P.S. 139 Parents Go Along for The Ride

By Craig McGuire

Three years after initiating a protest to install parent volunteers on board New York City school buses, parents in Community School District 22 have finally launched the pilot program.

On March 7, 1994, for the first time in New York City history, organized parent volunteers from Public School 139, 4001 18th Avenue, rode along with students from that elementary

school.

The five parent volunteers from P.S. 139 are part of a pilot program developed by Association of Community Organizations for Reform Now (ACORN) and the Board of Education Office of Pupil Transportation.

program fought for by ACORN parents, frustrated by conditions they considered un- eling long distances. They safe, which prompted them to approach School Board 22 as well as the central Board of Education in

According to Gloria Sanders, co-president of the Parents Association at P.S. 139, former New York City Schools Chancellor Joseph Fernandez gave his commitment before he left, but the program was not be launched during his administration.

Earlier this year, Fernandez's successor, Ramon Cortines, gave the organization the final approval. "We finally got the goahead from Chancellor Cortines and Kevin Gill, director of Pupil Transportation, to have parents on the school buses," said Sand-

The five parent volun-teers, Hazel David, Marie Victor, Sabine Jenty, Joclyn Paul, and Anne Zephrin, underwent a five-day training course conducted by the Pupil Transportation Division, and were fingerprinted upon completion of the course.

> Ensuring A Safe Ride Organizers cited several

was reasons for the need of the program.

> The children were travwere basically on their own because they were not supervised, said Pamela ACORN Marshall, an leader who helped win the program. They were getting out of hand, and there were accidents," she added.

> After listening to complaints from parents and children about all the problems on the school buses, it is a great relief to finally have adult supervision on buses thanks to ACORN members," said Sanders.

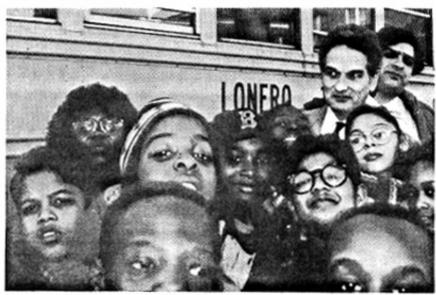
The administration at P.S. 139 has welcomed the pilot program.

wholeheartedly "Wc welcome this program and wish them all the success in this endeavor," said Joel Katz, Assistant Principal at P.S. 139. "The bus volunteer program is another facet of the school community working together for the betterment of our children. Adult supervision, especially when the volunteers have a stake in providing a secure environment for all the children riding the buses, should prove

Continued on page 4



P.S. 139 Principal Lawrence elcomes students.



Students crowd around volunteers after school.