



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Brad Hoylman-Sigal

Dino-mite News! Senator Hoylman-Sigal, Assembly Member Rosenthal & Council Member Brewer Announce that American Museum of Natural History will Serve as Early Voting Site

Senator Brad Hoylman-Sigal, Assemblymember Linda Rosenthal, Council Member Gale Brewer

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Local Elected Officials Lead Effort to Alleviate Disruptions that Impacted Students When the William O'Shea Educational Campus Was Used for Early Voting

NEW YORK — After receiving a [request](#) from New York State Senator Brad Hoylman-Sigal (D/WFP-Manhattan), Assembly Member Linda Rosenthal (D/WFP-Manhattan), and Council Member Gale Brewer (D-Manhattan), the American Museum of Natural History (AMNH) has enthusiastically agreed to serve as an early voting site, beginning with the upcoming primary elections in June.

Currently, the area's early voting site is the William O'Shea complex, home to 1500 public school students from three schools, M.S. 247 (Dual Language Middle School), M.S. 245 (the Computer School), and P.S. 334 (the Anderson School). Parents had expressed concerns that using the schools for early voting presented safety and logistical issues that were harming the student population. Voting typically took place in the schools cafeterias, leaving the cafeterias unable to properly serve the students. Parents reported that students were unable to eat hot food the week of early voting and that some students were even forced to eat in the hallways in unsanitary conditions. Relocating the early voting site to AMNH, right across the street from the schools, will ensure that this section of the Upper West Side continues to have access to a convenient and accessible early voting site, without disrupting necessary lunchtime socialization or school safety for the students of the three schools.

Senator Brad Hoylman-Sigal said: “This news is dino-mite! Thanks to the generosity of AMNH, no longer will hundreds of public school students be forced to share their busy school day with an early voting location at the William O’Shea educational campus because the museum has agreed to become an early voting location starting this June. I’m grateful to the teachers, parents and administrators for raising this issue and especially AMNH President Sean Decatur and the NYC Board of Elections, along with my colleagues Assembly Member Rosenthal and Council Member Brewer, for their community partnership in making this new early-voting site possible.”

"When in need, you can always count on the American Museum of Natural History (AMNH) to come to the rescue," **said Assembly Member Linda B. Rosenthal.** "While tens of thousands of West Siders proudly head to the polls during election season, it is critical to remember that our civic duty should never conflict or create safety problems for the hundreds of students who spend their days at the William O'Shea Campus, which has been used as an early voting site for years. That is why I am grateful to AMNH President Sean Decatur, the board and museum staff for responding to our neighborly call and for transforming their space into an early voting site for West Siders. This move will positively impact our constituents, while also providing our students (and their parents!) with the peace of mind they deserve during the school day."

"I'm grateful that AMNH has responded to our call for help and stepped in to host an early-voting site," **said Council Member Gale A. Brewer.** "This is a win for schools during the ten-day early voting period and a win for West Siders who want to vote early, and the Museum gets good-citizenship karma, too!"

"In addition to being a place of science, education, and engagement, the American Museum of Natural History is an important civic resource for our community, so we are particularly excited about the opportunity to serve as a voting site and to provide a convenient and accessible way for our neighbors to exercise their fundamental democratic right," **said Sean M. Decatur, President of the American Museum of Natural History.** "We have a long tradition of partnership with our State, City, and community leaders to serve New York and New Yorkers, which recently included serving as a COVID-19 vaccination site, and we appreciate the efforts of State Senator Brad Hoylman-Sigal, Assemblymember Linda Rosenthal, and City Councilmember Gale Brewer in bringing this important new opportunity to fruition."

Jodi Hyde, Principal of the Anderson School, said: "I want to express my sincere gratitude to Senator Brad Holyman-Sigal, Assemblymember Linda Rosenthal, and City Council Member Gale Brewer for their advocacy, empathy, and care for the students in the O'Shea Campus. Thank you to our special friends at the American Museum of Natural History for listening to the concerns of a neighbor and for their enormous generosity and compassion within this community. Relocating early voting to the museum will support the voting members of the community while ensuring the nutritional and safety needs of the 1200 students in our building, ages four to 14."

Sarah Babcock, Co-President of Computer School PA, said: "We are delighted by the responsiveness of our representatives and the AMNH to the concerns of our school administration, teachers and parents! Moving early voting from our cafeteria helps ensure the safety of the 1000+ students in the William J. O'Shea Campus and enables students to return to the cafeteria for breakfast, lunch, and afterschool."

Melissa Mercado, Parent of a DLMS student, said: "I'm glad to hear early voting will be moved to the Museum of Natural History! Early voting at our school disrupts students from their usual day. Not being able to eat in the cafeteria or use it for early arrival is an inconvenience for all. Working in a school myself, I believe it's extra work for the cafeteria staff as well and there are added security concerns with strangers coming in and out of the school. With early voting moved to the Museum of Natural History, not only are these concerns addressed but more people will enjoy the beauty of that building and discover amazing history!"

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