



COMMUNITY EDUCATION COUNCIL DISTRICT 15

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February 25, 2025
Calendar Meeting

President's Report - Antonia Ferraro Martinelli

Welcome to CEC15's February Calendar meeting. Before we dive in I want to thank PS 958 for hosting us tonight. Principal Shapiro accommodated our district into their space on short notice. Thank you Emily. I also have Rob Aguilar here from Council Member Avilés office with some important resources.

Good evening everyone. Tonight we have a very full agenda but I have some updates and acknowledgements.

In the waning days of February I want to celebrate **Black History Month** by recommending "Being Black in American Schools," by Brian Rashad Fuller. Fuller is a former DOE employee. He helped manage the NYC Community Schools initiative and he attended some of our community engagement sessions for our rezoning several years ago. In the book, he writes about his personal experiences as a high achieving Black student and the need to completely redesign the school experience away from a white supremacist mindset in order to include African Americans into schools holistically, whether it is representative curriculum, teacher training or disciplinary policy.

I want to wish **Ramadan Mubarak** to our Muslim families. Ramadan begins the evening of Fri, Feb 28, 2025 and continues through Sat, Mar 29, 2025. In honor of Ramadan, I want to share a banned book, "Lailah's Lunchbox - A Ramadan Story" by Reem Faruqi. The book tells the story of a girl's anxiety about explaining to friends and teachers that she doesn't have her lunch box because she is fasting. She leaves the lunchroom and finds solace in the library, where the librarian encourages her to write her thoughts down. She writes a poem to her teacher that explains Ramadan.

*"Ramadan is a month Muslims celebrate
A time to count our blessings and appreciate*

*Muslims fast before sunrise to sunset
But wait, that's not all just yet!*

*Ramadan is a time for lots of prayer.
We help the poor people to show we care!
So in the day I won't be eating any food
But hopefully will stay in a good mood!"*

Updates

CEC Elections Dates

It's not too late to apply to run for a seat on a Community or Citywide Education Council!
The deadline to [submit your application](#) has been extended to Thursday, February 27, 2025!

- February 28 - April 2: Candidate Forums
- April 25 - May 13: Parents vote online
- May 14 - June 2: Run-off elections, if necessary
- June: Election results announced
- July 1: Members-elect take office

Borough Presidents' Office has updated the link to apply for a seat on CECs as a Borough President appointee for 2025-2027 term. Please complete DOE's application below. You may apply prior to, or after interviewing.

Add to Chat:

<https://nycdoe.eballot.com/BPPA/en-BPApplicationForm>

CEC Vacancy

CEC15 still has a vacancy for the parent of an English Language Learner. The parents qualify if their student has been designated an ELL through a test given in 1st Grade. This qualification is very specific, making it a difficult vacancy to fill.

Add to Chat:

CEC15 currently has a vacant seat on the council for the parent of a Multilingual Learner student and is accepting applications. Please apply to the DOE directly at CCECinfo@schools.nyc.gov. Do not submit the application to CEC15. Eligible candidates will be invited to attend a candidate forum (date to be determined). Do not delay your application.

[Applications in nine languages and all information about eligibility to CECs can be found here.](#)
Please also visit CECd15.org to learn more about our organization.

Basic eligibility rules require that the applicant be a parent of a student in grades Kindergarten through 8th, or in a Pre-K program, who currently attends a non-charter public school or Pre-K program in the district where the applicant wishes to serve on the CEC. Please follow the links for more requirements.

PC Candidate Interview

I was invited by Principal Wanda Ramirez at PS 1 to interview a candidate for the position of parent coordinator. The candidate would replace Michelle Ortiz who was the former PC at PS 1. The candidate seemed enthusiastic and qualified. She is a paraprofessional and parent at PS 1, resident of Sunset Park. She was a school aid at PS 1.

PEP February Meeting

The Panel for Education Policy will hold a meeting on Wednesday, February 26, 2025, at 6:00pm (EST) at **Clara Barton High School** (901 Classon Avenue, Brooklyn, New York, 11225)

And finally, in a segment I'll call, **U.S. Constitution Watch**

The Federal Department of Education released a *Dear Colleague Letter* last week which is widely viewed as unconstitutional. However, I want to remind everyone that the first sentence of the letter is that discrimination is illegal and immoral. Admissions screens, be they academic, disciplinary, attendance or talent are highly effective proxies for discrimination. So effective, that when District 15 utilized such screens, it had the 2nd most racially segregated middle schools in the most racially segregated school system in the nation. After eliminating those screens for middle schools, D15 remedied this discrimination in the first year of implementation.

Dear Colleague Letter:

<https://www.chronicle.com/article/hitting-pause-on-the-dear-colleague-letter>

In more positive news, Chancellor Ramos released two letters: one affirming the NYCPS's commitment to the rights of LGBTQ+ students and another affirming the rights of migrant students. We shared the letters through our mailing list. I want to applaud NYCPS for giving a digital home to videos about prominent figures in the LGBTQ+ history that PBS has deleted in response to threats by the Trump/Musk administration that infringe on 1st Amendment rights. These videos are a part of the Hidden Voices curriculum.

Chalkbeat article:

<https://www.chalkbeat.org/newyork/2025/02/19/nyc-public-schools-publishes-lgbtq-history-videos-deleted-by-pbs-wnet/>