



COMMUNITY EDUCATION COUNCIL DISTRICT 15

Office: 131 Livingston Street, Room 301, Brooklyn, New York 11201

CEC15@schools.nyc.gov | tel. 718-935-4267 | facebook.com/CECD15 | CECD15.org

The Community and Citywide Education Councils (CCECs) are composed of parents who have been elected or appointed to serve as stakeholders of NYC School Community Districts, and specific cohorts of students, representing NYC public school students and their families.

Approved on January 18, 2022, the following resolution offers CEC 15's position regarding supports for the District 15 community around race and equity:

CEC15 Resolution to Support the D15 Community in Restorative Practices, Anti Bias Education and Collaborative Community Engagement Practices

WHEREAS, the NYC DOE explicitly emphasizes accountability in its Guidance to Foster Ongoing Dialogue and Action About Race and Equity¹:

As the largest school system in the country, we are accountable to addressing the ways in which our institution perpetuates racism and inequities. Accountability is reflecting, understanding biases, prioritizing learning and educating oneself, engaging in conversations with young people, community members, family, and colleagues about race, racism, and racial violence, listening, unpacking the root causes of our current state, and most importantly, taking action against racial injustice. In the absence of this individual and collective commitment to our shared humanity, learning, and action, we stand to replicate the inequities that are harming our Black students, families, employees and communities, and ultimately, us all.

WHEREAS, District 15 serves students from diverse socioeconomic, racial, linguistic, cultural, and religious backgrounds and has made a collaborative commitment to promoting diversity, equity, inclusion, and anti-racism², and this commitment is only meaningful when all members of our school communities are involved and engaged in the processes of change, where the most historically underrepresented voices are prioritized and uplifted;

¹ <https://infohub.nyced.org/in-our-schools/programs/race-and-equity>

² <https://wheatoncollege.edu/academics/special-projects-initiatives/center-for-collaborative-teaching-and-learning/anti-racist-educator/>

WHEREAS, the anti-racist work necessary to desegregate our schools and bring communities together requires an acknowledgement that prior and existing policies have perpetuated unequal outcomes for Black and brown students³;

WHEREAS, the work to ensure that our schools become equitable, culturally sustaining spaces for all children, families, and educators requires institutional support including comprehensive, intentional, proactive (not reactive) practices aligned with the 5 Rs of Real Integration⁴: Race and Enrollment, Resources, Relationships, Restorative Justice & Practices, and Representation;

WHEREAS, an authentic shift in policies and culture will be ongoing by definition, and like all growth will entail discomfort, particularly for those individuals whose comfort has been previously centered at the expense of others;

WHEREAS, in seeking equity for all of our students and families, leaders at the school level and within our PAs/PTAs have taken first steps in allowing for greater community building through sharing of information, resources and collaborative practices, intentionally intended to remove the inequitable barriers that exist and have created additional pathways for adult education;

WHEREAS, school communities in District 15 are seeking greater support from the Department of Education to prioritize the desegregation of our schools and that cannot happen effectively without every leader in the DOE prepared to implement The New York State Culturally Responsive-Sustaining Education (CRSE) framework⁵ which:

“helps educators create student-centered learning environments that: affirm racial, linguistic and cultural identities; develop student’ abilities to connect across lines of difference; elevate historically marginalized voices; and empower students as agents of social change””grounded in a vision of an education system that creates:

- *Students who experience academic success*
- *Students who are socio-politically conscious and socio-culturally responsive*
- *Students who have a critical lens through which they challenge inequitable systems of access, power, and privilege”*;

WHEREAS, District 15 recognizes the right of all of our community members to be respected and affirmed in their humanity, at the same time recognizing that systems are designed to achieve the results they get⁶ and so when harm occurs we must examine the systemic features that enabled the harm to occur;

WHEREAS, when members of our community have been harmed, whether intentionally or not, we must all rally around the harmed, especially a harmed child, creating a balance through restorative practices, where the harmed is not villainized or further traumatized by processes intended to create accountability;

³ <https://www.ascd.org/el/articles/beware-of-equity-traps-and-tropes>

⁴ https://research.steinhardt.nyu.edu/scmsAdmin/media/users/atn293/pdf/SDAG_MakingtheGrade_Summary.pdf

⁵ <http://www.nysed.gov/common/nysed/files/programs/crs/culturally-responsive-sustaining-education-framework.pdf>

⁶ Disputed attribution: <https://www.psqh.com/julaug08/editor.html>

WHEREAS, we must distinguish between "harm" that threatens someone's safety through verbal or physical injury to person, or object, including oppressive behaviors, violence, manipulation, lies, or bullying, and "discomfort" which, although may feel unpleasant at the time, is often necessary for growth, and does not threaten someone's safety;

WHEREAS, adults in school communities must be held accountable for their actions, reactions, words, including emotional violence, and must model the same willingness to participate in healing processes with integrity and vulnerability that they demand from students who perpetuate harm within their school communities;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that a **D15 Restorative Practices Team** will be formed through a collaboration with **CEC15, the District 15 office and the D15 Presidents' Council**, that will:

- **work in collaboration with the DEI subcommittee of the DLT,**
- **will exist within the District 15 school community to help mediate conflicts that might arise and directly support those harmed**
- **whose members will include a diverse group of representatives from the District 15 community, including representatives from the most marginalized communities in the district, with collective skills and expertise,**
- **will use practices that call people in while prioritizing accountability over comfort,**
- **will work with anyone from the D15 school community to have their voice heard confidentially around repair and healing, with protection from any retaliation from supervisors or children's teachers or school leaders, and where a commitment to support the person or people who have been harmed exists in various forms;**

BE IT RESOLVED that this **D15 Restorative Practices Team** will work with the impacted parties in:

- 1) **Recognizing & acknowledging the harm done**
- 2) **Take Responsibility for the harm**
- 3) **Taking action to Repair the harm, and**
- 4) **Taking action to prevent the Recurrence of the harm;**

BE IT RESOLVED that where the **Restorative Practices Team** has exhausted all options, the **District** will intervene with a **Mediation process** that includes all stakeholders, guided by an outside **BIPOC-led or LGBTQ+-led organization** that specializes in intersectionality in addressing harm, and distinguishing harm from discomfort, chosen by the impacted communities, where that process will be meaningful and clearly defined in terms of goals and timeline;

BE IT RESOLVED that **Equity Teams in D15, and the DLT DEI Committee members**, work with this new **Restorative Practices Team** on district based concerns as well as school based concerns, since we must recognize that what benefits one of our school communities may harm another, and that what benefits some in a given school community may harm others within that same school;

BE IT RESOLVED that all D15 schools will create dedicated spaces for student expression (ie: advisory periods) to center student voice in an intentional way, and use Human Rights centered curriculum⁷ to guide conversations;

BE IT RESOLVED that the Department of Education will require regular, ongoing Anti Bias Anti-Racism (ABAR) Education workshops and offer access to readings, videos, community-led teach-ins and other resources, including individual mentors, to promote greater understanding of systemic inequities and how they intersect with individual strengths and struggles, to allow for our communities to grow together in our humanity and model lifelong learning for our children, and where these resources are available not only to DOE staff but to families in their home languages;

BE IT RESOLVED that through small group listening sessions, District 15 administrators will partner authentically with their school's DEI Committee, students, families, and educators to generate, pilot, codify, and continually refine Collaborative Community Engagement Practices that are promoted throughout District 15, especially in co-located schools.

This Resolution was approved at a CEC15 Business Meeting held on January 18, 2022 by a vote of members present including: Camille Casaretti, Antonia Ferraro, Tia Schellstede, Nancy Randall, Nana-Poku Agyekum, Nana-Poku Agyekum, Joseph Alexander, and Ivan Banda.

The Resolution was voted YES by 7 members with 1 Abstention by Alfred De Ingeniis.

⁷ <https://www.tc.columbia.edu/cae/projects/human-rights-education-curricula/>