



CITY OF JERSEY CITY
OFFICE OF THE MAYOR

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February 7, 2020

Lorenzo Richardson, Board President
Jersey City Board of Education
346 Claremont Avenue
Jersey City, New Jersey 07305

Board President Lorenzo Richardson,

After being blindsided with the news regarding additional layoffs at the A. Harry Moore School that was sent to faculty yesterday, February 6th, I am deeply concerned. The actions by both the Board of Education and NJCU are contrary to the first meeting we had when the A. Harry Moore issue arose. As I have repeatedly asked both parties over the last few months, and I will ask you yet again: What is your plan as the first steps need to be taken by the BOE?

There has been no long-term strategy, only delay in action, and this speaks volumes to the priorities of all.

Yet again, I am publicly reiterating my steadfast belief that the children of A. Harry Moore deserve to be at a renovated A. Harry Moore School. They certainly do not deserve to be pushed around to crammed temporary facilities or “long-term trailers” as currently proposed by the BOE. Would you find this acceptable for your children?

The Jersey City Board of Education needs to make decisions and show leadership to help the children at A. Harry Moore School with a long term, acceptable solution for all, including parents and students.

As previously discussed, the BOE has assets that are drastically underutilized and can be strategically deployed to solve the A. Harry Moore building right now. The BOE can start with the old PS3 on Bright St. It currently houses the Renaissance Program, which, per the Superintendent, has between 50 - 70 children.

My strong recommendation is that the Board of Education partner with the Jersey City Redevelopment Authority (JCRA) to sell the old PS3, using the one-time revenues from the sale to match the one-time costs of the renovation at A Harry Moore. The market value of the old PS3 is certainly more than the engineering assessment for full renovations of A. Harry Moore. A timeline can then be set to return the children back to the completely renovated A. Harry Moore facility. The BOE leadership has already indicated there are alternate locations within the district to relocate the Renaissance Program, and this coupled with the City’s commitment that we would be willing to help expedite funds, if the funds were guaranteed by an asset like this PS3 building.

Up to this point we have not heard of any recommendations to solve this crisis that are acceptable to faculty, parents and students. There is no reason that a building like the old PS3 should be sitting virtually empty when the demand is so high for seats and the need for renovation at A Harry Moore exists. It is time that the Board of Education takes action.

We stand with the parents of A Harry Moore and we stand ready as a City to help with the better utilization of assets but the first step needs to come from the BOE. Trailers and temporary structures are simply an unacceptable solution.

Respectfully,

Steven M. Fulop

Cc:
Superintendent Franklin Walker
President Sue Henderson; NJCU
City Councilmembers
Board of Education Members
A. Harry Moore PTO President