

Solution to NYC Mayoral Control of Schools: Cooperative Governance Model

The Issue:

Mayoral control represents one person's power over the entire school system and it is antidemocratic and removes accountability power from New York City citizens.



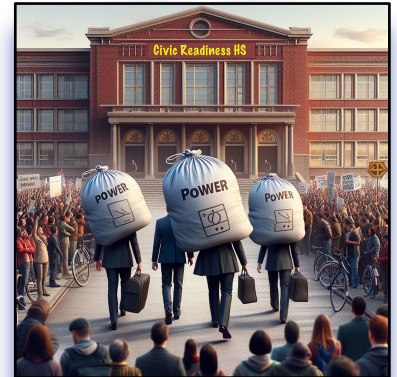
For 22 years, New York State legislators have refused to return control of the New York City public school system to local citizens who voted them into office.

They passed NYS laws that gave mayors, charters & nonprofit organizations and corporations opportunities to manage NYC public schools. Some of these organizations operate under a separate Affinity School District with their own boards of trustees. (See NYS Education Law §2590-g, §2590-k, §2581, §2582).

Here's what doesn't make sense.

NYS certified educators and administrators are professionals with expertise in instruction, learning, supervision, and parent engagement, and they, along with certified pupil personnel service providers, are needed by the mayor, charters, and Affinity organizations to run the schools.

So, why are private organizations and non-certified public officials trusted to manage public schools instead of the education professionals along with the local communities they serve?



- Parents and education professionals are saying they want school system transparency, the power to hold public school officials accountable, equal opportunities to participate in the governance of their public schools and not have them outsourced to private management.
- The legislators must return power to the people and repeal mayoral control in June 2024.
- In the spirit of fairness, there should be an equal number of appointed members on the Panel for Educational Policy. Specifically, two members each for the borough presidents, the mayor, the Presidents Council, and students.

What is the alternative solution to mayoral control of schools?

An inclusive, school community governance approach, called the Cooperative Governance model which addresses the power inequities within the system. This model redesigns how power and control influences the direction of NYC public schools and can begin adoption on July 1, 2024.

What is the Cooperative Governance Model?

- The *Cooperative Governance model* replaces the top-down power approach of previous mayors and chancellors.
- Power is jointly shared and focused on the collective responsibilities and interdependent roles within the system.

- These roles collaborate, share and can use resources effectively to support each other to achieve the common educational goals for New York City schools.
- This model functions by using current governance processes that are inclusive of all stakeholders.

What does jointly shared power and governance look like? It focuses on the collective responsibilities of school leadership teams, district leadership teams, Chancellor's team, and the Community Education Councils (CEC), which already have representatives in each area.

1. **School Leadership Teams (SLT):** Schools will have the freedom and opportunity to drive school innovations, reforms, types of educational resources, and budget allocations for their instructional programs. This is supported by *NYS Education Law §2590-I*. The work of empowered school leadership teams will bring diversity, equity, and inclusion to the system as they collaborate with all stakeholders in the design of their comprehensive education plans (CEP). The collective voice of the SLTs will provide the local school districts with the information they need to support school-based initiatives and funding.
2. **District Leadership Teams (DLT):** In collaboration with the superintendency team, the DLTs will review the CEPs of their local schools and use these plans to create the district comprehensive education plan (DCEP). The district will outline how it will support each school's initiatives and educational goals. The plan will include a report to the Chancellor that shows the requested budgets for each school, as well as the overall funding the district needs to provide resources and professional development based on the review of school CEPs.
3. **NYC Chancellor's Team:** The Chancellor's office will review all district CEPs to assess the overall educational and funding needs of the entire system. In the interest of transparency, the chancellor's team will develop a **Citywide Comprehensive Educational Support Plan** to ensure the success of each school district as outlined in their CEP plans and encourage local school-based innovations as stated in *NYS Education Law §2590-H*.

How does the Cooperative Governance Model ensure accountability within the system?

Accountability begins with stakeholders democratically choosing their leaders from the final list of candidates through the search process.



(1) SLTs within each district vote to select their superintendents. This process builds relationships with school stakeholders and superintendents.

(2) The Chancellor will be democratically selected by the collective votes of the SLTs, DLTs, and Panel for Educational Policy (PEP) within the school system. This means all schools and local school districts will get one vote along with the Panel for Educational Policy.

(3) Under the Cooperative Governance Model, parents and voting students have real input and representation in each area of the system, along with other education professionals.

(4) Accountability is interdependent in this model in that stakeholders and leaders hold each other accountable within the system based on their respective roles as outlined in NYS education law. This model is a community-driven, inclusive approach that brings instructional stability and efficiency to schools and will not be subject to political influences during each election cycle.

Another Recommendation:

It is recommended that Mayoral Control end June 2024 and the current Chancellor remain in his role, while he is given the task to collaborate with school stakeholders to transition the school system to the new governance model for 2025.

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