



June 5, 2015

Mayor Bill de Blasio  
City Hall  
New York, NY 10007

Dear Mayor de Blasio:

You made a pledge, both before your election and after becoming Mayor, to add Lunar New Year to the school calendar as a holiday. That's why -- as a group of community advocates and elected officials representing areas where many of those we serve celebrate this holiday -- we were surprised when you released the 2015-16 school calendar in March without the inclusion of Lunar New Year.

We were encouraged when you agreed to have members of your Administration meet with some of the elected officials undersigned on this letter. It was also a positive signal that, coming out of the meeting, your Administration agreed to a detailed Department of Education (DOE) analysis on including Lunar New Year as a school holiday, and agreed to address the issue again in May.

We respectfully request that your Administration meet with us to discuss the results of the promised DOE analysis and the possibility of Lunar New Year being a school holiday in the upcoming 2015-16 school year. Please consider that Lunar New Year falls on a school day next year on Monday, February 8, 2016, and it is unlikely to do so again until 2018.

We reiterate to you the importance of adding Lunar New Year as a school holiday. Asian-American students comprise approximately 15 percent of all public school students. As your policy stands today, children must miss class when celebrating their most important cultural celebration. That's why absentee rates in some schools have been reported to be as high as 80 percent on Lunar New Year.

Thank you for your renewed attention to this matter. We look forward to sitting down with your Administration to review the DOE analysis, and to make progress on adding Lunar New Year as a school holiday for the 2015-16 calendar.

Sincerely,

Daniel Squadron  
State Senator

Ron Kim  
State Assemblymember

Grace Meng  
Congressmember

Margaret S. Chin  
Councilmember

Steve Israel  
Congressmember

Carolyn Maloney  
Congressmember

Jerrold Nadler  
Congressmember

Nydia Velazquez  
Congresswoman

Eric Adams  
Brooklyn Borough President

Gale A. Brewer  
Manhattan Borough President

Martin J. Golden  
State Senator

Toby Ann Stavisky  
State Senator

Edward C. Braunstein  
Assemblymember

Michael G. DenDekker  
Assemblymember

Francisco P. Moya  
Assemblymember

Dan Quart  
Assemblymember

Nily Rozic  
Assemblymember

Sheldon Silver  
Assemblymember

Michaëlle Solages  
Assemblymember

Peter Koo  
City Councilmember

American Legion, Lt. B.R. Kimlau Post 1291

Asian American Federation

Asian Americans for Equality

Better Chinatown USA

Chinatown Partnership

Chinese American Planning Council

Chinese Chamber of Commerce

Chinese Consolidated Benevolent Association

Chinese Freemasons

Chinese Progressive Association

Coalition for Asian American Children and Families

Flushing Business Improvement District

Flushing Chinese Business Association

Hotel Chinese Association

Korean American Community Services

Lin Sing Association

Manhattan Community Board 3

Museum of Chinese in America

Myanmar Chinese Association of New York

Organization of Chinese Americans - New York Chapter

United Fujianese American Association

Yee Fong Toy Association