



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Pedro Espada Jr.

State Senate Majority Conference Urges City to Improve School Governance

PEDRO ESPADA, JR. July 23, 2009

For Immediate Release: July 23, 2009

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(New York, NY) State Senate leaders joined dozens of parents from across the city on the steps of City Hall to urge Mayor Bloomberg to support legislation that would include parental involvement and training.

“Parents play a decisive role in the educational outcomes of their children,” said Senate Majority Leader Pedro Espada, Jr. (D-Bronx). “Even when our schools were performing at their lowest point, we witnessed the power of parental involvement, which can be the difference between an enriching experience and failure for students. Parental involvement is the single most powerful factor in children’s education, more so than policy, edicts and even resources. Just like Sonia Sotomayor’s mother played a key role in her educational achievements, every parent of every child in the city’s public schools have the same opportunity and responsibility to do

the same for their children. We must empower them so they can help their children achieve.”

Senate Democrats have proposed changes to the Assembly Bill on school governance, including a new parent training institute, promotion of the arts, and a council to monitor police in the schools.

“I join with my colleagues in the New York State Senate in sending a very clear message, said Senator Hiram Monserrate (D-Corona). “New York needs a new school governance plan that truly empowers parents and delivers the highest level of education possible to New York’s more than 1.1 million public school children.”

“It’s time to move away from war of words surrounding the school governance issue and to move forward with the Senate’s goal of crafting legislation that improves the transparency and accountability of the Department of Education, including giving parents the essential voice in the governance of our schools,” said Senator Carl Kruger (D-Brooklyn).

“As a parent, I understand the importance of parents being involved in the education of their children,” said Senator Shirley L. Huntley (D-Jamaica).

“This is about increasing the access and accountability for 1.1 million school children and their parents.”

“Increasing parents' involvement in their children's schools should not be a point of contention,” said Senator Eric Adams (D-Brooklyn). “Alleged gains in New York City schools must be analyzed by an independent entity, and this should not be a point of contention. We cannot be satisfied.

We must make the necessary changes so our kids in NYC can compete with kids in Budapest and the students of New York can compete with the students of New Zealand. We must insist on a well-rounded education, more oversight, and the participation of concerned parents and educators. Then we will see true improvements in test scores, graduation rates, and dropout statistics. All powers, at all levels of government, have certain checks on them, and school governance should be refined further and further to provide the best education we can to our children.”

“After two years of calling for Chancellor Joel Klein's resignation for the lousy job this Administration is doing to educate our children, New York City Comptroller Bill Thompson has joined me,” said Senator Ruben Diaz, Sr.(D-Bronx). “I am hopeful that Bill Thompson will not be the only one who will join me. It's never too late to open our eyes and see the truth.”

The Senators were joined by parent groups from the Bronx, Brooklyn, and Queens.

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