



COMMUNITY EDUCATION COUNCIL DISTRICT 3

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District 3 Community Superintendent

CEC3 High School Admissions Committee Meeting Minutes

June 18, 2018, 6:30 PM

PS87 - library

160 W. 78th St.

- ❖ **Attendance:** *Jean Moreland, High School Admissions Committee Chair, Kim Watkins, CEC3 President, and 11 community members.*
- ❖ **Recap of June 9 High School Admissions Workshop:**
 1. We had good turnout at our workshop, with approximately 80 attendees.
 2. Michael Kraft (PEP, D3 Parent), Amy Basile (Executive Director of High School Admissions), and Laura Zingmond (InsideSchools.org) presented. Michael and Amy's presentations will be posted on CEC3 website (DOE presentation to be "tweaked" first).
 3. Most notable changes for the upcoming admissions cycle are:
 - i. Online applications: As with Middle School Admissions, application for High School will now be online. Guidance counselors will still interact with parents to help them with their application and will have visibility. Guidance Counselors can assist parents who don't have internet capability, there will also be a phone line dedicated to helping parents and the Family Welcome Centers.
 - ii. Limited Unscreened Admissions are going away. These schools will change to the "Educational Option" form of admissions. (16% high performers on ELA, 68% middle, 16% lower performers).
 - iii. There is a new list of schools running diversity pilots, where up to 63% of 9th grade seats are prioritized for students who qualify for Free and Reduced Priced Lunch. 8 schools in Manhattan will participate (Central Park East, Harvest Collegiate, The Heritage School, NYC iSchool, Park East, Urban Assembly Maker Academy, Urban Assembly New York, Harbor School)
 - iv. There will be a Specialized Admissions workshop, including Art Audition workshops on July 24 at LaGuardia High School. See the High School events page for details <http://schools.nyc.gov/ChoicesEnrollment/High/events/default.htm>
 - v. The only part of the mayor's plan to change Specialized High School admissions that can be implemented next year is the expansion of the Discovery Program (reserving 20% of offers for the Discovery program and adjusting the criteria to only students from high poverty schools (60% or above Economic Needs Index receive these offers). The other changes require legislation in Albany.
- ❖ **Review of Committee Goals and Priorities; Discussion of admissions challenges for D3 families and Specialized High School changes**
 1. We had a long discussion about focus and priorities centering around these topics:
 - i. Making the process easier for parents

- ii. Eliminating the D2 admissions priority OR advocating for a D3 priority school. If the DOE's focus is eliminating barriers and equity of access, why are they keeping the D2 priority when high school admissions is supposed to be by a citywide process? If geographic factors are important, then why aren't other districts allowed to reserve these spots at their desirable schools? Possibly work with CECs in other districts to push this issue.
- iii. Moving screened schools to a "Common Application" such as university admissions have (i.e. eliminating the host of different requirements for different schools)
- iv. Moving to a single application for Specialized and other schools so you don't have some families who receive 2 or 3 offers in Round 1 and other families that remain unmatched until seats free up, resulting in better matches in Round 1.
- v. Requesting a large D3 school (not necessarily D3 priority). The move to smaller schools that share buildings have meant there are no economies of scale, and many schools cannot offer a range of AP classes and courses covering all disciplines (such as physics) that would give students the breadth of knowledge needed to prepare them for university. Discussion centered around how soon this would be achievable, the fact that expanding one school (such as Frank McCourt for example or Manhattan Hunter Science) may mean closing or moving other schools in a building and possibly absorbing those students into the new school.
- vi. Was there a larger number of unmatched students in D3 this year due to parents putting a small amount of schools on their applications, due to the "baby boom" working its way through the system or both? Why are there so few schools that many D3 parents consider "desirable" for their children?
- vii. Discussion about how the 7% proposal for Specialized high school admissions could—give more advantage to students who already receive 2 offers, make MS54 less desirable because they will not be the same "pipeline" to specialized schools. One parent said that many mid/high income African American parents are looking at parochial, boarding and private schools because they do not like the atmosphere of the specialized schools.
- viii. Discussion on how recommendations and requests coming from our committee cannot be implemented this fall—but would be for 2019-20 and beyond (especially any requests for a new or expanded school).

❖ Action Items:

1. Follow up on enrollment data (Jean): Exmissions from D3 middle schools, match rate in D3 this year compared to previous years etc.
2. Draft a request for removal of D2 priority requesting equity of access (Angeline and Jean) for review at a July meeting.
3. Circulate dates for a July meeting (Jean). Possibly invite Fred Walsh (D3/CUNY High School Superintendent)
4. Research proposal for a Common Application. For example, how many screening priorities are the same between screened schools? How many require interviews? Is the chancellor's direction to get rid of screened schools?
5. Research proposal for combining specialized high school and "main round" application. How many students received 2 or more offers? Can we simulate whether the match rate to students' top choices would go up in the first round if the application was combined and students had to choose only one "number one" school etc.
6. Research ways to make the process of getting to know schools easier (hard to really get to know a school by looking at the book, can't always make a tour or only tour schools you already know about), perhaps through changes to what is in the "big book", requiring schools to have "virtual tours" on their websites and providing assistance to creating videos and content.