



THE CITY OF NEW YORK  
OFFICE OF THE MAYOR  
NEW YORK, NY 10007

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:** April 4, 2018  
**CONTACT:** [pressoffice@cityhall.nyc.gov](mailto:pressoffice@cityhall.nyc.gov), (212) 788-2958

**TRANSCRIPT: MAYOR DE BLASIO AND SCHOOLS CHANCELLOR RICHARD CARRANZA DELIVER REMARKS AT WEEKLY MEETING**

**Mayor Bill de Blasio:** Good morning, everyone. So, we are midway through a very exciting week as our new Chancellor has come on board and he as with everything he does in his life, has started with tremendous energy and optimism as he takes on the leadership of the largest school system in the United State of America. And this is our first formal meeting as we start the process of deepening our work at the Department of Education.

I want to say from the outset what Richard Carranza and I have talked about throughout is the need for the sense of urgency in everything we do over the next three years and nine months. We know the school system has been moving forward. We have seen it over the last four years – steady increases in our graduation rate, our highest graduation rate now in our entire history, a steady decrease in the dropout rate, steady improvement of test scores, a lot is working. Obviously the full scale implementation of Pre-K has been a great success. We have a lot of big initiatives that have begun and are bearing fruit, 3-K, advanced placement for all, computer science for all, college access for all. These are all building blocks of the future.

But Richard Carranza is the guy who is going to take it to the next level. We've started strong but my message to him from the beginning has been we need to do a lot more over the next three years and nine months. We are going to lay that out starting today and in the months to come to show what that means very tangibly.

Now Richard, you have a great team to work with. You are going to be working very closely not only with all the great folks at City Hall and DOE who are around the table, obviously especially First Deputy Mayor Dean Fuleihan and Deputy Mayor Phil Thompson who is going to be deeply involved in Pre-K and 3-K, and community schools elements of all of this.

We have a lot of work to do. I said from the beginning the goal was to shake the foundations of our school system. We have seen that is possible. We have seen how much change can happen quickly now we have got to do a lot more, a lot more quickly. That's the bottom line. Because we want to make sure that the change is lasting and is deep. And the Equity And Excellence vision really lays out a road map but it's not one that's well enough known so one of the things that Richard and I are going to focus on in the coming weeks and months is going all over this city – talking to parents, talking to teachers, talking to community members about what Equity and Excellence means.

He is the embodiment of this concept – I want that to be very clear. When you think about the fight for equity think about Richard Carranza because that is what his life's work has been. And that's what his life's journey has exemplified, you want an example of the American dream he's sitting right here. And also an example of what public education can mean and how it can transform not only a young person's life but a family's life. Richard has lived that life, he's traveled that journey.

One of the things that struck me as I got to know him was his extraordinary ability to communicate about everyday people's lives. I think he's going to have the ability to talk to students, to talk to parents, to talk to community members in a powerful way and help them join into this Equity and Excellence vision. One other thing I want to note we are going to be obsessively focused on getting our kids' reading on third grade level. Kids reading on third grade level have a world of possibilities ahead. We've made some real progress over the last few years, but again one of the hallmarks of Richard's tenure will be to take that progress and supercharge it, get more and more kids each year reading on third grade level. That will build a foundation for so much of the success ahead.

And as we start this week, I want to tell you what I think you're going to see when you get to the last week of December of 2021. I think you're going to see that because of Richard Carranza and this great team a lot changed in our schools and a lot of progress was made. And there was a lot more equity, a lot more fairness, and a lot more excellence. That is the mission ahead.

So I'm so excited to have you here and again, the word we keep sharing with each other – urgency. That's what we both feel, so we're going to sprint. We're not going to walk, we're not going to run, we're going to sprint all the way to the finish line.

I want to introduce to everyone Richard Carranza.

**Schools Chancellor Richard Carranza:** Thank you, Mr. Mayor. So, good morning. Mr. Mayor, I'm happy to report that we've hit the ground running. Monique, my wife, and I drove our Penske truck from Houston to New York –

**Mayor:** Do it yourself.

**Chancellor Carranza:** Like true New Yorkers. We unloaded, we're in our apartment – lots of boxes to unpack, but what we have already unpacked is this deep sense of urgency to do the work that has been laid out. Equity and Access is not a catchphrase, it is the method by which we will transform the lives of students who heretofore perhaps didn't understand they had the opportunity to live the American Dream. We're going to make it a reality, Sir.

And I'm very happy to report that the schools are in very good shape. The district, the Department of Education is full of very talented people. You and I had an opportunity yesterday to address teachers and administrators at a STEM conference and based on the energy and the expertise in that room, we have a great team, Sir. And just like our local baseball teams are going to compete for the World Series –

**Mayor:** That's a sensitive point.

**Chancellor Carranza:** I understand. I understand. But –

**Mayor:** You have been briefed.

**Chancellor Carranza:** But we're swinging for the fences and that's the urgency that we have with our team. I cannot wait to get into schools next week. I understand everyone is on Spring Break, but I can't wait to get into schools next week. We are ready to go. We're ready to take on the opportunities that we have. And Mr. Mayor just like you've said, you cannot have a world class city without a world class public education system. So we are completely on your team. But we will serve the children and the families of New York City to the best of our ability. And in 2021 we will all celebrate just how far we've come.

With that said *unas pocas palabras in Español por favor.*

[Chancellor Carranza speaks in Spanish]

Mr. Mayor, let's get to work.

**Mayor:** Amen. *Vamos.*

**Chancellor Carranza:** *Vamos.*

**Mayor:** Excellent. Thank you everyone.

###