NYC DOE Fails Current English Language Learners
Poor Enrollment Practices, Low Graduation Rates

Brooklyn, New York, February 22 — Haitian parents, newcomer students, and education rights advocates gather to express deep concerns about the lack of adequate services available to newcomer immigrant students at the New York City Department of Education (DOE) Family Welcome Centers (formerly the Enrollment Centers), the entry point to High School. Every day when newcomer immigrant students enter New York City, they are required to go through the Family Welcome Center to get a seat in High School, a complicated process. The DOE focuses on the high school application and entry process for students already in the system, but falls short of providing such information to newly arrived immigrant students entering the system for the first time.

Newcomer immigrant students are denied the options afforded to middle school students applying to high school, which includes school choice, school interviews and school visits. At the Family Welcome Centers, families only have a few minutes with an enrollment officer to register for high school, in comparison to the several months that others get. Newcomer immigrant students are often misplaced in overcrowded schools that lack adequate supports and programs, even schools soon scheduled to close, and are therefore forced to repeat the process.

Recently released graduation rates show that current English Language Learners continue to fall behind their peers with only 30.8% of English Language Learners graduating, while other groups have made gains. English Language Learners need more and better support to reach their potential. Poor enrollment practices that are inconsistent and arbitrary result in the failure of high school students from day one, when the student initially steps foot in the Family Welcome Center. A good beginning leads to a good ending.

Flanbwayan is launching a campaign to demand that the DOE improve its enrollment policies and to share materials Flanbwayan has developed about the enrollment process with immigrant communities.

Press Conference
When: Thursday, February 23, 2017 @ 12:00 noon
Location: FLANBWAYAN Haitian Literacy Project
208 Parkside Ave. 2nd Fl Brooklyn NY, 11226
(between Flatbush and Ocean Ave.)

Flanbwayan Haitian Literacy Project works to transform the lives of Haitian newcomer youth through education and leadership development and to raise awareness of immigrant education issues both in the community and citywide.
www.flanbwayan.org