

**NYC PARENTS AND STUDENTS ON TRACK
TO DERAIL KLEIN'S EFFORT TO WRECK SUCCESSFUL SCHOOL
STUDENT, STAFF AND PARENTS TO RALLY ON
THURSDAY, APRIL 27, 2006, 111 BROADWAY, 5:00 P.M.**

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NEW YORK CITY, April 26, 2006 - The students, families and staff of NEST+m will rally to protest Chancellor Joel Klein's decision to squeeze an experimental charter school into their already crowded public school building. Klein has taken this action against New York City's first and only K-12 public school despite it having, after only four years of existence, achieved perfect or near perfect scores on every standardized test at every grade level* and a 100 percent graduation rate in its high school, which subsequently has had students admitted to Columbia, University of Pennsylvania, Wesleyan, Yale and other outstanding post-secondary schools.

The **rally to defend the educational excellence** enjoyed by NEST+m's extraordinarily diverse student population, which speaks 29 different languages and represents nearly every ethnic group in New York City, is **scheduled for Thursday, April 27th for 5:00 p.m. outside at the Center for Charter School Excellence Leadership Summit, 111 Broadway, Trinity Center Building, between Pine and Cedar Streets**, where Klein is the keynote speaker at a reception for these quasi-private educational ventures that have mostly disappointed with their results.

The NYC Department of Education's (DOE) plan to invade NEST+m's space, which it hatched in concert with the Hamptons-based Ross Institute and New York University, has been in the works for two years. NEST+m, though, only learned of it on March 28th due to a leak to the NEST+m Parent-Teacher Association. Since then NEST+m representatives have met with State Assembly Speaker Sheldon Silver, Klein, and DOE officials and, using the actual 2006-07 NEST+m enrollment figures and architectural diagrams, demonstrated that it – and any incoming school – would be seriously compromised by cramming the two into the building.

At the meeting, Klein and Garth Harries who heads new school development at the DOE, had *no* plan – either concrete or conceptual – as to how the two schools could effectively share the building. Speaker Silver directed Chancellor Klein to stop Region 9's harassment of parents of incoming NEST+m students, who have been receiving phone calls suggesting the school they and their children have chosen may soon be closed. He requested that the DOE return on Monday, April 24th, with a written plan that would demonstrate the feasibility of the two schools sharing space.

On Monday, April 24th, Harries produced *neither* that written plan *nor* the cease-and-desist order to Region 9. Instead he told representatives from Speaker Silver's office and NEST+m how many classrooms and how much office space the charter school would require. After conceding that it would be *impossible* to find any space on the lower floor, which houses NEST+m's elementary school, Mr. Harries recommended locating the charter school's initial classes, which will comprise solely the primary grades, on the upper floor, where NEST+m's high school is. He suggested that NEST+m "figure it out."

After an analysis, NEST+m administrators figured *this* out: To accommodate the charter school's needs as "calculated" by Harries, NEST+m's high school would have to eliminate all honors, Regents, language and Advanced Placement classes, as well as electives and SAT prep, while seriously overloading its remaining classrooms. The college preparatory school's students would not be left with a skeletal program of core classes – rather they would be left lacking the courses required for admission to the sort of post-secondary schools for which they came to NEST+m to ready themselves. In other words, one can glean some disturbing specifics from Harries vague prescription – although it may sound like a formula for cooperation between two schools, it is actually a call for NEST+m to initially compromise and, as the charter school adds its secondary grades, surrender its purpose and perhaps its existence.

*ECLAS, NYS Standardized Tests, 8th Grade ELA and Math Tests