

April 23, 2018

Deputy Chancellor Elizabeth Rose
Deputy Chancellor Corinne Rello-Anselmi
New York City Department of Education
52 Chambers Street
New York, NY, 10007

Re: Conditions at D75-PS 25 North Shore Annex, Castleton Avenue

Dear Deputy Chancellors Rose and Rello-Anselmi:

I am writing to express my deep concern about sub-par and dangerous conditions affecting approximately 110 District 75 students and 30 staff members at the north shore PS 25 Annex on Castleton Avenue. It appears that serious safety issues exist at this location, and have for some time.

This is unacceptable, and I hope that we can work together to resolve these issues.

To start with, the school has no school safety agents and no radios. Because of this, students and staff are at risk in the event there is an intruder, as well the potential risk to students who, by nature of their disability, are flight risks. Classrooms, the gymnasium and the lunchroom are located in basement spaces without windows, and there is photographic evidence of mold, mice and roach infestation.

Parents, administrators, staff and the United Federation of Teachers are understandably deeply concerned about this; not only do their special needs children have a right to a quality and equitable education, they have a right to receive that education in a building that gives all concerned a secure and safe environment, free from these serious health violations.

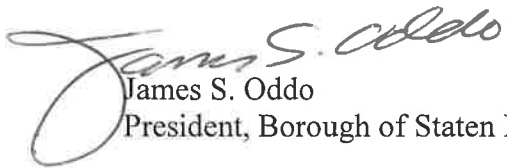
Principal James McKeon has informed me that there was an agreed-upon re-siting plan to move the middle school students to space at IS 61, and the elementary students to PS 3. The plan however was set aside with the explanation that the space at IS 61 would now be utilized for students from PS 373. As well, Principal McKeon was told that the space at PS 3 was being held for students not yet in the system – the “turning 5s.”



This has left the existing D75- P25 students at the north shore site with no relief from the disgraceful and inexcusable conditions which presently exist. None of this speaks to equity, access and excellence. I am hereby requesting that an intensive effort be made to relocate the students and staff from the north shore annex of PS 25; I believe this should receive a higher priority than it has to this point in time. More immediately, I am requesting that a school safety agent be assigned to the site as soon as possible, and that proper inspections be made to confirm the presence of mold, mildew and/or pest infestation infiltration. If so confirmed, immediate steps must be taken to mitigate these problems.

I look forward to hearing from you at your earliest convenience to discuss these issues.
Thank you for your kind attention.

Sincerely,


James S. Oddo
President, Borough of Staten Island