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**TRANSCRIPT: MAYOR DE BLASIO, SCHOOLS CHANCELLOR CARRANZA
DELIVER REMARKS AT STUYVESANT HIGH SCHOOL**

Mayor Bill de Blasio: Well, good morning, everyone.

Audience: Good morning.

Mayor: I want to thank you but first let me thank Linda for her extraordinary leadership. Let's thank her for all she has done.

[Applause]

This is very gratifying to be before you because you are creating the future of our city and our society. There is so much power in what you're doing because by teaching STEM you are unlocking for so many students their destiny. And we know we're in a city, we're in a nation where we desperately need a new generation of talented young people to pursue this field and it will only happen because of you.

This is literally crucial to the future in every sense – the future of our Earth, the quality of our life, our security, every piece of it runs through STEM education and you're unlocking that for thousands and thousands of kids.

So, just for that will you please give your neighbor a round of applause.

[Applause]

And I want to thank you because one way to tell how committed people are is to look what they do with their days off.

[Laughter]

You could be in Florida right now but you're here because you are so committed to our kids. That's worth a round of applause also.

[Applause]

Now, I always make the analogy that when I was coming up as a young person in the 1960s and into the 70s, we put on a pedestal, many of you may remember – we put on a pedestal the astronauts and the society was obsessed with the astronauts and they were the heroes and they were the trailblazers.

And I fundamentally believe our world has changed and our eyes have opened in such a way that we now understand the trailblazers, the creators of our future are our teachers. The educators will determine who we are and where we go right here on Earth.

[Applause]

We do not need to look to distant stars, we need to look right here in our own neighborhoods, right here in our own schools to see what will determine our future and to look up there to all of you up there as well. Thank you, everyone who – because you're determining where we will go because more than any other time in history, literally more than any other time in history, education determines human destiny.

For so many of us, when I was coming up a lot of young people I went to high school with, a high school education was going to serve them perfectly well but we know the bar keeps getting raised. We know the amount of education, the quality of education, the precise nature of the education determine more and more our destiny. And we know that those who have STEM education in particular have a whole wealth of opportunities before them.

So, I'm excited about what you do and I'm excited that you care so deeply. And I'm also excited because you not only get to be educators you get to be change-agents because we're at a time where we're changing the rules of the game. And it's very important to say this as I have the honor of bringing up our new Chancellor.

We are changing the rules of the game because we believe in equity, because we believe this school system's future is based on creating equity, where every child has opportunity, where every parent knows the school in their neighborhood is a good school that will serve their child well.

We believe in excellence. We don't want equity by dumbing the system down, we want equity by lifting all boats.

We believe in investment. We believe in investing in you which is why we put such an important emphasis on professional development because we see you as priceless professionals.

[Applause]

We believe you should be given every tool that will help you to success which is why we believe in early childhood education.

[Applause]

And by the way, we're only just getting started with pre-K because 3-K will be universal in the next few years as well.

[Applause]

We believe that a school system devoted to equity can achieve extraordinary things but you are the front line. You are the change-agents. You are the difference-makers.

When I thought about the choice of the next Chancellor, what ran through me throughout was this notion of equity and excellence. I needed someone who believed in equity in its core who didn't believe things would be right until there was fairness and consistency throughout our whole school system because the days when we used to accept the notion of the "good school" and the "bad school," we have to put those behind us.

We can't say we're the greatest city in the world if that's the way people are forced to think about their schools. We have to ensure that every school improves. But that notion of excellence too was so important. I knew we needed a Chancellor who believed that much greater things were possible.

I knew we needed a Chancellor who had urgency running through him. And I looked all over the country and I'll tell you one thing I knew that was pre-requisite. I knew the person who could lead all of you had to be one of you. The Chancellor had to be an educator.

[Applause]

And not just any educator but someone who had devoted his life, as you have with heart and soul and passion, someone who believed in our kids, someone who understood our kids because his own life took him on a journey so similar to so many of the kids you all serve every day.

Richard Carranza got into education exactly for the same reasons you did – because he believed he could change the world one life at a time, because he believed he could make a profound difference.

And when you hear him talk about his early experiences as a teacher, one of the things he says that's particularly beautiful is his parents taught him a real love for public education, a real belief in it so much so that at home they only spoke to him in Spanish because they had faith that the school system would teach him English and prepare him for his life ahead.

And he saw that faith play out and he saw the greatness of public education. He saw it transform his life and the lives of others and he decided he wanted to be a part of that. And he went throughout his career, kept rising up, and became Superintendent in San Francisco and led that system to hire levels of achievement while creating more equity. He went to Houston and led that system back after the worst natural disaster in the history of that city.

Like you, he knows how to stand and fight for our children. Like you, he knows that amazing sacred responsibility of being an educator, and he knows there are much greater things ahead for this school system.

Now, we all know he has very big shoes to fill.

[Laughter]

Maybe Carmen's shoes were not physically big –

[Applause]

But what Carmen Farina did for this school system over 50-plus years was nothing short of extraordinary. And that's a hard act to follow.

[Applause]

But Richard Carranza knows the goal of every leader is to take that baton, carry on that mission, and take it to the next level because we have even greater things ahead.

So, my dear friends, it is my profound honor to introduce to you, our new Chancellor, your new Chancellor, Richard Carranza.

[Applause]

Schools Chancellor Richard Carranza: My people, teachers, administrators.

[Applause]

You know Mr. Mayor, I really appreciate your words of introduction. Thank you very much. And while I may not be able to fill Chancellor Farina's shoes, I will tell you that everything else is at the right height. Everything else is at the right height, and what a great lady.

So, in all seriousness, Mr. Mayor thank you for that introduction. You know, we all, all of us in this room just you know us men and women we all are now going to now share one very important detail for the rest of my career. And that's the detail that this is the first meeting, the first visit that I have with teachers, administrators, and a school in the City of New York.

[Applause]

You're my first.

[Applause]

And I will tell you because I believe that a chancellor in the field is worth three in the seat. It's not going to be my last, not going to be my last. I do want to thank Doctor Curtis-Bey, our Director of STEM for her incredible work. Thank you for what you do.

[Applause]

And I also want to thank El Hefe, the guy that runs this school, Principal Eric Contreras for opening your doors and having us here. Thank you, señor.

[Applause]

So just a quick few thoughts, and as you know, you know once a Chancellor gets a microphone it's never a few quick thoughts, but just a few thoughts, because it's especially important for me today that on the second day on the job for me that I have an opportunity to speak to my colleagues. You see I was a teacher for almost a decade. I've been a high school principal in two different schools in two different states. And the one inalienable truth that I have found in my experiences is that if we do not lead from a sense of equity, and we do not lead from a sense of protecting the rights of our students and lifting our students, then who will? And if it's not for the public education system of America and of New York, you see the very future of New York is sitting in our classrooms right now or next week.

If we don't create the conditions for them to be prepared for a world which in many cases we don't even know what that world is going to look like by the time our pre-K, 3-K students walk across the stage and receive their diploma. You see then we are not preparing them for success in the future. So the reason that you are so important being here today is because I don't want you to read anything that says American education is failing, we're not failing. I've had the incredible pleasure, and honor –

[Applause]

I've had the incredible pleasure, and honor – a little kid from Avario in Tucson, Arizona that didn't speak English to travel the world and see educational systems across the world. And what I will tell you is that what we have in America is innovation. What students come from around the globe to do here in the United States is to learn to apply skills in a new and different kind of way. And you see that's what you're doing here, you're building your skill sets, you're sharing your skill sets. So I want to share with you two very quick stories of why I think STEM is so important. And see, people will say to you, well it's not just about STEM what about the arts. Let's between us just say it's about STEAM, right, we're going to add the A into the arts as well. It's about STEAM. But let me share with you why it's so important and I'm such a big supporter of STEAM and STEM education. You see I had the opportunity to visit a seventh grade classroom. And that seventh grade classroom they were doing a unit on physics. And the students had to be able to describe the difference between speed and velocity.

So traditionally what would happen is you'll take out your textbook and you'll read the section on speed and velocity and what you'll do is you'll say okay read that, and at the end of the

section answer the odd questions or the even questions and then you're done, right – speed, velocity taken care of. But see, you all believe that that's not the way to do it.

So what this teacher did, she had invested in technology. So, she used a technology not to supplant the instruction, because you could never supplant the instruction of a motivated, highly qualified teacher. So what she did, she took that technology and she said to her students and she had a classroom set of iPads and they used I-movie and what they did is they developed a rubric. How they were going to assess themselves on all of the projects they would throughout the school year. So what they did is they grouped in groups of three students and each group had to make a short, no more than five-minute video demonstrating the difference between speed and velocity.

Now think about that for a minute, if you're going to demonstrate, you have to know what it is. So, what they did is – on the day I visited, they got to share their IMovies. So they all walk in, they grab their iPads, Edmodo comes up on the screen, all the students log in, first group comes up, they upload their video, they play their video, and sure enough there's a student sliding down the hallway. And then they're measuring and they're using graphics to show how far. And then another one is dropping a watermelon off a roof to measure – incredibly creative and in every single one of these presentations, students were giving each other feedback. “Didn't quite understand it, it was blurry, you might want to think about putting some sand down so that you slide faster.” I mean great feedback.

So when they get done, everybody claps as each group gets done. They take that feedback, they capture it electronically, they email it to the students. The students have three days to revise their presentation for a final grade using the rubric that they have collaboratively developed.

Now, let me ask you this – who wouldn't, if you're an employer, want to hire those seventh grade students with those skill sets? If you're an institution of higher learning, who wouldn't want to admit those students into your student body? They're creative. They can work in teams. They can communicate. They can demonstrate. They can do all of the things that – we may not know what the careers look like in 15 years but I can tell you that being able to communicate, work in teams, demonstrate, be good at explaining things are going to be skills that will be universally transmittable to anyone, anywhere.

Why is that important? Because when we think of STEM education, we think about science, technology, engineering, and math.

[Laughter]

Right. It's time to blow it up. It's time to change the narrative around what STEM is and what STEAM is. It's about being excited. It's about demonstrating and we don't have to wait until they're seventh graders. We can start in pre-K.

Mayor: Amen.

Chancellor Carranza: We can start in pre-K.

[Applause]

By students using their hands, and using their hands and using their minds. Now, I've got a whole bunch of experiences, a whole bunch of examples that I could share with you but I just want to leave you with this – the work that you are doing is critically important not for the future of your school, not for the future of New York City's public schools, it's critical for the future of America.

The oldest democracy in the world – America.

And the only way to keep us the oldest democracy in the world is to educate our students in a creative way that they will be able to continue to demonstrate that creative thought as we go forward.

So, as one of your colleagues, as a teacher – I still consider myself a teacher, I just teach a little taller and older people now – I want to say what an honor it is to have my first visit be a classroom of hundreds of you.

Thank you for what you do. Thank you for touching the future. You make a difference.

[Applause]

Thank you. Now, Dr. Curtis-Bay, if I could have a little bit of privilege here.

[Chancellor Carranza speaks in Spanish]

For those of you who don't speak Spanish I said, it's going to be here. You have to learn Spanish –

[Laughter]

I'm just kidding. I said it snowed yesterday and I don't know if any of you noticed but I didn't even use an umbrella. So, I'm a New Yorker – or rain boots.

[Laughter]

[Chancellor Carranza speaks in Spanish]

It is a pleasure to be here with you, Mr. Mayor. Thank you for your incredible leadership. Together, we are going to take what you have already done and we're going to put it on a stage that no one's ever seen. We are going to provide you with the support that you need to do the work that you do and I want to say to you again, two words that teachers and administrators and public education advocates rarely hear in the rhetoric of the national conversation. I want to say to you simply and from the heart, thank you for what you do.

[Applause]

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