
Previously: Shared Power

Before 2002, school decision-making in NYC was decentralized, with Elected School Boards, the Board of Education, and the Chancellor sharing power. School Boards had power over hiring and firing and over local budgets. Mayoral Control of Schools represented a shift to centralized power over schools, and it is a trend in urban centers where schools serve high percentages of low-income students of color. In NYC: the Mayor appoints the Chancellor and 8 members (out of 13) of the Panel for Educational Policy (PEP). The PEP votes on policies including significant school change proposals like closures and consolidations, and on school system contracts. Power to determine citywide policy and budget are centralized, with no meaningful checks and balances. The Mayor has the power, and Bloomberg used it, to fire PEP members who are likely to oppose his/her policies. Several PEP members under de Blasio have resigned or not re-appeared on the PEP after publicly expressing frustration with charter co-locations, contracts, etc..

Presently: No Meaningful Power

Under Mayoral Control, CECs replaced Community School Boards. They only have advisory powers (beyond those related to rezoning, which do not relate to CEC1, as an unzoned district). Mayoral control grants parents no meaningful power, **in sharp contrast with suburban schools**. The Mayor and Chancellor promised greater collaboration, transparency, and shared decision-making along with a commitment to equity. But parents and teachers system-wide have been disempowered under continued Mayoral Control and PTAs, SLTs, and CECs have not been empowered by this administration.

Empower local stakeholders

As we have stated in a resolution, in order to be effective, we believe that the unique needs of our community can only be met by local stakeholders who are empowered by a governance structure that supports transparency and shared decision-making. Because of this, CEC 1 is opposed to the renewal of Mayoral Control. In District One, we have seen the negative effects that centralization has on local communities. Since the inception of mayoral control and the removal of authority from local decision makers like the superintendents and elected bodies like the CEC and Presidents Council, many of our shared values have gone ignored to the detriment of some of our most high-risk students and families. The most recent shifts in administrative governance under Chancellor Fariña are still not enough to strengthen our communities and continue improving our schools.
