

New York City Social Justice Organizations Oppose the Destruction of the Julia Richman Education Complex!

We stand together with the students, families, and teachers of the Julia Richman Education Complex (JREC) community in opposing its proposed destruction and relocation by the City and Hunter College.

The majority of our city's public schools are either failing our children or creating quasi-private institutions that exclude low-income children of color. Over the past 12 years, through enormous dedication and commitment, JREC has turned around a failing school and created six schools that provide an important example and model of public schools that serve and prioritize the learning, growth, and full development of low-income and children of color. Why should a plan to disrupt and destroy such a thriving educational community even be considered?

The struggle to save Julia Richman is connected to all our struggles for social justice. At a time when low-income and communities of color across the city are facing cut-backs, displacement due to gentrification, and attacks to basic human rights and dignity, JREC has built and maintained powerful and strong school communities. Displacing these communities must be stopped. The proposal to destroy JREC reveals, yet again, the City's and the Department of Education's contemptuous disregard for low-income and families of color.

This deep disrespect and disregard is also illustrated in the secret and behind-doors way in which the proposal was concocted – without any consultation from the JREC community. "Elite" public schools that serve middle/upper class and white families would not be facing the same dislocation. JREC's children deserve the same respect!

We understand Hunter intends to build a high-rise for its science facilities on the JREC site. We are not disputing Hunter's needs, but they cannot be met at the expense of JREC students. We appeal to Hunter College to honor its long-standing commitment to affordable public education by not putting its needs before the needs of our city's public school children.

The JREC schools deserve to be celebrated and supported--not destroyed!

The Campaign to Save the Julia Richman Education Complex is specifically requesting that organizations sign on to this statement, which will be sent to Hunter's President, Jennifer Raab (president@hunter.cuny.edu), NYC's Chancellor, Joel Klein (jklein@schools.nyc.gov), and City University Chancellor Matthew Goldstein (yvette.jones@mail.cuny.edu).

The following groups have committed their support to the Save JREC Campaign:

- Art for Change
- Brooklyn Childcare Collective
- Brotherhood/Sister Sol
- Center for Collaborative Education

- Center for Immigrant Families
- Class Size Matters, Leonie Hanison, Executive Director
- Coalition of Essential Schools
- Domestic Workers United
- DRUM – Desis Rising Up & Moving
- El Puente
- Greater New York Labor-Religion Coalition
- Independent Commission on Public Education
- Independent Parents Organizations
- It is Time
- Jews for Racial and Economic Justice
- National Center for Schools and Communities, John M. Beam, Executive Director
- New York Immigration Coalition
- North Star Fund
- NYCoRE
- Parentadvocates.org
- Teachers Unite
- Time Out from Testing
(List in progress)

To sign on, please email savejrec@jrec.org