



VIA EMAIL: CGFarina@schools.nyc.gov

Carmen Farina
Chancellor
New York City Department of Education
52 Chambers Street
New York, NY 10007

Dear Chancellor Farina:

I am writing you regarding the recent violation of my rights as a public school parent with children in the New York City Public School System. I am the mother of Mymoena Davids, a 10th grade student attending La Guardia High School and Eric Davids, a Kindergarten student attending P.S. 106-The Parkchester School in the Bronx.

On Friday morning, I attended the P.S. 106X Parent Association election meeting. Marian Martinez, the District 11 District Family Advocate, administered the elections. I first met Ms. Martinez six years ago when I was Co-President of P.S. 160X-The Walt Disney School. At that time, I filed a complaint against Ms. Martinez for her refusal to help the parents secure our Title 1 funds from the Principal. After filing my complaint, we finally received the Title 1 funds. (Unfortunately, the funds the principal never distributed in previous years were not recouped because they were already spent by her.)

At Friday's meeting, I was nominated by a parent as a candidate for President of the Parent Association (PA). I spoke after another parent, who had nominated herself. During my turn to address the parent members, I began speaking about my experience as a former PA Co-President and School Leadership Team member six years ago. Continuing with my experience and background as an active parent, I began speaking about my experience for the past few years as a full-time, unpaid volunteer founder and President of the New York City Parents Union. I was immediately interrupted by Ms. Martinez who told me I cannot say anything about the New York City Parents Union.

Madame Chancellor, I was frankly shocked that Ms. Martinez believed that she had the authority as a NYC Department of Education employee to censor my biography and professional speech addressed to the parent membership.

I did not argue with Ms. Martinez or cause a scene. Needless to say, however, I lost the election because parents did not learn about me or my candidacy -- I was blocked from speaking about the experience and work I do as an advocate. Please note that other parents who attended the

meeting *will* provide signed letters confirming Ms. Martinez's interruption and her inappropriate and prejudicial statements.

This situation is simple and outrageous. My rights as a public school parent were violated; the Chancellor's Regulation A-660 was violated when my presentation was interrupted and my remarks censored.

D. Candidate Rights (A-660, Page 7, Paragraph D)

Addressing membership - During the election meeting, candidates must be provided with an opportunity to address the membership prior to voting. If a candidate is not able to be present, another member may read the candidate's statement. The PA/PTA bylaws may include a process for the distribution of candidate statements prior to the elections, but after nominations have been closed. This process may include the hosting of candidate forums. ***All candidates must be given an equal opportunity to participate. [Emphasis added]***

Chancellor Farina, If it is not your policy to ban and censor New York City Parents Union members -- or other advocates who seek to participate in supporting their children's educations -- then I expect you and the Department of Education to take immediate corrective action with Ms. Martinez and to conduct a new election at P.S.106X.

Should you have any further questions, feel free to contact me via email at mona@nycparentsunion.org

Respectfully yours,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Mona Davids". The signature is written in a cursive style and is placed on a light gray rectangular background.

Mona Davids
Founder and President
New York City Parents Union