

THE

LITTLE NECK

*****CAR-RT-SORT**CR28
 L002551 A 01/19/92
 COREY BEARAK
 B2-35 251ST ST
 JAMAICA, NY 11426-2527

THE NEWSPAPER OF LITTLE NECK AND DOUGLASTON Vol. 71 No. 39 Thursday, March 1, 1990 25 Cents

8 • The Little Neck Ledger

Thursday, March 1, 1990

Letters To The Editor

Hiring Process Wrong

Dear Editor:

Chancellor Fernandez's proposed revision of the hiring process for principals, assistant principals and other supervisors would dramatically diminish—what should be—the *primary* role of parents in screening and recommending candidates to fill these crucial school positions.

Rather than cut back on patronage, cronyism and job-trading, the proposal appears merely to shift opportunities for such to teacher and supervisors from community school board members. The legislature barred school employees from holding office as community school board members to remove these opportunities for those school employees who act first for their own benefit. Indeed, at a recent meeting with parent leaders in my northeast Queens district, they expressed a clear

consensus for the current system, which excludes teachers despite their alliance with the Teacher's Union in last May's election.

The current system limits the initial screening of resumes and interviews (called "Level I") to parents and school board members. The only change at this level ought to be limited to permitting community school board members to auditing Level I to insure that supervisory candidates don't say one thing to the parents and an opposite think in their Level II interviews with the community school board. To insure the integrity of Level I, *parents* should be permitted to request an outside monitor from the board. Also, school boards should be free to opt out of all Level I interviews if they find that preferable.

The role of teachers and school administrators in this process should remain limited to working with parents to set up the criteria and qualities that they perceive their

school needs in a principal (or assistant principal).

In addition, the community superintendents should be required to recommend a minimum of three (3) and a maximum of five (5) candidates to the community school board at Level III.

Finally, I reiterate my long-standing opposition to the blanket introduction of any so-called neutral observer. Any outside monitor of the hiring process sent by the Central Board of Education should be imposed based on demonstrated need, or, as I said above, the invitation of the parents involved in the interviewing and screening process. Indeed, my board remains superseded because our predecessor board stood opposed to the imposition of such an outside intervener which the then chancellor asserted was necessary to insure a fair effort to hire black and Hispanic supervisors (it's interesting to note that

Asians, the largest minority in the district, were not a concern). The predecessor board certainly was not intolerant and was open and fair in its selection. No one was refused hiring based on their being of African or Hispanic descent.

The proposal does contain a worthwhile improvement. It correctly removes the current prerogative of a school board member to call to Level III a candidate not recommended by the parents.

The promise of decentralization—good schools for a children through parent empowerment—have been realized in some districts and many schools. If fully implemented and monitored, all New York City public school children will reap its benefit.

Sincerely,
 Corey Bearak, member,
 School Board 26