



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Eric Adams

NYS Senator Eric Adams Hails Judge's Decision to Block School Closings

ERIC ADAMS March 27, 2010

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Statement from NYS Senator Eric Adams

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“Justice Lobis’ ruling is a triumph for the NAACP, the UFT, and the elected officials and parents who sued to prevent the school closings and protect our children and our communities. I was one of those elected officials.”

The New York City Department of Education plan to close 19 schools for poor performance has been overturned by Justice Joan B. Lobis of State Supreme Court. The judge ruled that the City was guilty of “significant violations” of the new state law governing mayoral control of schools and ordered that any proposals to shutter schools be made with “meaningful community involvement.”

NYS Senator Eric Adams states: “Our lawsuit argued that the mayoral control law passed last year by the State Legislature required the Department of Education to provide detailed ‘educational-impact statements’ that explained the effect of any school closing on its

students and on neighboring schools. We contended that the City had violated the spirit of this requirement by furnishing information that was deficient in the 'detailed analysis that an impact statement mandates' and by giving inadequate notification to the public before conducting hearings.

"Justice Lobis held that the new mayoral control law 'created a public process with meaningful community involvement regarding the chancellor's proposals' and necessitated a public role in closing decisions, including meaningful hearings and statements that clarified how a closing would affect the community, before any decisions were irrevocable.

"The Department of Education of the City of New York has a responsibility to its students, families, and communities to be thoughtful and methodical in any decision to close a school. The State Legislature established a protocol last year, and the process clearly was not followed. It requires individual site hearings and consultations, and the unprecedented outcry from neighborhoods affected by the school closures is ample evidence of the DOE's lack of respect for this law.

"No one is concocting excuses for struggling schools; everyone agrees that they must successfully educate our young people. The issue is whether these schools deserve immediate closure or an opportunity to improve – and whether they have been given appropriate support prior to the decision to shut them down.

"I joined the lawsuit filed by the NAACP and the UFT in the belief that the DOE had forfeited its right to close these 19 schools because it had violated the state law that governs school closures. Schools and students deserve the fair and thoughtful process the law dictates, and any attempt to circumvent that process must be challenged."

"As Justice Lobis wrote, the entirety of the mayoral control law 'must be enforced, not

merely the portion extending mayoral control of the schools.”

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