

Fern Skolnick-Cruz, Principal

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Fern Skolnick-Cruz comes to City Neighbors Hamilton via New York City where she earned her undergraduate degree in Philosophy (Lehman College). In keeping with her desire to study ethics and social theory, Fern entered a doctoral program in philosophy (CUNY Graduate Center) and assumed a position as an adjunct lecturer at Hunter College. It was during her tenure at Hunter College that she became aware of the acute need to improve literacy education in NYC public schools. The desire to help to find solutions to the growing problem of illiteracy refocused her attention and efforts.

Fern went on to study education and received a Master's degree in special education from Adelphi University and a Master's degree in Administration and Supervision from Fordham University. She was first and foremost a classroom teacher at the Clara Barton school in the Bronx (CSD #12) where she learned the value of working closely with families. She then went on to hold district level positions as the coordinator of Parent Education and Involvement, the coordinator of the Program for Preventing Academic Failure as well as special education staff developer.

She was working as an assistant principal at the Crescent School in the Bronx (CSD#12) when asked to assume the leadership of Mother Hale Academy in the Bronx (CSD#7). She accepted the challenge. Fern worked with staff, students and their families to transform the school into a safe place where children are honored, parents and families are included, and faculty are provided with the support and tools they need to perform their work skillfully.

Fern currently lives in Baltimore County with a fantastic little dog that resembles a raccoon.