



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Daniel L. Squadron

Squadron, Meng Reiterate Call: Allow Students to Celebrate Lunar New Year WITH Their Families

DANIEL L. SQUADRON February 22, 2012

| ISSUE: **CONSTITUENTS CORNER**

Legislators Urge Mayor to Swap Former Brooklyn-Queens Day Professional Development Day for One on Lunar New Year

NEW YORK – Today, State Senator Daniel Squadron and Assemblymember Grace Meng reiterated their call for a New York City public school holiday or professional development day on the Asian Lunar New Year, urging Mayor Bloomberg to swap the professional development day on what was formerly Brooklyn-Queens Day for one on the first day of the Lunar New Year.

Last month, the legislators urged the City to allow the growing number of Asian American students in the public school system to celebrate the holiday with their families by creating a school holiday or professional development day. Currently, a student who celebrates the holiday receives an ‘excused’ absence – but it remains an absence on the student’s record and results in the student missing class.

On the first day of the Lunar New Year this year (January 23rd), a number of schools throughout the City reported dramatically higher absence rates than usual. P.S. 130 in Manhattan reported an absence rate of approximately 80 percent, compared to a typical rate

of under two percent.

Today, in a letter to Mayor Bloomberg (below), Squadron and Meng wrote, “We understand and agree with concerns about losing a day on the school calendar. That is why we’re urging you to take the professional development day that is currently held on what was formerly Brooklyn-Queens Day, and move it to the first day of the Lunar New Year.”

“This solution would ensure that the growing number of Asian American students in New York City public schools are able to celebrate this most important holiday with their families, without losing a day from the school calendar.”

###