

CEC 3 Middle School Committee
Meeting Notes
October 11, 2019, 9am at Joan of Arc, room 204

Kristen Berger, MS Committee Chair

Attendees: 7 parents in addition to committee chair and IA Superintendent Christine Laughlin

Committee Goals:

Setting Goals for this year - learnings from past 2 years' experience (first enrollment year of diversity initiative)

How did it work, what were challenges, what are changes moving forward?

Look at more qualitative environment eg what were the experiences of the children that went to a school outside the "norm" for their elementary school

Perhaps offer round table discussion for their experiences

Initial Schedule:

November: Office of Enrollment to attend Committee Meeting. Will discuss flow of students during year one application and matching process. Are students from all school applying to a wide range of schools in the district? If not how can we address some of these potential gaps? Added topic: Enrollment to discuss data shared as "D3 Screened admissions data", this is a slide deck requested by D3 Presidents Council Equity Committee. Enrollment will be able to discuss and interpret the data and take questions.

January: Waitlist discussions will take place, how do rankings interact with priority and how will this be communicated to parents. Parents will be able to view priority on the lists (will assure that the ranking represents true representation eg #56 is actually 56th on the list). Outstanding questions remain on topic

2019-2020 Topic specific Forums (no dates yet)

MS Committee is looking into hosting a series of topic specific forums. The goal would be to increase information and discussion in the district to issues relevant to the D3 middle school diversity plan. Topic specific forums - One structure is panelists and breakout groups to foster conversation in breakout groups.

Potentials Topics:

- Screened admissions (could be both HS and MS)
- Heterogenous Education
- Learning about schools: what resources do families use?

Many of these topics overlap with wider CEC3 concerns. The MS committee will coordinated with CEC3 to best compliment other CEC3 work.

How is Middle School Information Shared in District 3?

Family Welcome Center: are they looped in with the new efforts and placements because word on the street was that Family Welcome Center was not slotting students aligned with the diversity groups. Opaque, concerns with family welcome center and they need to be scrutinized based on anecdotal accounts (also came up in the CEC Business meeting)

- Office of Student Enrollment - manages Family Welcome Center, according to superintendent they appear to be upholding the diversity initiatives as well as Office of Enrollment
- Challenges unscreened so they get students all the time from Family Welcome Center, yet some need to meet state benchmarks so needs support in all of those incoming students as the year rolls along
- The Family Welcome Center has been invited to the CEC3 November Calendar meeting. This is an opportunity to address some of the raised concerns.

Middle School Events & info opportunities:

Superintendent Laughlin planning a feedback session after the Middle School fair to discuss information and support for 5th grade families in MS process. How do we improve systems going forward? Supt. to schedule with administrators, parent coordinators/ guidance counselors and CEC3 Middle School representative

At-a-Glance D3 brochure: D3 compiled brochure for our community. Distributed in hard copy at Principals Forum and avail electronically at CEC3.org. Are booklets available in other languages? FR, SP, Russian, Italian? District 3 office to look at printing and distributing additional booklets.

Middle School Fair

Think about ways to do things differently eg more open house style

- Working on “what is a great school” rather than just the data - what’s good for my child isn’t the same as yours so what’s a great school!
- Have a family fun night activities for kids, child care while parents learn about the school
- Principals will come out on a Sat
- Encourage families to learn about multiple schools

Other ways to share Information on Middle Schools

- Is there a way to get interdisciplinary field trips eg Robot day at 76 and invite 5th graders to attend
- Some elementary have MS students come into 5th grade students come into the school and teach a lesson or Have a lesson in another school - busing would be free
- Some MS can also host dedicated tours for individual elementary and coordinate student transportation
- Superintendent office can build out and manage the exchange

Information Flows:

Basic information flow was not robust this year - targeted the Parent Coordinator and Guidance Counselors, Perhaps add Phone Messaging for all schools, Need to up the game - all schools

Aligning academic offerings at D3 Middle Schools:

Make sure all offering are communicated e.g. which schools offer Regents

Example: “Algebra for all initiative” - all students with 8th grade should be able to have Regents; need to set up systems for support from the elementary grades where principals give more feedback in math not just ELA, opportunity for acceleration in MS. Create a coherent instructional framework across D3, where MS students are ready for regents to take at 8th grade, create conditions from elementary school through MS to be able to take Regents exam

Example: "Boost Up" (PS87) - Math and ELA: algebraic thinking at 1st grade with "number talks", cycle in and out at 6-12 weeks and costs \$10k per year with part time literacy and math coaches
Regents - Math Regents requires brain development, algebra requires certain level of brain development

Notes taken by: Ellen Malterre