

BROOKLYN COLLEGE  
OF  
THE CITY UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK  
BROOKLYN, N. Y. 11210

JOHN W. KNELLER  
PRESIDENT

March 4, 1971

Day Care Collective  
07W Whitman Hall  
Brooklyn College

Ladies and Gentlemen:

I am writing to discuss with you the problem of providing adequate space for the Day Care Center. I want to start off by strongly restating my firm commitment to helping you provide adequate day care facilities for Brooklyn College. Increasing numbers of people are gaining the chance to attend college today, and ever greater numbers of women are developing a heightened consciousness about their role in our society. For these reasons day care is essential, and you have performed a great service for the college community by providing it. I have supported you by providing facilities, by paying the salary for your teacher, and by providing some supplies.

Everyone recognizes that 07W is inadequate. It is small, unsanitary, and unsafe. It does not permit the necessary expansion of your program. For these reasons I instructed college officials to find more adequate space and they have done so. I now offer you a complex consisting of three classrooms, a kitchen, a washroom, and a concrete play area. This complex will be for your exclusive use. Room 052 Whitman Hall will be available almost immediately to you, as will the kitchen and washroom, and 055A and 055B will be available as soon as renovations in the two temporary classrooms are completed and the two Art classes can move in (this should take approximately a month though we cannot predict how contractors or the union will behave).

I have been informed by several of you that the Day Care Collective rejects this offer and that you demand the use of the entire temporary building #1. I want to state clearly that this is impossible for several reasons. First, it would cost the college an additional classroom (the temporary building houses four classrooms while we have offered you three in Whitman Hall) at a time when the college is severely pressed for space. We have had to take dramatic measures to gain new space (for example, the leasing of 210 Livingston Street) and regrettably we must be very careful about space allocation.

Second, even if it did not cost a classroom it would still be impossible to give you the temporary structure. These buildings were authorized by the Board of Higher Education for use exclusively as classroom and faculty office space. The request was made on that basis and was granted (with some reluctance I might add) on that basis. I simply cannot return to the Board for authorization to use the new temporary buildings as space for a Day Care Center.

Third, these temporary buildings are not owned by Brooklyn College or the City University of New York, they are leased for a five-year period, and therefore we cannot make extensive modifications to these structures. Furthermore, the Certificate of Occupancy is being issued on the basis that these buildings can be used only as classroom and staff room space.

Several arguments have been put forward against accepting the space offer. First, it is argued that the new space is not an improvement. This is just not true. You are currently occupying 1,150 square feet. The three new classrooms in Whitman Hall total 1,950 square feet. The new classrooms are also laid out in a manner much more conducive to sound education (you will have three separate rectangular areas). They are also adjacent to a kitchen and washroom while the old space is not. The new space has natural light which the old space doesn't; it also has better storage area, more privacy, proximity to a play area, and more sinks.

Second, it is argued that the new space is not eligible for funding from the city because it is underground. This is not true. I have contacted HRA officials and they inform me that they have already approved interim renovation and operating funding for O7W provided some renovations are accomplished. To repeat, HRA has approved funding O7W, which is underground (and which is in many ways less satisfactory than the new space we have offered). Hence, the HRA officials inform me, they would approve funding for the new space, despite its being underground.

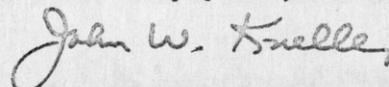
This raises another problem. The city, having approved funding for O7W, would have to conduct another inspection of any new facility you moved into. Hence, if you choose to accept my offer of more space there must be another inspection before funds are forthcoming. Every day you delay your decision means more delay in receiving HRA money and starting forward with your program.

I clearly understand that the space I am offering you will not become your permanent headquarters. This is the basis of the city funding--called interim funding--you will receive. As soon as we resolve the question of your new location I will instruct college officials to begin searching for permanent space that will be adequate in every respect. As many of you know, I have already taken some steps to secure you such space by requesting the Alumni Association to contribute money for a down payment for a building. If this plan doesn't work out we will try others until we reach a mutually satisfactory answer.

You have accomplished much in a short time. You have created a viable Day Care Center from scratch, hired staff, established a sound program, and received a promise of funding. You now have an opportunity to move into much more adequate space and create a truly exemplary program. Your energies, time, and resources should be directed toward this end instead of being employed in a fight which will endanger your funding chances and slow your progress.

You have my promise of cooperation and support in your continued efforts to grow and provide even better day care services for the Brooklyn College community.

Sincerely yours,



John W. Kneller