



CITY OF NEW YORK

MANHATTAN COMMUNITY BOARD No. 4

330 West 42nd Street, 26th floor New York, NY 10036
tel: 212-736-4536 fax: 212-947-9512
www.ManhattanCB4.org

WALTER MANKOFF
Chair

ANTHONY M. BORELLI
District Manager

May 31, 2005

Chancellor Joel Klein
NYC Department of Education
52 Chambers Street
New York, NY 10007

Re: New York City Museum School

Dear Chancellor Klein,

Manhattan Community Board No. 4 has always been committed to the concept of public education. We are particularly pleased to have several high functioning public schools in our neighborhood.

Precisely because they do serve the surrounding neighborhood, these schools provide a unique experience of bringing together children of very different social, ethnic, and economic backgrounds.

In this light, we are very concerned about changes that have been proceeding with regard to the Museum School at 333 West 17th Street; the middle school is already in the process of being phased out and we are uncertain about plans for the high school component. This school has had a high success rate in terms of student graduation and Regents grades. Children from the Fulton Houses, between 16th and 18th Streets, Ninth to Tenth Avenues, and the Elliott-Chelsea Houses between 22nd and 24th Streets, Ninth to Tenth Avenues, have benefited greatly from this learning opportunity.

There apparently has been a sharp decline in funding for this school. Over the course of the past 2 years, the Museum School funding from the DOE has been reduced by about \$400,000. The withdrawal of the Department of Education support, evidenced by ending the funding for the Museum Director, suggests that rumors of a phase out are not without foundation.

The phasing out of the middle school is especially distressing to us because, as a result of a series of unfortunate decisions over the past 8 years, this would mean there is finally no public middle school at all in or within walking distance of this community. IS70, which used to occupy the same building now home to the Museum School, was closed when PS33 was converted to PS/IS33, a decision which is now being reversed as that school returns to functioning as an elementary school only.

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We don't know how common it is in the city to have a neighborhood with a significant number of middle-school age children but no middle-school. This is especially ironic, given that pending rezonings will bring a significant number of additional families with school-age children into this neighborhood in the coming years.

We would appreciate it if you or your designated representative could attend our next meeting in order to clarify these very important issues which will impact on the children in our community.

Sincerely,



Walter Mankoff
Chair

Millie Glaberman
Co-chair
Quality of Life Committee

Jean Daniel Noland
Co-chair
Quality of Life Committee

Cc: Councilmember Eva Moskowitz
Councilmember Christine Quinn
other local elected officials

