

August 10, 2026

CEC 30 Calendar, & Business Meeting Minutes

Location: The District 30 Office: 28-11 Queens Plaza North, Long Island City, NY 11101 (Hybrid)

Calendar Meeting

Call to Order: 6:37 PM

Roll Call:

Linda Chung-Leung: Absent
Alexis Kaloyanides: Present
Danielle Lopresti-Lee: Present
Victoria Medelius: Present
Estela Nguema: Present -Virtual
Marlene Rossi: Present
Nadeea Saeed: Absent
Laura Simpson: Present
Whitney Toussaint: Present
Xochitl Cohen-Garcia: Present-Virtual
Kayla Spence: Present

First Public Agenda and Speaking Time

Crystal Cleveland, a District 30 parent, discussed concerns regarding educational technology, artificial intelligence, and screen use in schools. She stated that she had recently helped organize a coalition of parents concerned about these issues. Crystal raised concerns regarding students reportedly being able to access YouTube on school-issued devices, including through web browsers. She questioned what safeguards were in place and how families could report instances in which students were able to access platforms that were not intended for student use.

Julia Foreman, a parent of an incoming kindergartner at PS 150Q, spoke about the importance of direct interaction between young children, teachers, and classmates. She discussed how children develop communication and social-emotional skills through face-to-face interaction and expressed concern about individual device use in the early grades. She stated that her family had intentionally limited one-to-one device use and expressed support for Resolution 209.

Adriana Alicea, the Queens CEC representative to the Panel for Educational Policy (PEP), encouraged families to attend the upcoming PEP meeting September 26 located at MS131 at 6pm and raise concerns regarding artificial intelligence, one-to-one devices, and other educational technology issues. Speaking separately in her personal capacity as a parent, Adriana discussed her own family's concerns regarding student device use and parents' ability to establish boundaries regarding technology use at school.

Through the Q&A, Adriana encouraged parents to provide information regarding schools where students reportedly had access to YouTube so those concerns could be raised further at her email alicea6@schools.nyc.gov.

Office of District Planning Presentation

Julian Cianzarusso, Director of Queens Planning, and Rhea Cumberbatch, Associate Director of District Planning for Queens, presented on behalf of the Office of District Planning (ODP). They reviewed the district planning process, enrollment and utilization trends, future school capacity, and rezoning procedures.

ODP reviewed Chancellor's Regulation A-190, which governs significant changes in school utilization, including co-locations, school relocations, grade expansions, mergers, openings, and closures. These proposals require an Educational Impact Statement (EIS), public review, and ultimately a vote by the Panel for Educational Policy (PEP). The approved expansion of PS 384 from K-5 to K-8 was cited as an example.

ODP also reviewed Chancellor's Regulation A-185, which governs school rezonings. Unlike A-190 proposals, rezoning proposals are voted on by the Community Education Council (CEC) following community engagement and review of factors such as enrollment, overcrowding, transportation, neighborhood boundaries, and accessibility.

ODP reported that District 30 enrollment declined over the previous five years. Approximately 72% of District 30 K-5 residents attend District 30 schools, compared with 53% citywide, while approximately 69% of District 30 middle school residents remain in District 30 schools, compared with 48% citywide. Districtwide data showed the greatest excess elementary capacity in Woodside/Sunnyside and the greatest excess middle school capacity in Long Island City/Ravenswood.

ODP reviewed two new District 30 school buildings: Parcel C, expected to open in September 2027 with 547 seats, and Court Square, expected to open in September 2028 with 547 seats. PS 384 will phase in its K-8 expansion and is expected to operate across its current building and Parcel C. A new elementary school will open in a temporary location before moving to Court Square in 2028.

ODP also reported an increase in District 75 students and a current deficit of District 75 elementary and middle school seats. Both Parcel C and Court Square are expected to include District 75 capacity.

During questions, William Hates asked that sibling grandfathering protections remain part of any future rezoning.

Catherine Bezik, A Long Island City/Court Square parent asked for more neighborhood-specific data reflecting rapid residential growth. ODP stated that future Long Island City rezoning discussions would include more localized data.

Leona -Q&A question asked whether Q300 could eventually be housed in one building. ODP stated that the request is known and continues to be considered, but any relocation would require sufficient space without negatively affecting other schools.

Ms. Lisa Hidalgo, District 30 Community Superintendent's Report

Superintendent Lisa Hidalgo addressed concerns regarding student screen and device use, emphasizing that District 30 prioritizes student engagement and direct interaction. She stated that technology should support instruction rather than replace it and may be used for I-Ready, required assessments, projects, collaboration, presentations, and digital portfolios. She encouraged families with concerns about excessive device use at specific schools to contact the district.

Superintendent Hidalgo congratulated more than 50 summer school graduates and thanked school staff, CBOs, and Summer Rising partners. She reminded families that the first day of school is September 10, 2026, and announced the District 30 Back-to-School Event on September 1, 2026, from 2:00–5:00 p.m. at IS 145 in Jackson Heights.

Alexis Kaloyanides shared that her first grader, who was entering second grade, used i-Ready daily at school and was also assigned approximately 15 minutes each night at home. Her family opted out of the at home i-Ready work and instead used paper-based activities and additional reading. Alexis emphasized the importance of children physically writing, taking notes, annotating, and working through math problems on paper, and also raised concern that her young child had previously been able to access YouTube on a school-issued device.

Laura Simpson shared that her child's experience with technology had been very different, with limited screen use and mostly printed homework. She noted that families at nearby District 30 schools reported significantly more device use, including children reading apps and spending extended periods on screens, and expressed concern about the lack of consistency between schools. Laura emphasized the continued importance of basic skills such as reading, writing, and handwriting.

Xochitl Cohen-Garcia discussed concerns about students using school issued iPads during after-school homework periods, when staff may not always be able to monitor whether students are actually completing assignments. She supported families having access to devices when needed but suggested that receiving a device could be treated more as an opt-in rather than an opt-out, and also raised concerns about technical

support, the cost and effectiveness of i-Ready, and whether more resources should instead support teachers and classroom staffing.

Marlene Rossi raised concerns about devices being used during indoor recess when students could not go outside because of weather or other conditions. She described students sitting in an auditorium on devices rather than interacting with one another and stated that screen time should not replace recess, socialization, and opportunities for children to engage with their peers.

Whitney Toussaint discussed the issue from an equity perspective, noting that some schools have PTAs that can afford board games, sports equipment, books, and other enrichment activities, while other schools may not have the same resources and therefore rely more heavily on DOE-provided devices. She encouraged the Council and district to find ways to provide more equitable access to non-digital enrichment and Alexis Kaloyanides noted that a District 30 school does not have a librarian.

Kayla asked whether families receive information at the beginning of the school year explaining what technology their children will use, why it was selected, its educational benefit, and approximately how much screen time to expect. Superintendent Hidalgo agreed that clearer communication would be helpful and stated that she would encourage school leaders to include this information during Meet the Teacher and other beginning-of-year communication.

Wendy Biscoby, a District 30 parent with children at PS 398, questioned why device practices appeared different between District 30 and District 1, where she had been told younger students did not routinely receive devices unless families requested them. She also discussed her son's experience with i-Ready and MTSS, expressing concern that students working above grade level could spend independent instructional time on devices while other groups worked directly with teachers. Wendy suggested investing in more adults in classrooms so all groups could receive direct instructional support; Superintendent Hidalgo stated that she would follow up with Principal Fitzgerald regarding the concerns described.

Adriana Alicea, Queens CEC representative to the Panel for Educational Policy (PEP), asked whether District 30 could determine the average amount of time students spend on one-to-one devices during the school day so families would have clearer information about actual screen exposure. She also suggested that information about educational technology and its use could be included in a school's Comprehensive Education Plan (CEP) through the School Leadership Team (SLT). Superintendent Hidalgo stated that she would survey principals because practices vary by school.

Rhea Cumberbatch, Associate Director of District Planning for Queens, clarified that ODP focuses on districtwide enrollment, residential trends, and the use of space within school buildings. She explained that ODP does not track how much instructional time students

spend on individual devices and said that question would be better addressed by Superintendent Hidalgo, who had offered to survey principals about device use across District 30.

Megan Kelly Riley, a District 30 parent and longtime DOE special educator, questioned the amount of funding devoted to i-Ready, Amplify, Acadience, and individual devices and asked whether those expenses had affected budgets for physical books and other instructional resources. She emphasized that teachers can assess students through direct interaction and reading with them and asked about Scholastic News, Title I funding, and Title I Parent Advisory Councils (PACs) as ways to provide students with more physical reading materials.

Julia Foreman, parent of an incoming kindergartner at PS 150Q, asked Superintendent Hidalgo to explain the district's movement toward greater use of physical books and whether other instructional practices were changing in response to concerns about one-to-one devices. Superintendent Hidalgo stated that upcoming CEC meetings would include presentations on changes in literacy, mathematics, NYC Solves, and other instructional areas, and said the district was working toward having students use more physical books rather than relying solely on digital platforms.

Resolution 209 -Resolution to Establish Developmentally Appropriate Screen Time Limits in New York City Public Schools

Kayla Spence read Resolution 209, which calls on New York City Public Schools to establish a systemwide screen-time policy promoting developmentally appropriate technology use. The resolution emphasizes that technology should enhance, rather than replace, direct instruction, discussion, writing, hands-on learning, and peer collaboration. It calls for reducing routine individual device use in kindergarten through fifth grade, except when necessary for accessibility, emergencies, or specific instructional purposes, and for providing families with greater transparency and options to request reduced screen exposure or alternative paper-based instruction.

Laura Simpson expressed strong support for the resolution, stating that it was timely and needed. She noted that even though she was not involved in the parent WhatsApp groups discussing the issue, families had independently raised concerns with her throughout the year. She said CEC 30 had an opportunity to do the right thing and potentially establish a standard that other districts across the city could follow.

Alexis Kaloyanides thanked Kayla Spence and Nadeea Saeed for authoring the resolution and agreed that it was coming at the right time. Alexis attended a Panel for Educational Policy meeting where middle school students spoke against the use of AI in classrooms, noting that it was significant to hear students who grew up with technology themselves saying that its use had gone too far. Alexis noted that some progressive schools promote themselves specifically as having limited or no screen use.

Xochitl Cohen-Garcia expressed support for the resolution and emphasized that concerns about screen use are based on research showing potential learning deficits associated with one-to-one devices. She stressed the importance of reconsidering how technology is used in classrooms and ensuring that students continue to have access to traditional learning practices, including physical books and direct instruction.

Victoria Medelius expressed support for Resolution 209 and encouraged families to continue bringing concerns about screen time and technology, including the Panel for Educational Policy (PEP). She emphasized the importance of parent and community advocacy on these issues. Whitney Toussaint then echoed Victoria's comments and provided information about the upcoming PEP meeting and ways families could make their concerns heard. She noted that CEC 30 members regularly attend and speak at PEP meetings and encouraged families who cannot attend to contact the Council so their concerns can be brought forward.

During public comments, Crystal Cleveland stated her support for Resolution 209. She discussed observations she had made while touring schools and said the amount of screen use she observed affected how she ranked schools for her child, even when those schools were otherwise highly regarded. She acknowledged that families have different levels of privilege and ability to advocate or choose alternatives and emphasized that families struggling with excessive screen use should be supported. Crystal also discussed the advocacy efforts of her parent group, noting that the group had met with elected officials and engaged with the PEP since forming in May.

Anna Zarets raised concerns about the increasing use of screens in schools and specifically noted that mathematics curriculums and programs are increasingly being delivered online. She expressed her preference for students learning through physical books rather than primarily through computers.

Roll Call:

Linda Chung-Leung: Absent

Alexis Kaloyanides: Present

Danielle Lopresti-Lee: Infavor

Victoria Medelius: Infavor

Estela Nguema: Infavor -Virtual

Marlene Rossi: Infavor

Nadeea Saeed: Absent

Laura Simpson: Infavor

Whitney Toussaint: Infavor

Xochitl Cohen-Garcia: Infavor -Virtual

Kayla Spence: Infavor

Second Public Agenda and Speaking Time

Q&A comment asking how families could opt their children out of device use when some schools have said parental consent is not required. Superintendent Lisa Hidalgo responded that this would need to be discussed with principals so the district could collectively develop a system and structure for handling those requests.

Written comment from Adriana Elisea stated that i-Ready is currently the subject of a class-action lawsuit and called Resolution 209 a strong topic. She also raised the issue of obtaining information about how much money schools spend on technology/programs.

Katie Anskat, a high school teacher in District 28, expressed full support for Resolution 209. She raised concerns about inconsistencies across schools and districts regarding parents' ability to opt their children out of devices, state tests, and screeners. She said the lack of consistent policies creates confusion for both parents and educators and called for clearer, systemwide expectations.

Libby Brinkowski agreed that there should be consistent standards across schools and districts, particularly regarding parents' ability to opt their children in or out of device use. She said that when principals and superintendents handle parent requests differently, families receive conflicting information, which can undermine trust in schools and their leadership. She emphasized that these options should be standardized and should not depend on which school or district a family belongs to.

Announcements

The next CEC 30 Calendar Meeting was announced for Monday, September 14, at the District 30 Office, 28-11 Queens Plaza North, 5th Floor, with the option of attend via Zoom.

The next Panel for Educational Policy (PEP) meeting was announced for Wednesday, August 26 at 6:00 p.m. at MS 131, 100 Hester Street. Families who spoke during the meeting were encouraged to attend the PEP meeting and bring their concerns there as well.

An additional announcement highlighted the new Academy of Cultural Excellence (ACE). Families were encouraged to use the school's app/QR code to learn more about the school. Whitney Toussaint shared that she and Victoria Medelius had toured the school and highlighted its classrooms, curriculum planning, and opportunities for learning through play. She also noted that additional parent and school transportation information would be shared on the CEC 30 website.

Adjournment: 8:43 PM

Business Meeting

Call to Order: 8:59 PM

Roll Call:

Linda Chung-Leung: Absent
Alexis Kaloyanides: Present
Danielle Lopresti-Lee: Present
Victoria Medelius: Present
Estela Nguema: Present -Virtual
Marlene Rossi: Present
Nadeea Saeed: Absent
Laura Simpson: Present
Whitney Toussaint: Present
Xochitl Cohen-Garcia: Present-Virtual
Kayla Spence: Present

Reading and Approval of the July 2026 Minutes

Whitney Toussaint asked members whether they had any additional corrections or comments to the July 2026 Business Meeting minutes and reminded members to email any edits to Lesley A.A.

No additional corrections were raised during the meeting. The Council reached consensus to move to the next agenda item.

Committee Assignment Discussion

Whitney Toussaint announced the 2026–2027 committee chairs and co-chairs. She reminded members that, under the bylaws, Co-Presidents Whitney Toussaint and Victoria Medelius serve on every committee, but committee meetings should still proceed even if one or both Co-Presidents are unable to attend.

The committee leadership assignments were:

Bylaws Committee: Linda Chung- Leung and Kayla Spence, Co-Chairs

Educational Equity and Excellence (EEE) Committee: Alexis Kaloyanides, Chair

Special Education Committee: Estela Nguema, Chair

Zoning Committee: Whitney Toussaint and Victoria Medelius, Co-Chairs

Communications and Outreach Committee: Laura Simpson and Kayla Spence, Co-Chairs

Academic Advancement Committee: Xochitl Cohen-Garcia and Nadeea Saeed, Co-Chairs

District 30 Events Committee: Linda Chung- Leung and Victoria Medelius, Co-Chairs

Whitney reminded members that committee meetings are open to District 30 parents, school staff, parent coordinators, District Office staff, and other community participants.

Members interested in joining a committee were instructed to email the committee chair or co-chairs and copy Lesley so the committee list could be updated.

The deadline to submit initial committee selections was August 21, 2026. Whitney clarified that members could still join or leave committees later in the year; the deadline was intended to establish the initial roster so it could be finalized and shared with the public. Whitney encouraged committee chairs to begin scheduling meetings and emphasized that committees should conduct substantive work, develop ideas and recommendations, and bring proposals or resolutions back to the full Council when appropriate.

Speaker Series

The Council discussed potential programs for the 2026–2027 Speaker Series and noted that the ongoing Know Your Rights presentations would continue.

Wonder Girls was proposed as a future Speaker Series partner. Members discussed having the organization provide workshops on topics such as resume writing for middle school students seeking high school internships, youth empowerment, and other programming. The Council has agreed to invite Wonder Girls to give an approximately 10-minute introduction at the September meeting; with the possibility of holding a longer Wonder Girls Speaker Series presentation in October.

Laura Simpson proposed Kickoff to Kindergarten through Queens Public Library (QPL), a program for parents and children ages three and four that focuses on early literacy and school readiness. Laura noted that the program includes library based and virtual components and agreed to contact the program regarding a possible October Speaker Series presentation.

Estela Nguema proposed continuing INCLUDEnyc, including another presentation related to IEPs and special education. The Special Education Committee would determine the specific topic, and Estela would obtain possible dates so the presentation could be added to the Speaker Series calendar.

Committee chairs were also encouraged to develop additional Speaker Series ideas through their committees and bring proposals back to the Business Meeting.

September Meeting Speakers/Presentations

The Council reviewed planned speakers and presentations for the September 14, 2026 meeting. The agenda is expected to include:

Office of District Planning (ODP) returning for an additional presentation.

Wonder Girls providing an approximately 10-minute introduction to its programming.

A representative from Superintendent Lisa Hidalgo's District 30 team presenting as part of a new recurring series introducing district staff and their areas of work, including curriculum and instructional support. This presentation would be in addition to the Superintendent's Report.

A possible new resolution. Members were reminded that resolutions require two co-sponsors.

Members also discussed inviting NYC Solves to a future meeting to explain the mathematics curriculum and available parent programming. Superintendent Hidalgo was already working on bringing the program to the Council, with October discussed as a possible month.

The Council also discussed selecting a School Spotlight for September. Kayla Spence recommended School 111 in Long Island City, noting positive changes and new work taking place at the school. The Council agreed to reach out to Ms. Ham regarding having School 111 featured as the September School Spotlight.

Members briefly discussed additional resolutions that were still in the early stages of development and were encouraged to use their committees to develop resolution ideas before bringing them to the full Council.

Annual Back to School Drive

The Council discussed preparations for the annual District 30 Back-to-School Event, scheduled for Tuesday, September 1, 2026, from 2:00–5:00 p.m. at IS 145 in Jackson Heights. Members noted that the event flyer needed to be updated to include the confirmed location.

The Communications and Outreach Committee was encouraged to contact local businesses and community partners for school-supply donations and assistance promoting the event. Members also discussed reaching out to local elected officials after their own back-to-school drives to request any remaining supplies.

CEC 30's school supplies had arrived and are stored at the office. Members were asked to volunteer at the event to help set up and distribute supplies, as they had done the previous year. Danielle agreed to lend the Council her canopy again, and members were encouraged to bring folding chairs if available.

Members agreed to wear the blue CEC 30 shirts at the event.

The Council thanked the Queens Borough President's Office and Borough President Donovan Richards for donating backpacks to support the event. Kayla Spence and Xochitl Cohen-Garcia, the Borough President appointees to CEC 30, were also thanked for helping connect the Council with resources.

Members were encouraged to continue seeking additional donations and to connect potential donors with Danielle Lammering, who was helping coordinate event participation and contributions.

Member Reports

Estela Nguema reported on attending the most recent Panel for Educational Policy (PEP) meeting. She noted strong participation from parents, students, and advocates regarding technology concerns and stated that during public comment she raised families' concerns about student transportation and highlighted CEC 30 Resolution 207. Estela reported that although contracts had been voted on, there was still no transportation update for the upcoming school year, which continued to concern families.

Co-Presidents Whitney Toussaint and Victoria Medelius reported participating in an Office of District Planning (ODP) check-in and continuing monthly check-ins with the School Construction Authority (SCA). These meetings allow the Council to raise concerns from its liaison schools and follow up regularly on outstanding school building and facilities issues rather than waiting for an annual SCA presentation.

Whitney also reported attending Parent Leader Office Hours on July 27, 2026. Members were told that if Whitney and Victoria are unable to attend future sessions, another CEC 30 member may serve as their designee; interested members were asked to email the Co-Presidents and copy Lesley.

Members discussed Adriana Alicea's Queens CEC/PEP Office Hours and described the sessions as helpful, particularly for newer CEC members. The office hours are open to members from CECs across Queens, and members were encouraged to participate and collaborate with representatives from other districts.

Whitney and Victoria also discussed their recent visit to the new Academy of Cultural Excellence (ACE). Although the visit occurred in August rather than July, they shared that they met with Principal Espada and members of the teaching staff and toured the school. They highlighted the school's safety and custodial readiness, newly hired parent coordinator, natural-light classroom spaces, play kitchens and dress-up areas, and its emphasis on play-based learning.

The teachers also discussed implementing Portrait of a Graduate. Members briefly discussed wanting additional information about the initiative, including terminology and how related programming or grant funding is supported.

With no additional Member Reports, members were reminded that at the September meeting they should report on activities completed during August.

New Business

School Liaison Assignments

Members were reminded to complete the school liaison assignment spreadsheet. The Council discussed creating a more consistent process for introducing CEC 30 liaisons to their assigned schools, including having the District Office/Superintendent Lisa Hidalgo notify principals of their liaison and copy the assigned CEC member on the introduction. Members also discussed using standardized CEC 30 member email addresses before making introductions to schools. The Council emphasized that members should not make unannounced school visits in September, as schools are managing the beginning of the school year and holidays; routine liaison visits should generally begin in October, unless a school specifically requests an earlier visit.

CEC 30 Member Vacancy

The Council reported receiving one application for the vacant CEC 30 seat. Members agreed that the candidate would participate in a public interview before the September 14, 2026 meeting.

The Council agreed to use the same interview questions from the previous candidate process, with Alexis Kaloyanides developing an additional question focused on

understanding the candidate's viewpoints on current education issues. Members would identify possible interview dates, allow the candidate to select from those dates, publicize the interview, record it, and solicit public feedback.

Following the public interview and feedback, the Council would enter Executive Session to deliberate. If the candidate received sufficient support, an appointment resolution and vote would be placed on the September 14, 2026 meeting agenda. Members noted that if the vacancy could not be filled through the Council's process, the vacancy could ultimately move to a Chancellor appointment.

Chancellor Town Hall

The Council announced that the next CEC 30 Chancellor Town Hall is scheduled for May 13, 2027, with the program generally expected to run from 6:00–7:00 p.m. The location had not yet been selected.

Members discussed requirements for a possible host school, including:

- Close access to public transportation
- An accessible building
- First-floor restrooms
- A suitable auditorium

PS 126 was mentioned as one possible location, but the Council emphasized that no location decision was made during the meeting.

The Council plans to begin Town Hall planning in January 2027. Members explained that CEC 30 traditionally solicits questions from District 30 families and community members in advance and may reserve one or two questions for attendees at the event. Because the Chancellor is generally available for only approximately one hour, the Council emphasized developing focused questions and including at least one specific, tangible request for District 30. Previous examples included advocacy that resulted in cafeteria improvements at Louis Armstrong and additional Horizon programs for the district.

Adjournment: 9:39 p.m.