



Draft

Community Education Council District 23 (CEC23)

Draft Minutes

Calendar and Business Meeting

Date: September 14, 2026

Time: 6:12 PM – 8:04 PM

Location: Hybrid Meeting (In Person and Virtual)

Calendar Meeting

Call to Order and Roll Call

President Elcock called the Calendar Meeting to order at 6:12 PM.

Present: Elcock, Farrell, Pitta, Romero-Powell, Ruiz, Stewart, Tucker.

Absent: Garcia

President Report/Opening Remarks

President Elcock welcomed families, educators, school leaders, community partners, and students to the 2026–2027 school year. On behalf of CEC23, she extended well wishes for a successful academic year and reaffirmed the Council's commitment to advocating for students, supporting families, strengthening community engagement, and promoting educational excellence throughout District 23.

District and Brooklyn North Updates

The Council recognized and welcomed:

- Dr. Neil Harris, newly appointed Deputy Superintendent of Brooklyn North High Schools.
- Brooklyn North's continued expansion to 49 high schools.
- Brooklyn North's reported 93% graduation rate.

- New District 23 school leaders:
 - Kamar Hamilton, Interim Acting Principal, PS 671
 - Felicia Baptiste, Interim Acting Principal, PS 150
 - Alonzo Bell, Acting Principal, PS 668

Appointment of New Council Member

The Council conducted a roll-call vote to fill a vacant Parent Member seat.

Candidate: Melissa Taylor

Roll-Call Vote Results

- Yes: 7
- No: 0
- Abstentions: 0

Motion Passed.

Melissa Taylor was sworn in and officially seated as a voting member of CEC23.

Superintendent's Report (Dr. Kirkland)

School Opening Update

District leadership visited schools during the opening weeks of the school year to assess staffing and facility readiness.

Key highlights included:

- Minimal teacher vacancies across District 23.
- Positive reports regarding building readiness and custodial services.
- No significant facility issues impacting instructional operations.

Dr. Kirkland praised school leaders and staff for ensuring a smooth start to the school year.

Student and Community Supports

Dr. Kirkland shared that the district recently experienced two tragic incidents affecting school communities. District personnel were deployed to provide counseling and support services to impacted students, families, and staff. The Superintendent emphasized the importance of strong school culture and responsive support systems during times of crisis.

Academic Performance Update

English Language Arts (ELA)

District proficiency rates were reported as:

Year	2024	2025	2026
ELA Proficiency	35.2%	48.6%	42.4%

The most significant declines occurred in Grades 3 and 6.

Mathematics

District mathematics performance remained above 2024 levels despite a slight decline from 2025.

The largest decreases were also observed in Grades 3 and 6.

Dr. Kirkland noted that future District Comprehensive Educational Plan (DCEP) goals will be adjusted based on data review and feedback from the New York City Department of Education.

Attendance Update

District attendance rates remained relatively stable:

Year	2024	2025	2026
Attendance Rate	88%	89%	89%

However, districtwide attendance on the first Friday of school was reported at approximately 84%.

The Superintendent emphasized that improving attendance remains one of the district's highest priorities.

Key points included:

- Schools with the lowest attendance rates also recorded the lowest ELA performance.
- Early absenteeism can contribute to chronic absenteeism throughout the school year.

- Schools are increasing communication with families about the importance of regular attendance.

District Priorities for 2026–2027

District priorities include:

- Improving attendance outcomes
- Reducing chronic absenteeism
- Increasing family engagement
- Strengthening school culture
- Supporting students' social-emotional well-being
- Improving academic achievement in literacy and mathematics

The Superintendent stressed the importance of creating welcoming school environments and ensuring every child feels connected to a trusted adult in the building.

District Initiatives and Events

Highlights included:

- A district orientation event welcoming approximately 60 new teachers.
- Ongoing planning for a District 23 Town Hall.
- Dads Take Your Child to School Day:
 - September 17, 2026 and October 7, 2026

Enrollment Update

Preliminary enrollment figures indicate a decline in student enrollment across District 23 compared to the previous school year, particularly within middle schools. Final enrollment figures are expected later in the fall.

Council Questions

Gifted and Talented Programs

Council member (Pitts) requested information regarding the continuation of Gifted and Talented (G&T) programs within District 23.

Dr. Kirkland explained that participating schools continue to operate G&T programs; however, enrollment levels and funding limitations have presented challenges for some schools in maintaining separate classrooms.

The Superintendent noted that sustainable enrollment remains critical to preserving specialized programming.

Parent Engagement

Council members discussed strategies to improve family engagement and strengthen school-community partnerships.

The Council expressed interest in future discussions with school principals regarding:

- Family engagement practices
- School climate
- Parent participation opportunities
- Communication between schools and families

Artificial Intelligence (AI)

Discussion focused on the increasing use of Artificial Intelligence in education.

Topics included:

- Distinctions between generative AI and adaptive instructional technology.
- Citywide efforts to reduce screen time for younger students.
- Appropriate educational uses of AI tools to support instruction.
- Concerns regarding student creativity and overreliance on AI-generated content.

Literacy and Reading Achievement

Council members raised concerns regarding declining Grade 6 ELA outcomes.

Dr. Kirkland discussed the importance of:

- Increasing student exposure to full-length novels and books.
- Encouraging sustained independent reading.
- Building reading stamina and comprehension skills.
- Reducing reliance on short-form digital content.

Public Comment

Office of Council Member Chris Banks

A representative from Council Member Chris Banks' Office shared information regarding:

- Distribution of more than 2,000 backpacks throughout the community.
- Constituent services are available to families.
- Advocacy efforts concerning student transportation concerns.
- Upcoming employment and housing-related resources.

Office of State Senator Roxanne Persaud

A representative from Senator Persaud's Office welcomed families back to school and reaffirmed the office's commitment to supporting District 23 students and families.

Panel for Educational Policy (PEP)

Maddy Fox, member of the Panel for Educational Policy, introduced herself and encouraged District 23 families to engage in upcoming PEP meetings and public comment opportunities.

Community Board 16

Community Board 16 representatives shared information regarding the annual Statement of District Needs process and encouraged participation to help identify school facility and capital improvement priorities.

Adjournment

First by Ruiz, seconded by Romero-Powell

Business Meeting

Following a brief recess, the Business Meeting was called to order at 7:26pm

Present: Elcock, Farrell, Pitta, Romero-Powell, Ruiz, Stewart, Taylor, Tucker.

Absent: Garcia

Approval of Minutes

Council members reviewed August meeting minutes.

Corrections were made and accepted.

Motion to approve the minutes as amended passed unanimously.

Treasurer's Report

The Treasurer's Report was presented and reviewed.

Budget categories included:

- Website expenses - \$2400 / \$0
- Member reimbursements - \$14,400/\$12,390
- Legislative Breakfast allocations - \$2100/\$2100
- Refreshments - \$2300/\$1890
- Supplies - \$3300/\$3300
- P-Card - \$500/\$500

Treasurer's Report approved.

Council Vacancies

The Council reported the following vacancies:

- Two Parent Member seats
- One English Language Learner (ELL) Member seat

Discussion also included plans to recruit student representatives for the 2026–2027 school year.

New Council Member Orientation

Council Member Melissa Taylor received information regarding:

- Attendance requirements
- Council bylaws
- Committee assignments

- School liaison responsibilities
- Council communication procedures

Committee Updates

Planning Committee

Updates included:

- District Town Hall planning
- Legislative Breakfast Planning
- Upcoming district collaboration opportunities

Policy Committee

Updates included:

- Bylaw review
- Resolution development
- Legislative and policy issues affecting education

School Liaison Assignments

Council members reviewed liaison assignments and responsibilities, including:

- School Leadership Team participation
- PTA engagement
- School visits
- Capital planning walkthroughs
- Community outreach efforts

New Business

Council members discussed:

- Parent engagement priorities for the 2026–2027 school year.

- Upcoming FACE meetings.
- School introduction letters for liaison assignments.
- Planning for future district and community events.

Adjournment

First by Stewart, seconded by Ruiz.

The meeting adjourned at **8:04 PM**.

Next Meeting

October 5, 2026 AT 6pm

Community Education Council District 23

Draft Minutes – Pending Approval