

January 17, 2018

The Honorable Bill de Blasio
Mayor, City of New York
City Hall
New York, NY 10007

Re: Shuttle Bus Service for McKee/Staten Island Tech Athletes

Dear Mayor de Blasio:

I hope this letter finds you well.

I am writing to advise you of the need, in the spirit of equity and access, to re-institute a shuttle bus service so that athletes from inner-city Ralph McKee Vocational and Technical High School (McKee) will have access to their own athletic fields, which are located at Staten Island Technical High School (SITHS).

As you may know, SITHS was originally a remote campus of McKee in the mid-1980s; a magnet school for engineering. When it morphed into SITHS in 1988, Athletic Director Bob Steele had the vision to keep the two athletic programs under a single umbrella, and that joint PSAL program is today referred to as McKee/Staten Island Tech, or MSIT. The program has morphed from the original nine teams to an incredible 38 teams, serving nearly 900 student athletes from both schools each year.

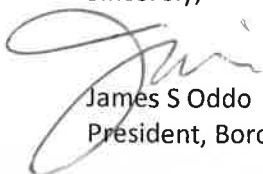
The problem is that the fields are located at the campus of SITHS. Of the 893 student athletes participating in MSIT's PSAL programs, only 126 hailed from McKee during the 2016-2017 PSAL seasons – roughly 14%. The principal reason for this discrepancy is transportation: to travel from McKee to the athletic complex requires a 45 minute to one hour, after school commute. As you might imagine, this puts a severe damper on McKee students' interest or willingness to participate in PSAL programs.

I believe strongly in the Department of Education's "Equity and Access" Initiative, and nowhere can I imagine a more glaring nullification of equity and access than in this case. Therefore, I am requesting the re-institution of a McKee – Staten Island Tech shuttle bus that existed during the 1990s and early 2000s, providing "equity and access" long before the term was coined.

I urge you to give this request your strongest consideration. It would be a relatively small investment to make in the future of many inner-city children.

Thank you for your kind attention.

Sincerely,



James S Oddo
President, Borough of Staten Island

