Appreciating The Past And Looking Forward

Chancellor Job Requires Remarkable Skill Set

By Mark Cannizzaro

When I was principal of Paulo Intermediate (IS 75) in Staten Island and Carmen Fariña was working as a consultant, following her first retirement from the DOE, she visited my school for a “walkthrough.” On that day, I discovered that Carmen was a gifted professional with much to give. Back in my office after the walkthrough, she offered an uncannily accurate description of every teacher she observed. All she needed was a cursory look to identify strengths and recommend realistic “next steps” for improvement. After just 3-4 minutes in a classroom, Carmen really “knew” the teacher. I was impressed!

As Chancellor, Carmen’s instructional expertise, her real concern for children and those who work with children, her compassion and willingness to listen have served us well.

Of course, there will never be a Chancellor who can be all things to all people. Just like there will never be any leader who can be all things to all people. Here are some of the most recent examples of what Carmen’s job entails. You may have noticed that Carmen has been the subject of some criticism from some sources. We often lead with the daily news and political gossip, but what we don’t understand is that Carmen is a very humble leader. She always seeks input and feedback from everyone, including teachers, administrators, and community members. She listens carefully to their concerns and takes them seriously. She is always trying to improve her job and make it better for everyone.

As you can see, there are many people who love Carmen and what she has done for New York City schools. We are grateful for her leadership and appreciate how much she has done for our students and our city.