THE CITY UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK

Naming of the Dr. Derrick Griffith CUNY Preparatory School

RESOLVED, That the CUNY Preparatory School in the Bronx be renamed the Dr. Derrick Griffith CUNY Preparatory School.

EXPLANATION: Derrick Griffith committed his life to education, using it to overcome obstacles and encouraging those he mentored to do the same. He died tragically in the Amtrak accident on May 12, 2015, outside of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. Dr. Griffith was a brilliant and passionate educator, scholar, and extraordinary human being who saw potential in others when it was hard for them to see it in themselves. He was a tireless force in the world of education. Starting out as a social studies teacher in Rochester, New York, he subsequently taught as an adjunct instructor at Hunter College. In 2003, The City University of New York hired him to serve as the founding principal and director of CUNY Prep, a school he helped create that has enabled thousands of out-of-school youth to earn high school equivalency diplomas and enter college. In doing so, Dr. Griffith altered the educational landscape for out-of-school youth in New York City. Because of Dr. Griffith’s early efforts to build the school, CUNY Prep has become a recognized model for re-engaging young people with an education that provides a rigorous and supportive pathway into college, especially for those traditionally considered incapable of achieving such goals.

Since leaving CUNY Prep in 2010, Dr. Griffith has served as Assistant Provost at Medgar Evers College and most recently as Dean of Student Affairs and Enrollment Management. He defended his dissertation and earned his Doctorate of Philosophy in Urban Education at The Graduate Center, The City University of New York, just one month before his tragic death, and received his degree posthumously on May 27, 2015. Dr. Griffith transformed thousands of lives of young New Yorkers who were uplifted by his encouragement as they found the resolve to pursue education and build personal beliefs in their own ability to persevere. He was a true visionary whose compassion and intelligence were paralleled only by his sense of humor and love for his students, colleagues, friends and family.