

October 20, 2011

Dear Families and Friends of La Cima,

Since our school's founding in 2008, we have taken many steps to incorporate our families' feedback in the ongoing development of our school. Last school year, we administered a Family Survey in February 2011 and collected **199 overwhelmingly positive responses**. Thank you for your participation in our survey! The results of that survey are attached here and can be found on our website at: www.lacimacharterschool.org/familysurveys.htm.

In March 2011, we received an additional survey from the NYC Department of Education (NYCDOE) and decided not to administer it, because as a NY State Education Department authorized charter school our participation in the NYC School Survey is not mandatory. We are, however, mandated to follow our charter and collect family survey data specific to our educational program and school community, which we do continuously. We also recognize that you are often overloaded with paper and compliance requests, and we make an effort to respect your time and gather your input only as it is specifically relevant to our school.

Here are some facts about our survey and the DOE's survey:

- **94.5% to 100%** of families reported satisfied or highly satisfied on our Survey across all measures.
- **78%** of parents responded to La Cima's Family Survey, compared with 52% of parents citywide on the NYC School Survey (and 52% of parents in Brooklyn).
- La Cima's Family Survey incorporated many of the same measures as the NYC School Survey, asking questions about our school community's safety, engagement, expectations, and communication.

Despite these extremely positive results, the NYCDOE decided not to include or take into consideration our survey results on the progress report they issue to every NYC public school. La Cima was unfairly given a School Environment grade of F, based primarily on our decision to opt out of the NYC School Survey. We spoke with NYCDOE representatives in an attempt to reach a fair conclusion to this matter but were unsuccessful, and our final overall progress report grade for 2010-11 is therefore a D. That the NYCDOE decided not to hear your voices in their determination of our progress report grade is especially disappointing. You certainly do not send your scholars to a school with an F-rated school environment. The NYCDOE's intention in grading us this way is to force us to use their survey in the future.

What does this mean for our school? Good question.

- 1) Because of the consequences we experienced for exercising our independence, and acknowledging that we do not want this erroneous grade to exist, **your family will receive two surveys this year**: one for the DOE and one specifically about our school and teachers. Please help us by looking for and completing both. Thanks in advance.
- 2) Our NYCDOE-issued progress report rates our academic performance a C. We, like all of our peer schools, are increasing the rigor of our curriculum in order to meet core curriculum shifts and to keep pace with the increase in cut scores. We are confident in the curricular changes we've made to continue our school's improvement. We look forward to sharing more about these efforts with our families at Family Conferences and other events.

To view La Cima's NYCDOE-issued progress report, please visit:
<http://schools.nyc.gov/SchoolPortals/16/K649/AboutUs/Statistics/default.htm>.

Please feel free to talk with our teachers, deans, and leadership team at any time if you have questions or concerns.

Climbing High!
Principal Zayas



800 Gates Avenue, 3rd Floor
Brooklyn, New York 11221
Phone (718) 443-2136
Fax (718) 443-7291

OUR MISSION

To prepare students for academic and life-long success through a rigorous and relevant academic program.

OUR VISION

To develop students who have the intellectual capacity, social capital and emotional strength of character to be personally successful and to act as effective change-makers in their communities.