



CITY OF NEW YORK

MANHATTAN COMMUNITY BOARD FOUR

330 West 42nd Street, 26th floor New York, NY 10036
tel: 212-736-4536 fax: 212-947-9512
www.nyc.gov/mcb4

COREY JOHNSON
Chair

ROBERT J. BENFATTO, JR., ESQ.
District Manager

March 6, 2013

Dennis Walcott
Chancellor
NYC Department of Education
Tweed Courthouse
52 Chambers Street
New York, NY 10007

Re: PS 51 Pre-K

Dear Chancellor Walcott:

Manhattan Community Board 4 is in support of pre-kindergarten for the upcoming year at P.S. 51, temporarily located at 323 East 91 Street. It had been the expectation of the school administration, parent community, and the neighborhood at large that pre-kindergarten would return this coming September, when P.S. 51 moves into its newly constructed and expanded building on W. 44th Street.

The local Council Member – Speaker Christine Quinn – informs us that a decision was made to not continue the program and that no member of your staff informed her office of this decision. In fact it was the school community that alerted her staff. We find this troubling news. We believe any such decision should be made in consultation with the local stakeholders and elected official.

P.S. 51 has in the past successfully operated two pre-kindergarten sections. In fact, the school only stopped due to its temporary relocation. The intention was to always continue when back at the newly constructed school.

Reducing the number of pre-kindergarten seats seriously hinders our city's overall ability to provide students with quality education, support the most disadvantaged students, and build a strong and competitive school system. By withdrawing valuable pre-kindergarten seats, which were only temporarily given up due to extraordinary circumstances, our community is losing an important and necessary stepping stone to elementary school. Please reconsider this decision.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be "CJ", written over a light blue horizontal line.

Corey Johnson
Chair

cc: NYC Council Speaker Christine Quinn