



COMMUNITY EDUCATION COUNCIL DISTRICT 3

154 West 93rd Street New York, New York 10025 - Room 204 Tel (212) 678-2782 Fax (212) 678-2804 Email: CEC3@schools.nyc.gov

Kimberly Watkins
President

Kristen Berger
First Vice President

Manuel Casanova
Second Vice President

Lucas Liu
Treasurer

Genisha Metcalf
Secretary

Council Members: Inyanga Collins Daniel Katz Michael McCarthy Jean Moreland | **Ilene Altschul**
Dennis Morgan Yan Sun, ELL Alana Metcalf, Student Member District 3 Community Superintendent

Middle School Committee Meeting

February 27th, 2018 6:30pm

Joan of Arc Complex, 154 W 93rd Street, Room 204

Attendance: 40 participants inclusive of District Superintendent Ilene Altschul and Committee Chair, Kristen Berger

Changes to Middle School Admission Process

The Middle School Committee continues to discuss potential changes to admissions process for admission in September 2019.

It was noted that there are changes in D3 middle school configurations. PS 165 will not be serving Middle School grades in 2019. Mott Hall 2 will be expanded by 2019 serving at least three additional sections across 6th- 8th grades. Wadleigh Middle School may potentially be truncated. Superintendent Altschul noted the West Prep will also be serving an additional section in 2019.

Committee Chair Berger gave an overview on current admission structures and outlined DOE requirement to 'eliminate revealed middle school ranking' (aka move to blind ranking). In short, those District 3 Middle Schools who only invite students who have ranked them 1st or 2nd to the second part of their admission process will no longer have access to ranking information and thereby will not be able to use that as part of their criteria.

The DOE diversity policy has implemented blind ranking city wide in the hopes of increasing parent choice in the Middle School process. The Office of Enrollment believes that "blind ranking can reduce barriers in the admissions process."

The Middle School committee has expressed support for increased diversity in D3 Middle Schools and expressed skepticism that a move to blind ranking alone will do so.

Final Recommendations should be submitted to the DOE **by May 2018** for changes in the Middle School Directory.

Current D3 Recommendations

District Superintendent Altschul outlined the modification the district is currently developing with Middle School Principals. After several Principal meetings, the following idea is being evaluated, before making a final decision the Superintendent's office is requesting feedback:

To have an academic diversity floor where 10% of all incoming 6th graders will have an average ELA and math score of level 1 and 15% of all incoming 6th graders will have an average ELA and math score of level 2. *Please note: The average score is based upon the student's 4th grade ELA and math score. Both scores will be averaged to become one composite score for middle school enrollment consideration.*

Note: As happens today, each middle school will develop their own rubric for admissions. These rubrics may include interviews or tests.

Initial feedback from attendees.

The committee broke up into four subgroups to solicit feedback. The major themes were:

- Concern that Blind Choice alone may increase segregation in D3 Middle Schools
- Concern that the move to Blind Choice can increase the reliance on numbers. Losing the individual aspects of a whole child, jeopardizing schools unique “magic”
- Need for details. If MS are to develop their own rubrics those need to be evaluated; there is a need for greater clarity on whether the floors represent the number of offers made by a Middle School or the actual enrollment
- Resources for diverse learners. Do the schools have the supports they need to address students of different levels? Supports for students at 1s & 2s as well as the needs of 3s & 4s
- Change and support should be happening at the elementary school level
- Will some students “fall in the gap”? i.e.- students who are level 3’s will not have specific targets (or floors) to assist them, yet may not shine like students with level 4’s
- How does this assist schools which are currently not in high demand?
- Top scoring students may “lose seats” at high demand schools.
- Could this be modified? E.g. a pilot or phase in; request exemption for specific schools; trial blind choice for 2019 & modify after??
- Need for additional resources for an extraordinarily busy appeals season

Feedback

The D3 Superintendent’s Office is seeking direct feedback from parents to understand parent’s preferences and concerns. To facilitate this communication the Superintendent’s office has set up a dedicated email address. **Please be sure to email the office at D3feedback@gmail.com with your opinion!**

The next Middle School Committee Meeting will be on **March 12th, 9 am** at the Joan of Arc Complex, 154 W 93rd street.

Further Information

More information is available on the middle school page of the CEC3 website: <https://www.cec3.org/middle-school-committee>

DOE Office of Enrollment presented to the CEC 3 Calendar Meeting on December 13, 2017 available here: https://docs.wixstatic.com/ugd/a806f4_d11955dfb017455699445573d48a8480.pdf