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Gale A. Brewer, Borough President

October 3, 2014

Carmen Fariña
Chancellor
NYC Department of Education
52 Chambers Street
New York, NY 10007

Dear Chancellor Fariña:

As you may recall, I recently attended the Arts Endorsed Diploma Reception with you, where we celebrated the achievements of high school students who had completed 10 credits of arts education along with an arts assessment exam. This was a wonderful event, and I thank you for involving me. The Arts Endorsed Diploma is not only a tremendous honor for qualifying students, but also a mark of distinction for students pursuing further education or employment in the arts.

Given the potential value of such a distinction, I am requesting your help to develop a similar Technology Endorsed Diploma for students who take 10 credits of technology classes. These could include computer science or other related subjects to be determined by your staff. I believe that such a program would also enhance the prospects of students earning Mastery in Math or Science credits, especially given our joint focus on the importance of STEM education for New York City students.

As you know, New York's technology sector is growing rapidly, and we need to ensure that technology companies are hiring from New York City schools. Many technology jobs do not require a college diploma. A Technology Endorsed Diploma from the New York City Department of Education could open the door to a successful career or college experience for thousands of New York City students. Although I'm sure you share my enthusiasm for these possibilities, the problem is the dearth of computer science classes in the current DOE curriculum.

Fortunately, I believe I have a solution. The New York City Foundation for Computer Science Education (CSNYC) is a nonprofit organization launched in 2013 by Venture Capitalist Fred Wilson, Evan Korth (NYU) and Sarah Holloway (Columbia), with a goal of ensuring that all New York City public school children have access to computer science education. Beginning with the Academy for Software Engineering (AFSE) in Manhattan, and its sister school, the Bronx Academy for Software Engineering (BASE), CSNYC has since expanded and is now supporting 100 schools through a variety of programs. While this expansion is impressive, there are still many more students who need access to this curriculum. CSNYC and other private donors have committed \$12.5m to expand their programs over the next several years. They are looking for matching funds from other private – and public –

donors. With a matching grant of \$25m from the DOE over the next five years (\$5m per year), the program would reach a scale that New York City schoolchildren need and deserve.

I believe that with this reasonable funding commitment from the City, we could meet our shared goal of better preparing New York City public school children for the 21st century. With this unique public-private partnership, New York can become a model for the country and the world. I hope you will agree that the benefits of such an investment far outpace the costs.

In summary, I hope we can collaborate on a Technology Endorsed Diploma and on support for Computer Science education. When I recently visited the Urban Assembly Gateway School for Technology at 439 West 49 Street, I saw firsthand what funding, an extraordinary principal, and teachers who have a background in coding, programming and animation can accomplish with their students.

I think this idea is very worthy of serious consideration from the DOE, and I would like to propose a meeting with the CSNYC leadership and your office to discuss this plan in more detail. Thank you in advance for your consideration, and I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,



Gale A. Brewer