Dear 4th Grade Class of PS 165,

We are extremely glad that you already have so many ideas towards changing the world! We loved receiving your letter! Homelessness and all of the other issues that you mentioned are very important, and we are excited to see the work that you will do to change it for the better. Every day when we go to school, we see many homeless people living on the streets, fighting, pollution-inducing cars, and stray cats on the street, and they need an ambitious class like you to help them out.

We wanted to let you know that the Solutionary Congress that both our classes are working on is not a program that TEAK created. There are many other amazing students in the world, just like us, who want to help create solutions for a better world. TEAK decided to use this project in our classroom to find solutions for the world, too! And now, so are you! A lot of people may say that since someone else may already be finding solutions to end the problems in the world, there is no point for other people to do it. But if there is still violence, homelessness, injustice, and war in the world, don’t we need more people to help?

People often come up with many solutions to problems, but not all of them are “***Solutionary***” solutions. A Solutionary solution is humane to all living things, truly digs deep down to the root of a problem, and improves it from there. An “***Un-Solutionary***” solution would be something that simply improves the “top-layer” of a problem. For example, arresting all of the homeless people in the streets would obviously not be a Solutionary solution since its not humane, but neither would providing all of NYC’s homeless people with a free meal. I bet you are thinking, “Well why is that not solutionary? It is a humane solution.” Free meals are a humane solution, but they are not solving the problem at its roots. Even after you provide free meals, the homeless are still poor and jobless. That solution is not ultimately effective. Not only does this apply to homelessness, but to other issues as well. Another example of an “***Un-Solutionary”*** solution would be by giving free cattle to villagers who lack food. Why is this “***Un-Solutionary”*** ?, because not only is the slaughter of animals inhumane, but the villagers will once again go back to their previous state once all of the cattle has been slaughtered and eaten.

Finding a truly Solutionary solution to your problem is very difficult, but us TEAK-sters know that you can do it. After researching and discussing homelessness, what do you think its cause is? Where could it possibly have started from? Think of it as a tree: it’s not enough for the leaves of a tree to be exposed to energy from sunlight, but its roots also need to collect water in order for it to survive. Just like that, you need to identify and work from the root of your problem in order to truly make a difference. Once again, we are so excited to be working with you towards a better world, but it all starts at the roots.

With HEART,

TEAK Class 18