



Parents &
Teachers
Association
Executive Board

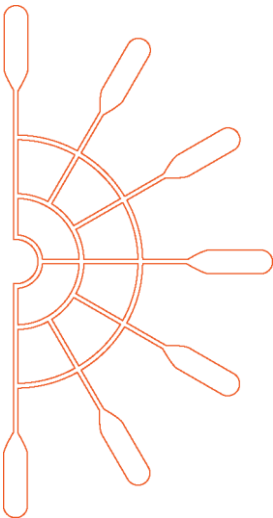


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May 8, 2018

Dear *New York Post* editorial staff, Sara Dorn and Susan Edelman,

We write in response to a biased and poorly reported story that ran in the *New York Post* on Sunday, May 6, 2018, regarding Brooklyn Heights parents choosing to leave the neighborhood for middle school. Many 5th grade parents were approached for comment, but those that shared positive experiences and stories were left out of the article. One parent of an MS8 graduate and current 5th grader excited to attend MS8 was told by the reporter Sara Dorn that her comments were not needed because the reporter had already heard positive things about MS8 from parents sending their children there and she was specifically looking for parents sending their children to charter schools.

Despite the good expressed about MS8 by so many, there was little positive language about the school in the article. The article's purpose appeared to be the denigration of a neighborhood public school in favor of another school. To have the hard work and success of MS8's teachers, students, administrators, and parents reflected so poorly, for the sake of pitting one hard-working school against another, is a disservice and an insult to all involved and invested in public education in New York City.

School choice can be valuable for parents and guardians in pursuit of the right educational fit for their children. To disparage a school like MS8, which has successfully traversed the various transitions one might expect at a fledgling school, is unnecessary and unappreciated by the community that has poured its heart into ensuring its success.

Furthermore, at a time when the stark racial segregation in NYC public schools is again in the headlines, the under-reported story is that MS8 is a success. It is an example of a racially (34% white, 41% black, 16% Hispanic, 1% American Indian/Alaskan, 4% Asian, 1% Hawaiian/Pacific Islander and 3% multiracial), ethnically and socio-economically mixed public middle school serving students of all academic levels that is working hard to support and foster an inclusive, supportive school environment. The commitment of MS8 teachers, administrators, students and parents to racial diversity and equity shows in the ELA and Social Studies curriculum and has led to various programs to support restorative justice practices and persistent dialogue about equity both in the school and community at large. With the continued efforts of engaged students, parents, guardians, administrators and teachers, we continue to strengthen our MS8 community.

Most importantly perhaps, MS8 is succeeding academically. MS8's high school admissions have been strong. MS8 offers Regents Algebra and Living Environment to all students in 8th grade, and students have historically done very well on those tests. MS8 also has a new science lab, a lovely art room, a fitness room upstairs (MS8 students currently have exclusive access to the larger gym one period a day, and additional access is expected to be available for sports team practice next year), and we are forging science and other partnerships with neighbor universities City Tech College and NYU Tandon. That the Spanish teacher left in the beginning of the academic year due to familial illness and could not be replaced was difficult, but the program is expected to resume in the fall.

Every marker indicates that MS8 is growing nicely into its position as a cornerstone of middle school education in District 13. The MS8 community is excited to welcome the many students continuing from our lower to our middle school next year, and all those joining us from the other amazing District 13 elementary schools.

Sincerely,

The PS8/MS8 PTA Executive Board & School Leadership Team