



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Jesse Hamilton

Community Unites in Support of Protecting Medgar Evers College Prep School in Brooklyn

EAN FULLERTON October 25, 2017

| ISSUE: **EDUCATION, ELEMENTARY & SECONDARY EDUCATION, COMMUNITY**



Brooklyn, NY – Wednesday afternoon, elected officials, educators, and parents voiced their objections to Department of Education (DOE) imposed changes planned for Medgar Evers College Preparatory School (MECPS) at the corner of Nostrand Avenue and Carroll Street in Brooklyn. The coalition is particularly concerned that community consultation and input was not sought prior to the DOE imposing changes, which are feared to threaten the successful academic model of MECPS. Parents and community leaders have

high praise for the current structure of the school, which has a 96% graduation rate and pipeline to great colleges such as Columbia University and Cornell University.

NYS Senator Jesse Hamilton said, “The parents and educators at Medgar Evers College Preparatory School deserve to have their voices heard. They deserve a say before the Department of Education imposes changes on admissions or other major areas that will impact the success of this high-performing school. Failing to consult with parents and educators is unacceptable. That’s why I am introducing legislation that will enshrine this simple principle in State law. The DOE should consult with parents and educators, hear out their concerns, and ensure the community has had an opportunity to engage. That process should take place well beforehand, I should not have parents calling my office afraid that the DOE is about to impose changes that have not been aired, or parents telling me that they are being blindsided by DOE changes. At minimum, what is happening at Medgar Evers College Preparatory School represents a failure in outreach. We will not stand by and see our community failed in this manner.”

“We must continue to advocate for a quality education and excellence, when it comes to the academic future of our youth,” said Assemblywoman Diana C. Richardson. “It is imperative that we collectively seek ways to strengthen, not dismantle, our high performing model, Medgar Evers College Preparatory School.”

NYS Assemblyman Walter T. Mosley said, "For over a decade Medgar Evers College Preparatory School (MECPS) has been one of the top performing middle schools in New York

City. Thus, it is incomprehensible that the DOE would attempt to water-down their academic standards, and limit their student body diversity by altering the admissions policy to concentrate on low-income, minority students in a school that already has a sizeable population of both. I am proud to stand alongside my colleagues in government as we call for the DOE to forge strong community partnerships, and work with the parents, faculty, staff and elected officials in an effort to serve children in need, without dismantling such a highly successful and proven program, such as MECPS."

NYC Public Advocate Letitia James said, "There's nothing more important than ensuring every single one of our children has access to a high quality education. Medgar Evers College Preparatory School educates some of the City's brightest students and helps them excel, and I am deeply concerned about the DOE's decision to change academic programs and admission criteria. Instead of altering a program that is clearly working, we must prioritize the success of the students and MECPS."

Brooklyn Borough President Eric L. Adams said, "Medgar Evers College Preparatory School is a great institution in Crown Heights, and its academic program has proven to be a stellar example of academic leadership done right in Brooklyn. The DOE should not be changing a formula that works particularly well in an already challenging part of our borough. We should be expanding access to high-quality opportunity for all children, but not at the expense of an institution that is working."

NYC Council Member Laurie Cumbo said, “As we nurture the next generation of leaders and influencers, it is imperative that we create opportunities for every student to pursue higher education and career success. Ultimately, any decision to change a school’s admission process must prioritize the needs of its surrounding community while creating a positive environment that supports academic excellence and promotes the holistic well-being of every student. I stand with the parents, the PTA, and students who want to preserve the vitality, mission, and vision of the Medgar Evers College Preparatory School. I want to make sure that the New York City Department of Education engages the entire school community and presents their rationale in a concise manner. Any proposal must address existing community concerns and fully integrate their voices. My office will continue to closely monitor the DOE’s proposal and community outreach.”

About Senator Hamilton:

Senator Jesse Hamilton has spent his entire career helping people, including over 15 years as President of the School Board and District Leader. He is a husband, father, and public servant delivering and fighting for one of the most diverse Senate districts in New York State.

###