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CHAIM M. DEUTSCH
COUNCIL MEMBER, 48- DISTRICT

Honorable Richard Carranza
Chancellor, New York City Schools
Tweed Courthouse
52 Chambers Street
New York, NY 10007

November 13, 2019

Dear Chancellor Carranza,

I write to express my deep concerns regarding a member of Community Education Council – District 22. It is my understanding that as Chancellor, you have ultimate oversight over the volunteer members of the CEC.

In September, Dr. Jackie Cody sent an email to CEC members from several districts, referring to Asian-American children as “yellow children”, and their parents as “yellow folks”. Despite other CEC members informing Dr. Cody that her language was an offensive racial slur, Dr. Cody did not apologize.

Last night, I attending a CEC-22 meeting in my district, at PS 206 in Gravesend. Also in attendance were hundreds of parents and children from District 22, which is one-quarter Asian-American. The attendees were frustrated at Dr. Cody for her racist language, and they expressed that respectfully, holding up signs throughout the meeting. I was repeatedly stunned – and frankly disgusted – at the attitude and disdain shown for the attendees of the meeting by members of the CEC-22, and Dr. Cody in particular. At several points, Asian-American attendees were mocked, laughed at, ignored, or told they “need to put down their signs” and “relax”.

When I was offered a chance to speak, I passed the mic along to Dr. Cody, hoping she would apologize. She offered a tepid apology, during which she excused her usage of a racial slur and stated that she had to “think about offering an apology”, because “there were certain things that happened to me too”. Her attitude and demeanor spoke volumes about how sincere her “apology” really was.

It is distressing that a member of the CEC, who is expected to represent and advocate for a diverse body of students, could be so tone-deaf to a huge population of school families. After I left the meeting, community members shared with me video of speeches that followed mine, including one by a member

of CEC-22 who implied that I, and the Asian-American attendees, were perpetuating a “negative cycle of white supremacy”. This is an outrageous claim to make about members of two historically marginalized communities – Asians and Jews.

When hatred or bias faces one community, it is crucial that all communities stand together to combat that hate. I have stood with my BLAC (Black, Latino, Asian Caucus) colleagues numerous times when New Yorkers of other racial or ethnic backgrounds were targeted, and my colleagues have done the same with me when the Jewish community has been targeted. **I expect that you will take swift steps to assure the Asian-American community here in New York City that you, as Chancellor, will not tolerate hateful and racial language directed towards their ethnicity.**

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Chaim Deutsch". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Hon. Chaim Deutsch
Councilmember, 48th District