

### CEC 31 Candidate Brochure

Candidate	Council	Council Description	DBN	IEP	LEP	Candidate Statement
IMAN AHMED	CEC31	Community Education Council (31)	31R004	YES	NO	I AM LOOKING FORWARD to serve on an Education Council as being a mother to a child that have IEP and facing the different challenges as a working mother with a child and student that needs a special effort and attention will make me a good candidate to serve the community that will help me and other children get the best service and education which will help the families,community and our great nation to build a new healthy generation.
Johana Andujar	CEC31	Community Education Council (31)	31R051	YES	NO	
			31R445	YES	NO	
			31R445	NO	YES	
			75R373	NO	NO	
KRISTIE ARELLANO STARK	CEC31	Community Education Council (31)	31R048	NO	NO	To Whom it May Concern; My name is Kristie Stark. I am a business consultant in Staten Island and I have a background in community health education and outreach. My company (Stark Standard) is known for being resourceful, and organizing and executing activities large in nature, for example: Coordinating Social Media for The 2020 - US OPEN at Winged Foot Golf Course. I have proven successful in social media outreach within a specified community. I hope to make in impression in my neighborhood schools and participate in anything that brings our young people (especially Minority and Female students) of Staten Island success. Thank you for your consideration. Kristie Stark WMBE Certified <a href="http://www.StarkStandard.com">www.StarkStandard.com</a>
SOBHA ATLURI	CEC31	Community Education Council (31)	31R005	NO	NO	
NSHAT ATTIA	CEC31	Community Education Council (31)	31R027	NO	YES	As a mother for two children's Origen from Egypt moved to the us and settled in America finally as a citizen as well my husband and two children (10 and 13 ) years old, I consider my self responsible for their education and pushing them into new world as American to obtain higher skill of career for better live and bright future! I worked as a teacher for more than 10 years and I used to share as a councilor back home and I was very helpful in education field for progressive plans through different subjects!
			31R029	NO	NO	

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SARAH BLAS	CEC31	Community Education Council (31)	31R059	NO	NO	<p>My name is Sarah Blas, mother of six, community advocate, public speaker and non profit leader. My personal and professional and experience makes me an ideal candidate to serve on the education council. I like thousands of caregivers across NYC have children that are reaching their full potential with the help of I.E.P's. I know first hand that fighting against stigma, navigating evaluations and advocating for specific related services can often be emotionally and physically draining which is why I have volunteered on the PTA as well as currently holding a seat in the SLT board. Professionally, I have worked in the non profit world for over 12 years. I currently for The Child Wellness Initiative as the Equity and Community Impact Lead, Director of Health and Wellness for The House of Community and I am the Founder of Staten Island Therapeutic Gardens. I have had the privilege of facilitating Town Halls with actionable next steps which have lead to system changes, changes in mental models and policy reform. I have experience developing trauma informed workshops for teachers and school personnel. I have participated in the development of workshops for school wellness council programs on the elementary, junior high and highschool level as well as worked with school foods to help address obesity rates revise policies with an equity focused lense. Both my unique personal experiences professional experiences make me uniquely qualified for a seat on the Education Council and I would be honored to continue to serve the children and families of my community with integrity, a passion for an equitable school system.</p>
			31R059	YES	NO	
LUCIA BOYLAN	CEC31	Community Education Council (31)	31R009	NO	NO	<p>I am a mother of four elementary school children who has been devoted to advocacy work since my early days of PTA volunteering, PTA presidency, and SLT selection. The Community Education Council just felt like it would be a natural fit. I am so proud to be serving my second two year term on the the D31 council. I am a parent leader who is deeply committed to creating a community of engaged, informed and dedicated families to foster better educational opportunities for our children. This has been a tumultuous year where every challenge we faced felt insurmountable. I have never once let my voice waiver in fighting for what our children need and deserve. I have directly held the Chancellor and his deputies accountable, helped place a parent member on the PEP, sat on countless panels and created town halls, all in order give voice to the voiceless on our Island. As the IEP Parent Representative I have weekly escalated the issues that our special needs families face day to day. During this crisis our special needs students and families endured such hardship and watched helplessly as their services and access disappeared. This system has failed our kids. I will continue to fight and speak out about how the gaps COVID created must be closed and work towards a time where no special needs family needs to fight for the basic services they have been state mandated to receive. I believe in a more a just, equitable and accountable education system. One where our most underserved populations are elevated and our student excellence is celebrated. I fight for more transparency and hope to model the power how parent partnership can change the face of education for the better. I hope with your vote that I can continue my advocacy for children across Staten Island.</p>
			31R009	YES	NO	

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CALVIN BROWN	CEC31	Community Education Council (31)	31R061	NO	NO	Hello There! 2020 was a year that brought any confusion to clarity. Being a Black woman with an 11year old son. I'm choosing to cut back on work and be more involved in matters that benefit my child and community. Education Council is important to me, for one we lack on meaningful daily information to help children in real life matters. I grew up in an era where there were tons of free after school programs. Everything has been wiped away for paid programs. Which takes time away from mother and child bonding to pay for one program. There's more to be done. I want to join like minded individuals who want more and better for their children.
CHANTEL CABRERA	CEC31	Community Education Council (31)	31R022	NO	NO	In my short tenure on CEC31 (primarily due to administrative difficulties in my appointment as a result of the pandemic) it has been a pleasure to coalesce around the needs of our students. It has been a terribly exhausting and tumultuous year. It is my hope that now that we have lived through year 1 of COVID more proactive work can be done as opposed reactive damage control. We need to continue amplifying common sense solutions to real time problems. As a social worker and elected official staffer I am also interested in leveraging any and all community stakeholders in conversations related to our youth and their well being. It would be an honor to be reappointed to the board and I would welcome the opportunity to do much more. As a parent of a 5 year old in dual language programming and twin stepdaughters entering high school, I am very much invested in encouraging, providing and fostering healthy environments where academic achievement is reached through collaboration and in the best interest of all students.
PHIL CAMERON	CEC31	Community Education Council (31)	31R024	YES	NO	As a parent of two children in NYC's education system, as well as an educator with over twenty years' experience, I strongly feel that I can meaningfully contribute to the dialogue regarding policies and decisions that affect the success of our city's children.
			31R050	YES	NO	
ANGELENA CANIZARES	CEC31	Community Education Council (31)	31R059	NO	NO	Hi! I'm Angelena Canizares and I'm 29 years old with a broad background of working with children. 5 years experience in working with children with autism in a school system, clinical based center & home services. 6+ years of ABA experience. One year experience working in a daycare facility. Two and a half years experience supervising adults with mental and developmental disabilities. 5+ years of Parent Teaching experience when it comes to their children's educational plans, goals and progress. I work well with the public and I am very patient with others concerns in a work place. I absolutely LOVE working with children! They are our FUTURE. I take pride in being an asset of helping families meet the needs for their little ones on all levels of education. I'm very understanding. I'm very familiar with the schools systems both General Education as well as District 75. It would be my absolute pleasure to be apart of an Education Council in any way possible. The children need our help. And we need them.
Monifa Cannady	CEC31	Community Education Council (31)	31R057	NO	NO	
		Community Education Council (31)	31R063	YES	NO	

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TONIANNE CECERE	CEC31	Community Education Council (31)	31R034	NO	NO	I would like an opportunity to be a part of the Education Council. Like any other parent, my children, their education, and their overall schooling experience are of great importance. To have a chance to help mold the education of our children would be a role I would take with great seriousness, pride & importance.
			31R062	NO	NO	
STEPHEN CHEREPANY	CEC31	Community Education Council (31)	31R004	NO	NO	
ZUNERA CHUGHTAI	CEC31	Community Education Council (31)	31R032	NO	NO	My name is zunera Chughtai and I run a non profit youth organization and a adult daycare center in Brooklyn NY. During covid19 I and my youth including my daughters have served over 100,000 hot meals and food boxes to help communities in need. I believe being a Muslim I want to help everyone and anyone in need and want my kids and all kids to work together as one to learn to help serve humanity. We have a need for different cultures to get together and make a difference for all our kids and what's needed for them and the future and how we can teach them to work with one another and help one another. I want to do what ever I can to help in what ever is needed in district 31 communities and other communities and make a difference for all our children. Let's become strong together as one. Thank you
EMILY COLON	CEC31	Community Education Council (31)	31R075	YES	NO	Hello, my name is Emily Colon and I am interested in running for a seat on the education council. I have two children in public school district 31, one in elementary school and one in junior high school. I have volunteered with the P.S. 58 PTA, holding the Vice President's seat for three school years; volunteering with the school both before and after I was a on the board. I have experience with the IEP process and with making the decision to hold my child over because I did not feel he was up to the tasks of the next grade. I'd like to join the education council so that I may bring forth some of the issues our school community faces and so that I can assist with finding solutions for our school community to become more united and transparent. Covid has shown us an entirely different perspective on our children's education and too many parents feel as if their voices have not been heard, I'd like to be that voice.
Dolores Concepcion	CEC31	Community Education Council (31)	21K468	NO	NO	I want to be part of the education council because I feel that I can bring unique ideas and I am flexible with my schedule and I care about others. I like being part of something that can do good for the school.
			31R046	YES	NO	
JEAN COUNCIL	CEC31	Community Education Council (31)	31R078	NO	NO	I am a retired grandmother raising my granddaughter. I have been President of her school's PTA for the last to years. I think serving on the council will help me and the Students and Parents get a better understanding on what's going on in the school system and keeping the families informed.

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TERESITA DEHOYOS	CEC31	Community Education Council (31)	31R065	YES	NO	Serving on an Education Council is important to me because I believe that every child deserves the best education possible. As a parent of a child receiving services, I have first hand experienced how children can slip through the cracks without the benefit of information available to them. I have spent 7 years wearing the hats of different roles for the PTA as a Treasurer, Correspondence Secretary and President. Daily, I am helping those who are underserved in their communities by directing them to services and programs that would be beneficial to them and their families. With this experience as well as being in a leadership role, I believe I would be an asset to a team working together towards a common goal.
MARIA DELLAGATTA	CEC31	Community Education Council (31)	31R023	NO	NO	I Maria Dellagata was a former young mother, who not only raised her daughter on and off the system but I am also a mother who once lived in poverty and a broken home. I now am a college student on the dean's list, who has beat cancer, lives with rheumatoid arthritis, and someone who had suffered from Covid-19. I am a Humans Service major, thriving to be the top psychiatrist. I have a voice that is not only educated in academics but one who is well educated in life. And, in what the children of my district and their parents and teachers need. Thank you. M. Dellagatta
JAMES DESIDERATO	CEC31	Community Education Council (31)	31R060	NO	NO	I am a father of three girls one currently in 7th grade has an extensive IEP, one in 4th grade and one that is 2 years old and currently attends pre-school. I currently serve as PTA president (first year) for IS 72 as well as the recording secretary at PS 60 (my 2nd year). I am also on SLT for both schools. Additionally, I run two parent only private Facebook pages for my children's schools. It is a great way for parents to voice their concerns and I try and act as a liaison for parents. I work for the MTA as a bus driver and my wife of 12 years is a paraprofessional at a local intermediate school. Before my employment for the MTA, I was an NYPD school safety agent on Staten Island. My wife and I have always been involved in our children's education and we believe it is especially important for our family. I was first introduced to the CEC last year when there was an incident at my daughters' intermediate school and I had the opportunity to speak to the superintendent at a meeting, shortly after she encouraged me to come and voice my disciplinary code issues to the CEC. I have attended almost every meeting since and it is a great place for parents to gain knowledge and to voice concerns that we might have. I do believe that I am ready to be that voice for parents. I am an advocate for public schools, I believe in our schools and our teachers. I believe the only way to invoke positive change is to have respectful debating and dialogue. Serving on this council is especially important to me, now more than ever we need to be the voice and my voice would come from a parent (IEP and Gen ed), someone who was involved in the disciplinary code as a NYPD School Safety Agent, someone who has a DOE employee as a wife, someone who sits on 2 schools PTA's and SLT's, it would be a seasoned voice to help our children and our parents of District 31. If elected to the council I would serve D31 to the best of my ability.
			31R072	YES	NO	

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EMRAL DEVANY	CEC31	Community Education Council (31)	21K239	NO	NO	<p>NYC Public schools community, I am an Assistant Professor of Biology in Kingsborough Community College. I have been a part of public schools in NYC for the past 11 years, first as a graduate school student in our public university system - CUNY, then as a parent of two public school students and finally as a professor to the students who just graduated from NYC public high schools. As a result, I have different perspective: student perspective, parent perspective and educator perspective. Over the years, as a part of my education and professional development I learned and experienced different aspects of public school system in NYC as well as student learning. I have attended many seminars and workshops where we analyzed how students learn, what curricular and extracurricular needs of students to progress academically and socially while being healthy and happy. As a parent I made sure that I participate in school meetings and activities. I tried to interact with as many parents, teachers and administrators as possible to learn about their experiences and challenges. I volunteered in countless school activities and fund raising activities to try to give back to the community that I was very much involved. I had wonderful experiences, as well as not so wonderful experiences. I believe being a part of NYC public school system for years and holding different perspectives and views within this system, I am ready to serve more by being a part of Education Council. I am confident I can help everyone's voices to be heard and work on making necessary changes and improvements in the system to give our children what they deserve: a perfect school experience with all it's ups and downs. Dr. Devany</p>
			31R045	NO	NO	
JOHN DIMICELI	CEC31	Community Education Council (31)	31R004	NO	NO	<p>As a retired father I have taken the responsibility in being at the head of my children's education. And while most things should have a straight forward way of being done, sometimes outside the box thinking is needed and should be welcomed. How many fathers have a presence to lend their ideas and observations? I will be that father. I care about my children and their education greatly. I would look at situations based on how I would want something to be if it effected my children. Is a different POV a bad thing? I don't think it is. If you vote for me I promise not to be the same old elected member. Thank you.</p>
AYOTILEWA EFUNIYI	CEC31	Community Education Council (31)	31R009	YES	NO	<p>As a Mother of Children with disabilities in District 31, and District 75 schools. There is need for more representation, and inclusion of all races and classes. More help, training, information and resources to Families and Children with IEP's will help children with disabilities attain the growth they need and give them the Independence they need to be able to thrive in their Community.</p>
			75R373	YES	NO	

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MARIA ESTEVES	CEC31	Community Education Council (31)	31R009	NO	NO	Hello, my name is Maria Esteves, and currently a stay-at-home mom to my daughter in first grade and my son a third-grader in the NEST program. I have also become a full-time remote learning teacher to both of my children who have not seen the inside of a school since February 2020. I am an active participant in my children's school PTA and also volunteer my time whenever possible at P.S. 9 on Staten Island. I currently volunteer and lead my daughter's Girl Scout Troop, which I established at P.S. 9 as well as a volunteer with my son's Cub Scout pack. I also handled my son's OWPDD services with self-direction and am familiar with the IEP process with the DOE. I am interested in continuing and furthering my involvement in the Department of Education as a parent who is concerned with its direction and the future education of my children. I am eager to become more involved and strongly feel that a parent's voice should be the driving force in our children's education. Thank you for the opportunity and hopefully, I can join in that collaboration.
			31R009	YES	NO	
CLAIR FAHIM	CEC31	Community Education Council (31)	31R063	NO	NO	
Denise Farrelly	CEC31	Community Education Council (31)	31R003	NO	NO	As a parent of 3 children attending school on Staten Island, I believe that I have the knowledge and experience to serve effectively on the District 31 Education Council. In addition to my role as a parent, I was a NYC public school classroom teacher for 9 years and am currently an education professor at an NYC community college. I hold both Bachelor's and Master's degrees in early childhood and elementary education, as well as a doctorate in Curriculum & Instruction. I believe in the power of public education and its role in creating equitable opportunities for all students. If elected, I will advocate for our district's public school students and their families in order to ensure educational success across all school zones within our district.
Pamela Gomez	CEC31	Community Education Council (31)	31R057	YES	YES	
KARIMA HAFEZ	CEC31	Community Education Council (31)	31R069	NO	NO	
Sasha Hampton scharf	CEC31	Community Education Council (31)	31R444	YES	NO	I am the proud daughter/grand-daughter of professional New York state educators and a mother of 3 sons in the NYC school system. I have a child in elementary, middle and high school so I'm well informed of what goes on across the board. I have been actively involved with my children's education since day one. I started serving as the parent Vice President and then President for my local Early Head-Start Program. In 2012, I was presented with the Outstanding Volunteer award by Headstart. I am the founder of a FB support group for parents of New York state school children and we currently have close to 500 active members. It's important for me to serve on the NYC Education Council because it will provide a platform for me to voice the concerns, wants and needs for children and parents like myself. Thank you!
gabriela herrera	CEC31	Community Education Council (31)	31R029	NO	YES	I have a very great connection with children, I love to learn every day and I also use everything I have learned to teach others. I am a mother of 3 children, I speak perfect Spanish although I am still improving my English every day, the only thing I can say is that I love working with children, they are the future of our country, and I am excited to be able to help no matter what the reason. This would be a great experience for me since it is something that I love to do, I love to help and feel that I am doing something productive for humanity.

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Aziza Huramova	CEC31	Community Education Council (31)	31R058	NO	NO	
FARAH JAYMAN	CEC31	Community Education Council (31)	31R061	NO	NO	My name is Farah Jayman. I am a parent of a student in public school as well as an alumni of the NYC public school system. I have a doctorate in biochemistry and I am a strong advocate for fostering a strong education system. I have numerous years of teaching experience from tutoring while in college, to being appointed as an assistant professor to teach advanced level courses. As an alumni and parent of the NYC public school system I would like to have a voice in the NYC department of education as our kids don't have voices. I am also a Veteran of the United States Army where I served as an officer in the Clinical Laboratory and Research Laboratory. I have combined civilian and military experience gained in the following areas: Teaching, coaching, mentoring and team development. Given my education and experience, I am confident that I will be an excellent fit in the education council. I am here to represent our children and the teachers.
Michael Kazis	CEC31	Community Education Council (31)	31R056	YES	NO	Serving on an Education Council would be important to me because, I feel that it provides a fitting way to serve my community and offer a contribution to the greater good of the education of the children in our borough. Although I may not be fully informed of all the duties required I feel that my background and experience serving in various managerial and analytical roles could offer valuable feedback in our public school system. My college education includes a bachelor of science in computer information systems and a master of business administration. Although I am not a teacher, 2013 I had completed my New York State exam requirements to teach secondary education in physical sciences and have accumulated over one thousand hours of tutoring in higher level math, science and technology subjects. In my college years, I served as president of a student chapter of the Institute of Electrical and Electronic Engineers at the College of Staten Island. Most recently I served several years in officer roles of a professional association in New Jersey, including three years as the association's president.



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MAEY KHALED	CEC31	Community Education Council (31)	31R029	NO	NO	<p>Hello, my name is Maey Khaled and I'm a working mother of 3 children of varying age/grade levels whom are currently attending elementary and middle-schools in District 31. As like many of you, I've become increasingly concerned with our children's social- emotional well being learning from home as well as their academic progress. It breaks my heart on a daily basis to see my children (and yours) feeling isolated and segregated from their classroom environments and class mates. As a child myself, I used to look forward to any unanticipated days off from school (i.e. snow days) and now our kids are put in a situation where they are looking forward to going to school in person, due to the frequent and uncontrollable school closures as a response to COVID exposure. I work as a Senior Director of Campus Planning &amp; Technical Services for the Tandon School of Engineering at NYU. And one things this past year has taught me is that we are "unprepared" as a society to deal with these lingering societal impacts. From first hand experience, this past year has proven to be a rather difficult one for all administrators to make decisions that impact the lives and futures of our next generation. I believe that with my experience in handling the COVID pandemic response at a higher educational academic institution such as my current employer-- I have the necessary skill set and insight to help inform the planning process for the NYCDOE from a professional stand-point, but most importantly from a parental standpoint. Like many of you, my life turned upside down on 3/16/20, when the mayor announced that NYC schools will be closed indefinitely for "in-person" student learning. I am fortunate enough to be able to work remotely from home, which is a major blessing-- but I couldn't help but constantly think about the thousands of students and families that were immediately impacted by such decisions with no "fail safe" plans in place such as those of essential workers. This personal concern of mine was a factor in every decision I made on a professional level working for my employer because I would "put myself in others shoes" on how closure/openings of various activities and facilities would impact the lives of so many others. Another thought that I just couldn't bare, was the apparent inequity and disparity among the different members of the same school district and what added level of complexity that added to those families. Whether it was children who grew up in non-English speaking households, or those who came from lower income families, one thought kept crossing my mind, "Who is helping to understand those families struggle with such impactful and abrupt decision making?" Being the daughter of first generation immigrants to this country, it's really hit home with me and brought upon flashbacks of being "different". This really hurt, since we're in a day and age of "Diversity and Inclusion" but unfortunately this initiative still exists on paper only. In closing, I would like express my gratitude towards all of those local hero's more commonly referred to as "essential workers" whom of which were severely impacted, much more than we were. I would like the opportunity to represent the correction that needs to take place to make sure that our learning system infrastructure is resilient enough to be able to withstand another situation such as the pandemic we're slowly trying to climb out of, while putting our children and families first at the thought of any policy making. Sincerely, Maey</p>
			31R063	NO	NO	

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SARAH KISSOONDATH	CEC31	Community Education Council (31)	31R039	NO	NO	My name is Sarah Kissoondath and I am a mother of three boys. My two eldest sons went to Public School since Kindergarten and they have excelled as individuals. Public school has provided my kids access to a great education and offer the best academic opportunities. My eldest son got a full scholarship to Columbia University and my second son attends John Jay College. Currently my youngest son is a 4th grader and I love the way his growth, from athletics to music and theater, his school has alot to offer. In my 16 years as a parent of public school children, public school would be my first choice for education.
TAKISHA LANDY	CEC31	Community Education Council (31)	31R019	NO	NO	When I moved to Staten Island a couple years ago, as a parent, I was very worried about the quality of the public schools on the island. I heard countless negative comments from parents from other boroughs, including my former borough, Brooklyn. I decided to ignore the negativity and get involved instead. I volunteered to become our school's Title 1 Chairperson. What I have learned is that we have exceptional and caring educators, principals and administrators who believe in our children and programs that provide academic as well as enrichment skills. Staten Island has a lot to offer our children. Yes, there are disparities, but I believe that if we work towards the same goals of elevating and acknowledging our students talents and abilities, we can all succeed. I hope to be a part of that work. Thank you.
SHALENA LEWIS	CEC31	Community Education Council (31)	31R011	YES	NO	Serving on an Education Council is important to me due to the fact that I believe education is empowerment, oftentimes parents move through the system unprepared and incapable of effectively advocating on behalf of their child. During a time where so much is happening at a high speed, information is power and I need to be in a position to educate not only myself but the community that I am part of. Parents look for answers and are not comfortable seeking help, so the child suffers in the long run. Children are our most natural and precious resource and it is my obligation to provide them with all of the resources available so their educational experience is one to be proud of and is the most fulfilling for them. I am currently on the SLT and PTA at my children's school and this is affording me the opportunity to be a voice for them and to learn how so much has changed since my eldest was in the Public School system. I believe my passion for supporting children and their families, along with the experience gained from serving on an Education Council will make me capable of being the best advocate for children's education and sharing information with families to inspire them to hopefully join and cast a larger, supportive network for us all.
DAWN LILENFELD-SAADA	CEC31	Community Education Council (31)	31R029	NO	NO	My name is Dawn E. Lilienfeld-Saada. I have been a teacher for 19 years. I have 2 daughters in 5th and 7th grade. I want to make sure that their education is as great as it can be.
			31R051	NO	NO	

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RENEE MARHONG	CEC31	Community Education Council (31)	31R013	NO	NO	Hello, my name is Renee Marhong. I am a Public Health Nurse living and working on Staten Island. I am the mother to 3 children in school on the Island, one in pre-K, one in fifth grade and one in ninth grade. My children are in District 31 and 75. Serving on the CEC is important to me because I want to make a deeper investment in my community. I believe in holding our leaders accountable and parents having a voice in the school system. My priority is to bring as much equity, access and resources to our schools as possible. I currently sit on my son's SLT and attend PTA meetings. I have been a community activist for over 20 years and I am excited to serve in this new capacity. Thank you for considering me, it would be my honor to serve on a CEC.
			75R721	YES	NO	
FRANK MARINO	CEC31	Community Education Council (31)	31R032	NO	NO	Dear Parents, My name is Frank Marino, I'm a born and raised Staten Island, New Yorker and through my youth and childhood I attended the New York City Public Schooling system. Now years later my oldest child is in the pre school program and next year so will my youngest. I have numerous nieces and nephews also attending NYC public schools and I feel that I have a vested interest in serving this city on the school board education council to do my part in making sure the education of my children, nieces, nephews and every single other child that goes to school, is as beneficial as it possibly can be. As parents it's our job to raise them, steer them in the right direction and do whatever we could in our power to set them up for success. I want to take part in making sure that the public schooling system is left to them better then when we had it, in hopes that these formative years shape these young minds into being far more prepared for college and adulthood then we were. I feel that serving on this council will allow me as a parent to have a voice for the children and be able to be at the table when discussions are being had as to hopefully ensure that the education they receive is the best in New York State. I believe that I can be an advocate to fellow parents because I'm certain there's so much about the public schooling system that parents are unaware about and I'd like to have answers for parents that have questions or concerns, so that you too are as informed as you could be and have peace of mind that your children are in the best possible environment they could be. For all these reasons that why I feel I would be a strong candidate for this council seat. I would be honored to serve our community and greatly appreciate your support. Thank you for taking the time to briefly hear my reasoning for wanting to take on this job. Sincerely, Frank Marino
Muhammad Masuk Mian	CEC31	Community Education Council (31)	31R007	NO	NO	
			31R042	NO	NO	
MELINDA MERCADO	CEC31	Community Education Council (31)	31R031	NO	NO	
			31R061	YES	NO	
PETER MIN	CEC31	Community Education Council (31)	31R069	NO	NO	

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MELISSA MINAKAKIS	CEC31	Community Education Council (31)	31R005	NO	NO	I believe I would be a valuable asset to the Education Council because of my background in volunteering, which includes 9 years serving on PTA committees at my children's schools, 2 years as PTA President and 5 years serving on my school SLT. Now more than ever, we need a diverse group of voices involved in public education as we face challenges we've never seen before. I would be happy to be a part of the Council and offer my services to this worthwhile cause. Thank you.
			31R064	YES	NO	
KRISTIE MONTALVAN	CEC31	Community Education Council (31)	31R032	YES	NO	My name is Kristie Montalvan and I have been a New York City Department of Education parent for almost 6 years. My oldest son is in the 4th grade in a district 31 general education classroom. I have 7 year old twins who are both in special education programs. My son is in 1st grade in the NEST program in a district 31 school. My daughter is in first grade in a district 75 school. I believe the experience of having children in three different NYC public schools, in two different school districts, gives me a very unique perspective. I am able to contribute my experiences with a variety of schools and programs to assist in making important and complex decisions on the education council. I have volunteered and participated in many PTAs and parent organizations over the last 6 years. I believe my time is the greatest contribution I can give toward my child's educational experience. From 2018-2019, I was the Parent Council President for my twins CPSE preschool. During my time running the parent council, I held monthly meetings with parents and staff and helped facilitate a symbiotic relationship between the school and parents. I organized several fundraisers and through my tenacity and perseverance, I was able to secure much needed funds for therapy programs and supplies for the school. I also had the pleasure of making connections with other parents and gaining incites to their individual educational needs for their children. In my position as parent council president, I learned empathy and respect for all parents and students. I believe that our schools thrive when there is active parent involvement. Education thrives when parents, teachers, and administrators are all working together. I am thoroughly excited at the opportunity to serve on the education council and represent the diverse population of New York City public schools. Now more than ever, I believe it is important to work diligently to ensure that all of our children receive the free and appropriate education they are entitled to. With my past experiences, empathy, and tenacity, I feel like I would make an excellent addition to the Education Council. I humbly ask for your vote.
			31R069	YES	NO	
			75R037	YES	NO	

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Roxanne Mustafa	CEC31	Community Education Council (31)	31R063	NO	NO	<p>I am a mother of 2 boys on Staten Island. I was born and raised in the Brooklyn Public Schools and was the daughter of immigrant parents who did not speak English. I am the first college graduate in my extended family and have 2 advanced degrees. I am also the mother of 2 boys who are in the public school system in District 31; one son is in MAELS Middle School and my other son is a freshman in Wagner High School. I would like to be considered for a seat on the Community Education Councils (CEC). In my day job, I am a product designer, a technologist, and a consultant for a major tech company, VMware. I also work as a Diversity and Inclusion leader in my organization. I practice the methodology of human computer interactions and am a human centered designer. I have taught design and User Experience to adults at General Assembly, and adult vocational school. I am also a community advocate and work to build civic engagement on Staten Island. In the community I am on several non profit boards, including Staten Island Urban Center, Bait Al Jummah, Staten Island Therapeutic Gardens. I worked on the public advocate's transition team, volunteered at teach-ins for NYC census work and helped with civic engagement throughout the city. I have worked on policy groups for electeds and contributed to many brainstorming sessions within Staten Island. For many years, my family has navigated the public schools, from universal pre-k to the G&amp;T and specialized school testing. I have had many experiences and heard many other parents' experiences about the school system. As someone who works in our community, and as someone who understands technology and digital infrastructure, I feel that I have a lot to offer the CEC. I feel that we are at a watershed moment in our public schools. Teachers are overwhelmed, parents are asked to be IT consultants, guidance counselors, teachers, as well as parents. Parents can't seem to support teachers, and vice versa. Teachers are overwhelmed teaching to screens and not real life children, who are in a zombie zoom haze. Looking forward we must be brave and have real solutions to out NYC children and DOW staff. I have experience in the pros and cons of technology, what it has to offer a sector like education from a human and technology perspective, as well as a mother's perspective.</p>
			31R460	NO	NO	
Olayinka Oduyayo	CEC31	Community Education Council (31)	31R078	YES	NO	
YULIANA OLEYNIK	CEC31	Community Education Council (31)	31R055	NO	NO	<p>I am running for the City Education Council because I believe only through direct participation in the Council I can help relate the current concerns of many parents. It is disheartening watching what is happening in NYC. I would like the opportunity to do better by our children. I am ready to roll up my sleeves and get to work for the good people of my home borough Staten Island. I am a paralegal, a notary public and a strong believer in our government however, Democracy only works with involvement of its citizens.</p>
			31R055	YES	NO	

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Candidate	Council	Council Description	DBN	IEP	LEP	Candidate Statement
YELENA PIKMAN	CEC31	Community Education Council (31)	31R050	YES	NO	Hi my name is Yelena Pikman and I am a parent of a current 5th grader who is on an IEP and a now 9th grader who was on an IEP until 8th grade. I have been involved in PTA's since my older son started school and have been a very involved parent for special needs kids and those who have an IEP. Now especially since we are mostly remote I see how much this has impacted my younger child and I want to do anything I can to help the community. I currently sit as a title 1 co-chair at New Dorp high school and am the parliamentarian for the Executive Board. I look forward to serving for another 8 years until my younger child exits high school and hope to impact the community and children as much as possible.
			31R440	YES	NO	
GINA PLOTKIN	CEC31	Community Education Council (31)	31R023	YES	NO	
			31R024	NO	NO	
			31R047	YES	NO	
CHRISTINE POMMERENK	CEC31	Community Education Council (31)	31R030	NO	NO	I am running for education council because I see a great opportunity for growth within our education system. I am a single mother of 3 children all currently enrolled in department of education schools. I am also a pediatric occupational therapist and I feel that these experiences will give me unique insight into education today. It is important to be involved as a parent to ensure children are getting every opportunity in school that they can and to make sure education is equitable across the board. Now more than ever parent involvement is critical. Parents know what is good for their children and we need a voice in the system. I hope to provide that voice.
			31R047	NO	NO	
			31R445	NO	NO	
MONICA PULLO DELGADO	CEC31	Community Education Council (31)	31R061	NO	YES	
ALEXIS PYNE	CEC31	Community Education Council (31)	31R027	NO	NO	Lance Stevens
MELISSA QUILES	CEC31	Community Education Council (31)	31R861	NO	NO	
			31R861	YES	NO	
CRISTOBAL REYES	CEC31	Community Education Council (31)	31R020	NO	NO	
ZORYANA ROMANYUK	CEC31	Community Education Council (31)	31R024	NO	YES	
REHAM ROMHEN	CEC31	Community Education Council (31)	31R058	YES	NO	
			31R075	NO	NO	
MIA RUIZ	CEC31	Community Education Council (31)	31R004	NO	NO	I would like to serve on the 2021 Education Council because I am a parent of a five year old child in the public school system, and a long time resident of District 31. A single parent, and a staunch advocate for all students in my district. I bring diversity, advocacy and a positive, hopeful and fresh perspective to the table on behalf of all parents and students alike.
ROXANNE SCHMIDT	CEC31	Community Education Council (31)	31R055	NO	NO	My name is Roxanne Schmidt, I am a single mom of twin 9 year old's currently in 4th grade at PS 55. My daughter has had an IEP since she was 3 years old and has worked with OT, PT, Speech and Guidance therapists throughout her school career. My son had a very difficult second grade with a teacher that did not understand him and was bullied by other students. I have been through the school system for equal and effective treatment and education for both my kids. I would love the opportunity to be that advocate for your kids as well.
			31R055	YES	NO	

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SHERIEN SHADY	CEC31	Community Education Council (31)	31R069	NO	NO	I am a parent of three girls who served as an officer in a my kids elementary and middle school for PTAAnd SLT from the years 2006 to 2018 , these positions were corresponding secretary, 1 vice PTA president, Tresurer , and PTA president, SLT office through all these years. Then served as a substitute teacher for the years 2019 and 2020 currently I work on public service as care coordinator with a non profit organization. I strongly believe that parent voice makes a difference , our community has been always in need of parental connection with the education system for support and input with every day struggles , Goals and dreams of our children. Specially in today's environment parents and teachers needs to work hand in hand to provide best education to our kids .
			31R460	NO	NO	
BORIS SLOOTSKY	CEC31	Community Education Council (31)	31R075	NO	NO	<p>Anyone who runs for a seat should ask him/herself: why am I running? Am I going to bring changes that are long overdue, or will I uphold the status quo? Everything that is currently going on in the NYC public school system cannot be described as anything less than a disaster. Kids, including those in middle school, either have no homework at all or have very little assigned. Our children spend more time on social and emotional activities (SEL) than on studying core subjects like math and English. The amount of tests and quizzes have been minimized to almost nothing. As a parent, I do not know any other way to assess my child's progress other than seeing his grades. And on top of this, our children have been sitting home for almost a year. In-person learning is important, not only for gaining academic knowledge, but also for gaining social skills and building up the discipline and understanding of a daily routine. All these consequences of the schooling system in place just widens the gap between wealthy families on one hand and the working-class families on the other. Those who are rich can afford tutoring and private schools; those who are not simply do not have the money to compensate for the flaws of public education. Additionally, we need to expel politics from public schools for good. Schools should concentrate on teaching basic knowledge, not on forming students' political views. Whether you are Republican or Democrat, liberal or conservative, the rules of mathematics, laws of Physics, and the fundamentals of English grammar stay the same and will always be the same. Schools should be preparing our children for college and adult life, not producing political activists. At the same time schools should be institutions that teach patriotism, showing our children what a great nation the United States is and how proud we should feel to live here. Every country in the world has both bright and dark pages in its history, but we cannot concentrate on one specific side. So, if you ask me, "What would you do if elected?" I would say that I would preserve all the good things that we have in our education system and would work on changing those that need to be changed. I am not an educator, but I have over 15 years of experience in Charter School Finance. Over this time, I held various financial positions in charter schools in several states. I have seen different approaches to public education, including turning around failing schools to prosperous ones and ones that are doing very well. I want to bring my skills and experience to the Education Council and work on bettering NYC public schools. At the end of a day what matters is not only what kind of country we hand to our children, but also whether our children are prepared to take it. Getting them ready for this responsibility is what the school system is for. I am honest and trustworthy, and I apply these traits into everything that I do. Therefore, I urge you all to vote for me and to trust me with this job in the upcoming year.</p>

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TONI SPANO	CEC31	Community Education Council (31)	31R075	NO	NO	<p>My name is Toni Spano. I currently have three children in the NYC public school system. I also was a teacher in New York BOE for 8 years. I resigned to stay home and raise my three daughters 17 years ago. I currently have one child in high school, one in middle school and one in elementary school. My first two daughters were part of the gifted and talented program and after entered the scholars program and my oldest is in the institute program in her high school. I strongly believe in having programs for students who excel and need a more rigorous and challenging program. I believe there are many children who would benefit from these programs and would encourage the expansion of more programs to allow all students who are capable to have access rather than eliminating them. I also believe all children are gifted in different ways and all classes should differentiate instruction to bring out each child's fullest potential. As a parent I attended many pta meetings, have been class mom for many years. I volunteered at my children's schools and participated in many fundraising events. There were times throughout my experiences as a public school parent that I needed to voice my opinion. I have always done this with respect and with a desire to be an advocate for the students. One example of this was when my child applied to the scholars program and was turned down. I later found out they had changed the requirements to be accepted. I did more research and found that schools that graded with a 1-4 scale were at a disadvantage to students from schools that graded with actual grades. I wrote letters to the district offices and superintendent. I went to the district office to speak to the office of admissions and also met with middle school principles. Ultimately it was determined that the practice was unfair and it was changed. I also was able to get my daughter into the program based on her grades and a recommendation. I will continue to fight for fairness and better ways to educate our children. As a teacher, former staff developer, Literacy Coach, Reading recovery specialist and a public school parent I can see issues from many different perspectives. I would love the opportunity to serve on the board.</p>
VENUS SZE-TSANG	CEC31	Community Education Council (31)	31R053	NO	NO	



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FRESHTA TAEB	CEC31	Community Education Council (31)	31R058	NO	NO	<p>My name is Freshta Taeb. I have two daughters in the public school system. When my eldest daughter was at the end of 2nd grade it was brought to my attention that she needed to be evaluated. The assessment team at her elementary school assisted in that process. She is now in junior high and has an IEP for the past few years, it is important for me to serve on an education council to better bridge the gap between the policymakers and parents. As a former elementary and Highschool teacher I feel my presence on these councils would provide both the parental and educator perspective. Currently, I am the senior refugee family and marriage interventionist at Cornerstone Family and Marriage intervention. I currently lead the Refugee Interventionists Program at Cornerstone Family and Marriage Intervention. I also spearhead intervention sessions that incorporate, but are not limited to, clients with PTSD, anger management, and domestic violence. Additionally, I oversee a team that implements emotional wellness workshops for refugee teens and adults, before becoming an interventionist, I advocated for individuals and families through my position as a director for an agency providing culturally sensitive services to the underserved marginalized Middle Eastern and South Asian population. As a subject matter expert, I have advised and lectured on various topics relating to domestic violence, refugee rights, and holistic health. currentI am also a Board Member of the Afghan American Foundation a non-profit, non-partisan institution representing and advancing the interests of Afghan-Americans. The foundation focuses on civic, cultural, economic, and policy issues amongst the American public, policymakers and opinion shapers. I was also a member of the Afghan Americans for Biden steering committee, a volunteer group dedicated to Afghan-Americans supporting the Biden/Harris campaign and in mobilizing our communities to bring about change in the November 2020 elections. I also regularly volunteer my time to reputable organizations within my community. They include but are not limited to the NOVA Coalition for Refugee Wellness and NJ Refugee Wellness Coalition. Lastly, I provide cultural competence trainings to resettlement agencies. I believe these experiences would add value to the council. Thank you for considering my application.</p>
			31R063	YES	NO	
LARAE TATE	CEC31	Community Education Council (31)	31R044	YES	NO	
Jessica Torres	CEC31	Community Education Council (31)	31R019	NO	NO	<p>I want to give my input as a parent to other parents. To voice on important matters in school regarding education Childrens personal and professional needs to have children and parents feel welcomed and safe while their children are in school buildings or remote learning. Parents and children need more advice and help with understanding and coping with any issues.</p>

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Candidate	Council	Council Description	DBN	IEP	LEP	Candidate Statement
Erin Ulitto	CEC31	Community Education Council (31)	31R001	YES	NO	My name is Erin Ulitto and I am a stay-at-home mom. My full-time job has been taking care of my 2 children over the last 7 years. I Currently have a daughter in PreK4 and my son is in the 1st grade in District 31. My son has been in a specialized program since he was 3 years old. While he was in preschool I served as a member of the schools Parent Council. The second year he was there (2018) I was the co-leader of the council and organized many school based fundraisers, parents night out gatherings and play dates for the children . The year ended with a 200 person + dinner dance. At the dinner dance there was over 150 baskets made and put together by myself and several of the other parents that were raffled off. The money raised from this event went towards much needed equipment for the school, therapy programs and other various actives for the children to enjoy. Serving on this council is important to me because I would like to have a bigger part in the decisions that go on in the public schools, especially for those in the special needs community. The children in the special needs classes and schools need more assistance now than ever. I think I would be a great asset to the council and thank you for your consideration.
MICHELLE WEBSTER	CEC31	Community Education Council (31)	31R039	YES	NO	To Whom it May Concern, I decided to run for the Education Council after seeing how my daughter Melody is struggling. She is completely remote learning due to health issues and she recently fell behind because she had two brain surgeries in January due to Hydrocephalus. I've noticed that during meets that the curriculum is sped through and never gone over again. There is no review or time to ask questions when kids need help. Every day is a new topic that is sped through. I am running because I would like to see more help for the children who are struggling and be more involved with the education of children like my daughter. Stay safe and well, Michelle Webster
QUASHECA WRIGHT	CEC31	Community Education Council (31)	31R078	NO	NO	
			31R078	YES	NO	
NICOLE XIE	CEC31	Community Education Council (31)	31R013	YES	YES	
			31R013	YES	YES	
MICHAEL YANNI	CEC31	Community Education Council (31)	31R029	NO	NO	
IMELDA ZEFERINO	CEC31	Community Education Council (31)	31R002	NO	YES	