

PLEDGE TO ACTION

We, the undersigned,

KNOW that public education can be the cornerstone of true democracy,

RECOGNIZE that there is a direct connection between (NEW YORK CITY'S SYSTEM OF) mayoral control and the increasing failure of our public schools to meet the human rights of all families and students,

CALL upon the New York state legislature to develop a bill that will

1. **IMMEDIATELY SET UP A FULLY FUNDED COMMISSION**

- to assess the strengths and weaknesses of the current educational system, and, then,
- to create a strategic plan and develop a mission, goals, and policies to redesign the system and its governance structure to guarantee every child's human right to an education

THE REDESIGNED SYSTEM WILL -

SERVE and be responsive to all of its students, particularly the neglected majority: low income students of color, immigrants, and students with special needs

END the inequities in the current segregated and unequal system by not favoring those with race or class privilege, by distributing resources according to need and to those historically under resourced due to the impact of structural racial and economic discrimination.

ENCOURAGE curricula and pedagogies that promote creative and challenging opportunities to learn, that emphasize problem solving and critical thinking. And that reflect and build upon the histories, experiences, interests, languages, special needs, and capabilities of all our students

CREATE a system of assessment that enhances quality education, that grows out of student centered models of curriculum and instruction.. Such a system would require multiple and multi-textured forms of accountability, including sampling and performance-based assessment in lieu of high stakes testing.

RECOGNIZE parents and other family members as our children's first educators and public advocates; and have structures to make sure that parents, families and students can participate in substantive decisions affecting public education and local schools

VALUE the role of educators (together with parents, students and communities) in developing and running our schools.

RECOGNIZE the importance of having educators who develop relationships of care and trust with their students, and reflect the communities that their students are from.

ENCOURAGE schools to build interactive partnerships with community members and community based groups that support the overall well-being of students, their families, and the community.

2. **ENSURE THAT THE COMMISSION WILL BE SELECTED BY "EDUCATION ELDERS,"*** and will be composed of such parents, students, teachers, school administrators, and community leaders who reflect the racial, economic and linguistic demographics of New York City, as well as its representative communities, and that they will be assisted by qualified independent* researchers.

*Not to include persons who may have conflicts of interest due to an alliance or contract with the DOE, the Mayor, or the Chancellor.

3. If the commission's work is not completed by June 2009, when the current governance law sunsets, we ask that the Legislature **TEMPORARILY CONTINUE THE CURRENT SYSTEM WITH THE NEEDED CHECKS AND BALANCES** such as (OR: INCLUDING, BUT NOT LIMITED TO) independent budget oversight and an independent research organization until the Commission completes and submits its work to the Legislature, no later than December 1, 2009.

WE RECOGNIZE THAT THE CHALLENGES WE FACE IN PUBLIC EDUCATION ARE INEXTRICABLY CONNECTED TO OTHER CRITICAL STRUGGLES, SUCH AS...(HOUSING, GENTRIFICATION, POLICE BRUTALITY/ABUSE, SOMETHING CONNECTED TO POWER AND TERM LIMITS, ETC.) AND PLEDGE TO WORK TOGETHER FOR JUSTICE FOR ALL OUR COMMUNITIES

We, the undersigned, pledge to mobilize our communities to support a public education system based on every child's human right to education, and which empowers parents, students, teachers, school administrators, and members of the community as full partners in the planning, implementation, and evaluation of this system.