



NEW YORK
CITY BAR

**COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION &
THE LAW**

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Chancellor Richard Carranza
52 Chambers Street
New York, New York 10007

Re: Invitation from the NYCBA Education and the Law Committee

Dear Chancellor Carranza:

On behalf of the Education and the Law Committee of the New York City Bar Association, it is our pleasure to welcome you as Chancellor of the largest and most complex school district in the United States. Your initial school visits reveal your sincere interest in acquiring an understanding of the city's 1.1 million remarkable students, its fine educators, and its many and varied schools. As Albert Einstein said: "It is the supreme art of the teacher to awaken joy in creative expression and knowledge." We are especially delighted that you are an experienced educator, one who will undoubtedly bring your deep knowledge and understanding of educational issues to the challenges and opportunities ahead.

The Education and the Law Committee offers you its resources and assistance. The Committee is nonpolitical and represents a diverse cross-section of experienced education lawyers, including advocates, scholars, government employees (both city and state), teachers, practitioners, and parents. Its mandate is to study and address the full range of legal and policy issues surrounding education, from pre-K through higher education, including school diversity, integration, and zoning; educational quality and equity; special education; school safety and discipline; school finance; career and technical education; non-public and charter schools; and education and community resource requirements for vulnerable populations.¹

¹ We also have access to and collaborate with the City Bar's Civil Rights, Sex and Law, Land Use Planning and Zoning, and Disabilities Law Committees, as well as its Office for Diversity Pipeline Initiatives.

We read with great interest your recent remarks given at Stuyvesant High School, and in subsequent interviews, and were heartened by your willingness to address head-on the issues of segregation in our city's schools. New York City was identified as one of the most segregated school districts in the country by the UCLA Civil Rights Project. This report observed that, between 1989 and 2010, the number of schools with over 90% concentration of students of color increased by 70%. The City Council School Diversity Accountability Act of 2015 indicates that DOE strategies to increase diversity, while well-intentioned, have not been extensive enough to meaningfully impact the wide disparities in opportunities to learn that exist in different parts of the city. Moreover, this year's admissions data for the city's selective high schools show both the lack of access as well as the lack of equitable preparation for students of certain demographic backgrounds and those who live in certain zip codes. As *Brown v. Board of Education* instructs, high quality, equitable education cannot be achieved in racially and economically segregated schools.

We are more than aware of the complexity of these issues. As lawyers, educators, and parents, we offer you our expertise and energy. To that end, we invite you to meet with the members of our Committee to discuss your thoughts and to allow us to offer suggestions on how we may support you in addressing these challenges and opportunities. Please contact our Chair, Laura D. Barbieri, to arrange a meeting as soon as your schedule permits. We look forward to hearing from you.

Thank you, and welcome again, Chancellor!

Laura D. Barbieri
Chair, Education and the Law Committee



Stefanie Coyle
Subcommittee Chair, Diversity Committee

