agendas, flyers, notices and invitations for public hearings, forums, debates or town hall meetings about mayoral control
- Factsheets about mayoral control, produced by civic and advocacy groups
- Local government resolutions and recommendations concerning mayoral control
- Newsletters that address school governance issues
- Press releases about organizations and events
- Reports and reviews of school governance from academics, civic groups, advocacy organizations, government bodies, and unions
- School governance proposals from civic groups, organizations, legislators and unions
- Transcripts of testimonies at mayoral control hearings and other venues
- Emails about rallies against school closings
- Letter by Arne Duncan on fixed terms
- Summary of legislation as passed by Assembly
- Report on parental engagement by mayoral candidate Bill Thompson

Appendix B: Campaign Initiating Groups

The Alliance for Quality Education

The Alliance for Quality Education (AQE) is a community-based organization that fights for quality public education. Founded in 2000, AQE is made up of over 230 organizations across New York State, representing parents, children's advocacy groups, schools, teachers, clergy and others. AQE emphasizes parent and youth involvement while working on leadership development, community organizing and activism, extensive media relations, policy work, and lobbying. The Equity Reform Project, from which AQE was formed, was part of the first phase of DEC funding. AQE itself first received DEC funding in 2005.

Community Involvement Program

The Community Involvement Program (CIP) was founded in 1996 by the Institute for Education and Social Policy at the Steinhardt School of Education at NYU. In 2006, CIP joined the Annenberg Institute for School Reform at Brown University. CIP focuses on a grassroots strategy for school reform, providing training support, organizing strategy, data analysis, and policy research to help urban community organizations get involved in school reform issues. To hold public school systems accountable for educating all students, CIP works to strengthen the power, leadership, and vision of community groups. The Institute for Education and Social Policy first received DEC funding in 1995.

Coalition for Educational Justice in New York City

Founded in 2005, the Coalition for Educational Justice (CEJ) is a parent-led coalition currently made up of ten local, statewide and national community-based and union advocacy groups. CEJ works to mobilize parents and community members to influence policy discussions to create a more equitable educational system in New York City. The Community Collaborative for Bronx Schools, which became a part of CEJ in 2005 was first funded by DEC in 2001. DEC also began funding CEJ in 2005.

New York Immigration Coalition

The New York Immigration Coalition (NYIC) is a state-wide umbrella organization of over 200 policy and advocacy groups that work with immigrants and refugees. Founded in 1987, NYIC focuses on policy analysis and advocacy, civic participation and voter education, community education, and leadership development to improve legislation related to immigrants and refugees. NYIC works to promote and protect the rights of immigrants, and improve immigrants' access to services across New York State. NYIC first received DEC funding in 1995.

Appendix C: Campaign for Better Schools Steering Committee

Early Members of the Steering Committee

The following organizations were invited to the initial Retreat and agreed to join the Steering Committee:

1. ACORN
2. Advocates for Children
3. Alliance for Quality Education
4. Annenberg Institute for School Reform
5. Citizen's Committee for Children
6. Coalition for Asian American Children and Families
7. Cypress Hills Advocates for Education
8. Education Voters of New York
9. Haitian Americans United for Progress
10. Highbridge Community Life Center
11. Hispanic Federation
12. La Union
13. Make the Road New York
14. NAACP
15. New Settlement Apartments
16. New York City Coalition for Educational Justice
17. New York Civic Participation Project
18. New York Immigration Coalition
19. Queens Congregations United for Action
20. Urban Youth Collaborative

The following groups were invited to join the Steering Committee but were not present at the Retreat when the Steering Committee was formalized:

21. Child Care, Inc.
22. Metropolitan Russian American Parent Association
23. Alianza Dominicana
24. El Centro de la Hospitalidad

Child Care, Inc., Metropolitan Russian American Parent Association and El Centro de la Hospitalidad joined the Steering Committee shortly after the retreat.

The following organizations were interested in joining the Steering Committee, but could not commit before considering finances or receiving the approval of their organization's governing body:

25. National Center for Schools and Communities
26. Coalition for After School Funding
27. Campaign for Fiscal Equity
28. Children's Aid Society

Of these, the National Center for Schools and Communities and the Coalition for After School Funding joined the Steering Committee.

Steering Committee members, May 2009

1. ACORN
2. Advocates for Children
3. Alliance for Quality Education
4. Annenberg Institute for School Reform
5. Center for Arts Education
6. Child Care, Inc.
7. Chinese Progressive Association
8. Coalition for After-School Funding
9. Coalition for Asian American Children & Families
10. Cypress Hills Advocates for Education
11. Education Voters of New York
12. El Centro de la Hospitalidad de Staten Island
13. Flanbwayan Haitian Literacy Project
14. Haitian Americans United for Progress
15. Highbridge Community Life Center
16. La Union
17. Make the Road New York
18. Metropolitan Russian-American Parent Association
19. NAACP Metropolitan Council
20. New Settlement Apartments Parent Action Committee
21. New York City Coalition for Educational Justice
22. New York Civic Participation Project
23. New York Immigration Coalition
24. Northwest Bronx Community & Clergy Coalition
25. Queens Congregations United for Action
26. Urban Youth Collaborative

The following organizations are supporters, but not Steering Committee members:

27. New Immigrant Community Empowerment
28. Mothers on the Move
29. Mirabal Sisters Cultural and Community Center
30. Girls for Gender Equity
31. African Services Committee

Appendix D: Final Campaign Platform

CAMPAIGN For BETTER SCHOOLS

RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE NEW YORK STATE LEGISLATURE ON GOVERNANCE OF THE NEW YORK CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT

The Campaign for Better Schools is a diverse coalition of more than two dozen parent, youth, community based and education advocacy organizations from all five boroughs of New York City. The Campaign for Better Schools supports the concept of Mayoral Control, but disagrees with the way it has been implemented. The reforms and policies that have been put in place as a result of mayoral control have not led to the turn-around of schools in some of New York City's highest-need communities. For instance, the achievement gap between African American and Latino students and white students in obtaining Regents diplomas has not budged, and graduation rates for immigrant students learning English has actually dipped under mayoral control. In addition, mayoral control has led to parents, students and communities being shut out of important decisions that affect the quality of education students receive.

The reforms outlined in this proposal will make mayoral control of schools workable by strengthening the decision making process by which education policies and reforms are developed, and by restoring the trust that families and communities put in the school system. These recommendations were developed through a rigorous, year-long process that involved numerous discussions with national and local education experts, and parent, student and community organizations in neighborhoods throughout New York City. It is a community-driven proposal, developed by parents, youth and community groups.

CHECKS & BALANCES

Panel for Education Policy (PEP)⁹²

The PEP should have a narrow majority of members appointed by the City Council or other elected officials, and a minority of members appointed by the mayor.

PEP members should serve for set terms of a relatively short duration (3 years or less) and have full voting rights.

The PEP should select a Chair who sets meeting agendas

Chancellor

The mayor should appoint the Schools Chancellor

The Chancellor should not be a voting member of the PEP, but may serve as an ex-officio member.

The Chancellor's power to issue rules and regulations should be subject to existing laws requiring public notice and opportunity for public comment prior to issue.

Criteria and Selection of PEP Members

The PEP should be diverse geographically (representatives from all boroughs).

⁹² The Panel for Education Policy is the legal entity known as the Board of Education in state law.

The members of the PEP should reflect the school system’s diversity.

The PEP must include multiple community representatives. Community representatives should be defined as parents, students and representatives of community based organizations.

Powers of the PEP

The Chancellor should have the power to propose the Department of Education’s (DOE) operating budget and the five-year capital plan. The PEP should have approval power over the annual DOE operating budget and five-year capital plan.

The Chancellor should propose changes in education policies. The PEP shall have the power to approve all chancellor-proposed decisions about standards, policies, objectives, and regulations related to educational achievement, student performance and school safety.

The PEP should approve large DOE procurement contracts.

PEP Operations

The PEP should operate with an open public process. As such all PEP meetings should be held publicly, on a regular monthly basis. All decisions should be made publicly, by roll call vote. Notices and agendas of PEP meetings should be widely disseminated publicly, in multiple languages, at least two weeks in advance. PEP meetings should be held in venues large enough to accommodate large public attendance and appropriate interpretation services shall be provided at all meetings. The PEP should solicit public comment on all voting issues.

The PEP should be given resources for its own staff so that it can adequately prepare for meetings.

TRANSPARENCY

The Independent Budget Office (IBO) should be given legal authority to report on all aspects of the City school district including DOE’s finances, school performance, student achievement, student safety and shared decision making at the school level.

Sufficient funding should be provided to the Independent Budget Office to support their new monitoring and reporting functions.

The IBO should:

- Be guaranteed full and timely access to all NYC DOE data;
- Annually compile, produce, and widely disseminate school system student demographics and achievement outcomes, as well as annual analyses of school system resource allocation and fiscal expenditure;
- Use methodologies, benchmarks and indicators recommended by national agencies and expert researchers to produce the annual set of required data reports, and make their methodologies, benchmarks and indicators public;
- Carry out annual analyses of critical school system education policy issues and issue their findings in widely disseminated public reports.

The law should be clarified to make the DOE’s finances completely open and available to the City Comptroller for financial oversight and auditing purposes.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Center for Parent and Student Service and Empowerment

An independent, publicly funded, Center for Parent and Student Service and Empowerment should be created to outreach, train, and support parents and students in New York City Schools.

Structure:

- Publicly Funded

Research for Action

- Independent of DOE

Responsibilities should include leadership development, such as:

- Providing training and ongoing support for current members of Parent Associations (PA), School Leadership Teams (SLT), Community District Education Councils (CDEC), District Leadership Teams (DLT), the Citywide Council on High Schools (CCHS), and the Citywide Council on Special Education (CCSE); topics should include:
 - a) *baseline knowledge of*: central DOE structure and operations, school budget procedures, state and city structures and policies that impact education; and
 - b) *skills-building*: meeting facilitation, tools for parent outreach and leadership development.
- Conducting outreach to parents and students on the process for getting involved in these bodies and other basic tools for navigating the school system;
- Providing capacity building opportunities for parent coordinators;
- Holding conferences and events to educate parents and students about how to get more involved

School Level

The role of parents and high school students, on the school leadership teams should be strengthened. Student representatives should be selected through vote of student body.

Principals should be required to develop school based budgets in consultation with School Leadership Teams and ensure that budgets are aligned with schools' Comprehensive Education Plans (CEP).

Principals should be required to hold public meetings to report on school finances and student performance, and to discuss plans for meeting CEP benchmarks and budget targets.

As in past C-30 processes at the school level, parents, high school students and others, including community stakeholders should be authorized and empowered to interview and make recommendations for candidates for principal and assistant principal.

District Level

District superintendents should be responsible for supervising principals and providing administrative oversight of schools in their district. They should have access to all schools in their district as well as access to all school records to carry out their evaluations effectively.

Superintendents should be empowered to address issues regarding school choice, discipline (suspensions, expulsions, etc), language access (parents, ELL students), special needs, and shared decision-making.

Superintendents should hold public meetings to report on district performance and discuss plans for improvement of district schools.

The Chancellor should appoint district superintendents in consultation with the Community District Education Council (CDEC), Presidents' Council and District Leadership Team.

District superintendents should be supported by sufficient staff to carry out their duties.

The Citywide Council on High Schools should be codified in state law, as are the thirty-two Community District Education Councils and the Citywide Council on Special Education.

A process of opening, closing, re-siting and re-configuring of any school in a community school district, in which:

- a. DOE must give reasonable notice of its intent to open, close, or re-site any school to the CDEC and the CCHS (in cases involving high schools) or the CCSE (in cases involving District 75 schools);
- b. an impact study and needs assessment is prepared by the DOE and submitted within a reasonable timeframe to the CDEC and the CCHS or CCSE where applicable, detailing the necessity for the opening, closing, or re-siting action;

- c. a public hearing is called and held by the CDEC and the CCHS or CCSE where applicable, with reasonable public notice, to discuss the DOE's proposal, needs assessment and the implications and impacts of the proposed action;
- d. a vote of approval or disapproval of the proposed action is held by the CDEC and the CCHS or CCSE where applicable;
- e. an appeal to the PEP may be made, by either the Dept. of Education or one member of the PEP;
- f. a final decision, of approval or disapproval of the proposed action, is made by the PEP in public session.