

Dear members of the education committee of the state senate,

Doomberg, was what teachers called Bloomberg when he took over. Joel Klein's ignorance of what really happens in the classroom was astounding. Children were reduced to data. Yes, data is important and it has its place. Data is what was missing from local control, but again the ignorance was astounding. I worked for a principal in 1985 who didn't know what the writing process was. District 2 was already being paid to attend PD at Columbia's TC. We are the ones with Master's degrees, why not trust us?

As a teacher with 36 years of experience, I have worked under many forms of school governance. First, was the pilot program for school-based management in Florida. Next, a private school on its own, and another adhering to city and state regulations. After that, I worked under local community school districts in NYC and finally, mayoral control. Each has its pros and cons. Briefly, school-based management gave teachers enormous input and control, yet lacked oversight. Local school districts gave the community control, however, left an opening for nepotism and corruption. More importantly, that created an atmosphere for insentient decisions. Mayoral control has been said to have created corruption on a grander scale, with no checks and balances wasting millions of dollars. Also, less parent involvement and no teacher input over what they are to implement in their own classrooms! As for communication, there are teachers out there that have never even heard of the CEC or know what they do. Teachers couldn't believe me when I told them inquiry teams are actually about the staff choosing professional development for themselves. The system is either too big or poorly managed. Don't get me started on the waste of money on crappy PD. Why pay Mc Graw Hill for a day of PD to go over a table of contents? Why pay a company to develop an evaluation for children to detect trauma when it is already available on the Child Mind website many teachers were already using?

I propose a more democratic approach to school governance! This would be modeled after our constitution, with three branches of government including checks and balances. The three branches would be teachers, parents, and administrators. I would also include student representatives and give them voting rights. On the school level, The SLT would be that body, fortified by instituting a communication plan that would include the entire school community. Voting privileges would be extended to the entire PA/PTA, pedagogical staff, and administration. Monthly staff meetings may use Parliamentary procedure to hear all opinions. They can develop committees such as curriculum, budget, and parent outreach just to name a few. The DLT would have to update its bylaws to include checks and balances, committees, voting rights and a communication model. The three branches are now Principals, PTA presidents/CBO leaders, and Superintendents, with representatives from the teaching staff. This model could be repeated on the borough level and finally on the city level. At the city level, the PEP must be Parents for Education Policy and must be elected by members of DLT's or Borough Leadership Teams. There must be a Panel of Educators for Policy in which all members must have at least 5 years of classroom experience. and also be voted in. The DOE becomes the Administrators for Education Policy. All must have a communication model, public access to meetings, and bylaws including checks and balances. Checks and balances do not mean asking the principal. That's why the DOE tells the press all schools have upgraded their ventilation systems but teachers say oh no they have not. Also, all policymakers should have classroom experience. No teacher will respect anything coming from someone with less than 5 years of classroom experience.

. I don't think many teachers even know what the DOE does. What they do know, or are told to do much of it doesn't make sense and is infuriating. They make rules called Chancellor's

Regulations. They decide how children will be tested and how teachers are evaluated. So then what should the DOE do, provide funding for staff, facilities, curriculum, supplies, etc. Now I'm going on my soapbox. It should be illegal for one district to pay teachers to attend Columbia Teachers College for 20 + years of professional development while the outer boroughs get none. It should be illegal for one school to have air conditioning and another not. It should be illegal for a school to hire only inexperienced teachers to save money. It should be illegal for one district to hire all the Ivy league graduates and none in the outer boroughs. It should be illegal for a PTA to raise a million dollars to spend in one school while others can only raise \$5000 through no fault of their own. The DOE should be doing the research teachers don't have time for, but leave teachers the freedom of choice.

I think you'll find Mark Treyger agrees with me, former NYC Council's Committee on Education chair.

Do we work in a democracy? It sure doesn't feel like it!

Thank you

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