



COMMUNITY EDUCATION COUNCIL DISTRICT 15

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

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Calendar Meeting

Approved on 10/23/2018 at a Business Meeting

Date: 09/25/2018

Time: 6:30 p.m.

Location: P.S. 230, 425 McDonald Avenue, Multi-Media Room

AGENDA (as publicly posted)

1. Call to Order and Roll Call
2. Welcome - Camille Casaretti, CEC15 President
3. D15 Middle School Diversity in Admissions Update - Neal Zephyrin, CEC Diversity Working Group Representative
4. District Report - Anita Skop, D15 Superintendent
5. Capital Improvements Coming to D15 Schools - School Construction Authority
6. Strength Based IEPs - Paula Heitman, Understood.org
7. Vote on CEC15 Resolution on New Dyslexia Guidance from NY State - Nicole Brier, CEC15 IEP Representative
8. Charter Committee Report
 - a. Vote on LEEP Statement for Board of Regents
 - b. Discussion on CEC15 Statement regarding Charter Schools in D15
9. Public Comments
10. Adjournment

Call to order at 6:46 p.m.

1. Roll Call - Antonia Ferraro

Present:

Camille Casaretti, President

Kathy Park Price, Co-Vice President 2

Antonia Ferraro, Secretary

Charles Star, Treasurer

Lili Velez, Parliamentarian

Nicole Brier

Mark Bisard

Scott Powell

Yanfeng Zhang

Late:

Elena Romero, Co-Vice President 1

Neal Zephyrin

Invited Guests:



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Anita Skop, D15 Superintendent

Tamar Smith, Community Relations Manager, External Affairs, New York City School Construction Authority

Paula Heitman, Understood.org

Announcements - Antonia Ferraro, CEC15 Recording Secretary

- The next CEC15 Calendar Meeting will be on Tuesday, Oct. 9 at 6:30 p.m. at M.S. 136 in Sunset Park. Department of Education Officials and Working Group Members will talk about the new Middle School Admissions Process. Feel free to submit your questions in advance to cec15@schools.nyc.gov.
- The next CEC15 Business Meeting will be on Oct. 23 at 6:30 p.m. Business meetings, like all of CEC15 meetings, are open to the public.
- Applications for \$1000 Fall Green Team Mini-Grants will be accepted until Nov. 6 on nyc.gov/zws
- Vicki Sell from CM Brad Lander's Office is here to talk briefly about Participatory Budget monies.

Participatory Budget - Vicki Sell, Education Liaison, the Office of Council Member Brad Lander

- CM Lander's office accepting ideas for the Participatory Budget.
- There are 2 Participatory Assemblies scheduled. One is happening tonight, Sept. 25 from 6:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. at Carroll Gardens Library located at 396 Clinton Street. The other will be tomorrow, Sept. 26 from 6:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. at P.S. 230 (Upper School) located at 1 Albemarle Road.
- Ideas can also be submitted [online](#). The deadline to submit ideas online is Oct. 5.
- They will also be hosting a handful of idea collection pop-ups at various district events and at subway stops and libraries around the district.
- The winning projects can sometimes take a long time to be approved. Some projects may be a multiple year project.

2. Welcome - Camille Casaretti, CEC15 President (continuation)

- Community Education Council is a group of 11 elected and appointed parents with children in D15 elementary and middle schools.
- Each CEC15 member is assigned to a few different schools in the District. If you want to know who represents your school please refer to the [school liaison list](#) that was handed out or visit cecd15.org.
- If you're a parent and are interested in running for a position as a [council member in a CEC](#), there will be an election process beginning in January.
- Congratulations to the many parents and guardians who were elected to serve on the PTA Executive Boards and on the numerous Committees that support our schools and congratulations to all new D15 Principals and Administrators.
- The greatest champion and advocate for District 15 is our Superintendent Anita Skop. She's been our district leader for 10 years and has witnessed first hand the challenges, growth and development of District 15.
- CEC15 has received a lot of positive feedback regarding last week's announcement about the changes to the D15 Middle School Admissions Process. We have the full support and financial support of our Mayor, Chancellor and Superintendent. CEC15 is a strong supporter of the [D15 Diversity Plan](#).



4. District Report - Anita Skop, D15 Superintendent

- D15 vision for the school year: A heritage of excellence for all students. Her office and D15 educators believe that each child is born with an innate capacity to love learning. This aligns with D15 Diversity Plan.
- Karen Watts is the new Executive Superintendent for Brooklyn North. She oversees Districts 13, 14, 15, 16, 19, 23, 32 and High Schools.
- D15 educational priorities are in alignment with the Chancellor's priorities to accelerate learning and instruction.
- District-wide school support goals for 2018-19:
 - Goal 1: Supporting language learning and rigorous academic discourse for all children.
 - Goal 2: Expand and deepen district-wide discussion and parent outreach, not only for district diversity efforts but also to ensure that all voices are heard and true partnerships are established.
 - Goal 3: Deepen District-wide work to integrate practices that support students' social emotional learning.
 - Goal 4: Enhance the performance of teachers and school leaders.
 - Goal 5: To expand equitable admissions and integration in District 15.
- District 15 Special Initiatives:
 - District 15 Equity Congress
 - District Youth Equity Congress
 - Continuing Principal and School Leadership Team training in diversity and implicit bias
 - Parent outreach forums in all neighborhoods across the district
 - Translation at all meetings, including tours
 - Ongoing reflection on admissions data and protocols
- D15 Superintendent's office will be hosting monthly conferences:
 - Principal Conferences
 - Assistant Principal Conferences
 - Guidance Counselor and Parent Coordinator shared conferences to focus on middle school admissions.
- D15 Superintendent will also have meetings with CEC15, District Leadership Team (DLT) and Presidents' Council.
- The Superintendent's office has received emails mostly in favor of the D15 Diversity Plan.
- Parents still have school choice when applying for middle schools. Screening was the only thing that was taken away. District 15 has great middle schools. Parents can hear all about the MS admissions process during the CEC15 Calendar meeting on October 9.
- LEEP Charter school is trying to open in Sunset Park but they do not have a location yet.
- PS 896 (St. Agatha's) opened this year but not a lot of kids enrolled. The goal was to get the overflow but that did not happen. Hoping to get Pre-K classes in the building. There is space. The decision was made to make the school a lottery school and not a zoned school because the zone would be very small and will not show diversity.
- SIGA grant update: Superintendent Skop is hopeful to get the 2nd tier of funding. D15 gets to pick the programs the grant will help fund.



- Schools choose their own programs that align with their curriculum.
- Superintendent's responsibility is to establish goals that reflect the district's needs but she's always looking for input.
- Standardized test scores have not yet been released.
- How does the district measure the success of a school? By observing the day to day work of students, asking the teachers what kind of projects their students are doing and if it will teach them skills that will help them in college.
- She's looking to expand the Chinese Dual Language in the district. It's hard to find teachers who are skilled in dual language.
- Superintendent Skop is happy to meet with anyone, not just CEC15 members. Her door is always open. Please email her at ASkop@schools.nyc.gov
- Administrative changes in District 15:
 - PS 896 (St. Agatha's) - Ruth Rodriguez Rivera is the new principal for this school.
 - PS 38 - Dr. Yolanda Ramirez retired. Pascal Pradel is the new principal.
 - PS 124 - Annable Burrell resigned. Maria Interlandi is the new principal.
 - PS 154 - Jason Foreman replaced Michael Buckley.
 - PS 172 - Jack Spatola retired. Erika Gunderson is the new principal.
 - MS 51 - Lenore Dileo Berner is serving as a Mentor Principal for one year. Gregory Stanislaus will serve as principal for this school year.

3. D15 Middle School Diversity in Admissions Update - Neal Zephyrin, CEC Diversity Working Group Representative

- The D15 Diversity Plan was announced last Thursday with positive feedback.
- The Middle School admissions will be discussed at the Oct. 9 CEC15 meeting. There will be no screens. That's the only thing that has changed.
- Most recommendations were accepted.
- Some recommendation were hard to work out like transportation, working with schools not to lose Title I funding and smaller class size.

5. [Capital Improvements](#) Coming to D15 Schools - Tamar Smith, Community Relations Manager, External Affairs, New York City School Construction Authority

- The School Construction Authority (SCA) and the Division of School Facilities (DSF) are separate departments but work closely with each other.
- If a school building requires a small project the DSF should be contacted. If it's a big project, SCA should be contacted.
- Most school buildings are 85 years old or older. It takes a lot to keep them up to date. Every year the SCA visits every school to do a building condition survey. It is very thorough assessment of the school building.
- If there is an emergency issue the first step is to call the custodian.
- This is the final year of the current Capital Plan. The New 5 Year Capital Plan will begin next year.
- Any small project issues like boilers or fire alarms should be directed to DSF.



- The Mayor funded the Air Conditioning Initiative to make sure every classroom has an AC unit by 2022. Some buildings have broken ACs, need updated outlets and/or new electrical panels. Some schools are not able to handle the added power from the ACs and will need an electrical wiring upgrade.
- Some D15 schools already have ACs in every classroom or they will have them by the end of the school year. Those schools are the following: PS 1, PS 10, PS 27, MS 88, PS 295, MS 51, PS 29, PS 107, PS 118, PS 124, PS 130 and PS 321.
- Most roofs in the D15 school buildings are in good shape.
- SCA always tries to find permanent solutions to mini buildings and trailers in schools.
- SCA does not define an adequate school by requiring school buildings to have certain features. Some buildings are leased and cannot be changed.
- There is a mandate to make schools ADA accessible by a certain time. Elevators take a lot of space, time and money, but there are things being done throughout the district to make schools accessible to all kids.
- Projects in the 5 year plan are budgeted for that plan. Even if the 5 years are up, they will continue to work on it. No money will be taken from the budget of the next 5 year plan.
- Is there a plan to incorporate solar panels? Not in the current capital plan but some schools have been able to fundraise for them. Some schools have also used Reso A funding for solar panels.
- Reso A money goes through the City Council. City Council finances the projects. When the money comes through it would appear in the capital plan.

6. Strength Based IEPs - Paula Heitman, Understood.org

- Understood.org has put together resources to help parents of special needs kids.
- A student's Individual Education Plan (IEP) is developed by parents and key school staff.
- A strengths-based IEP uses student abilities to help work on weaknesses.
- IEP goals are built around what the student can do and how the team can use those abilities.
- Helping students identify and leverage their strengths, interests and preferences can lead to more self-awareness and self-advocacy.
- IEP meetings can be stressful. If the school and the parent disagree about how to help a student, it can be a very difficult situation.
- Too often, IEPs and IEP meetings focus almost entirely on student weaknesses, deficits, or the things they can't do. The [National Center for Learning Disabilities](http://NationalCenterforLearningDisabilities.org) (NCLD) and Understood want to promote a new approach to IEPs that can help build and maintain positive school-family relationships, while also helping students learn and grow.
- A strengths-based IEP is not just about strengths and weaknesses. It also focuses on interests and preferences. It is NOT an adults-only process. Students are encouraged to help identify strengths and actively participate in IEP meetings.
- Examples of strengths:
 - General: problem-solves well
 - Social: is truthful and honest
 - Language: has and uses a growing vocabulary
 - Literacy: recalls and retells stories and facts after reading
 - Math sees and understands patterns in nature and numbers



- To make this a standard practice teacher training should be provided to help educators learn to:
 - Use strengths-finders to identify abilities, interests and preferences.
 - Prepare students to participate in IEP meetings and self-advocate.
 - Help weave strengths into IEP goals as a way to set high expectations.
 - Expand IEP templates to focus on strengths, interests and preferences
- Understood.org is asking for:
 - Schools to start every IEP meeting with a discussion about strengths.
 - Schools to send parents some key questions to consider about their child's strengths before each IEP meeting.
 - The CEC to issue a resolution or proclamation about strengths in IEPs.
- For more information:
 - Parent Toolkit: How to Ask for Schoolwide Teacher Training to Help Kids with Learning and Attention Issues: u.org/schoolwide
 - Strengths-Based IEPs: What You Need to Know: u.org/sb-ieps
- For any questions please email Ms. Heitman at PHeitman@understood.org

7. Vote on [CEC15 Resolution on New Dyslexia Guidance from NY State](#) - Nicole Brier, CEC15 IEP Representative

- Nicole Brier presented a Resolution to Support Guidance on Chapter 216 of the Laws of 2017 - Students with Disabilities Resulting from Dyslexia, Dysgraphia, and Dyscalculia. She read the resolution out loud.
- The public expressed support of the resolution.

Motion to adopt the Resolution to Support Guidance on Chapter 216 of the Laws of 2017 - Students with Disabilities Resulting from Dyslexia, Dysgraphia, and Dyscalculia - Scott Powell

2nd motion to adopt the Resolution to Support Guidance on Chapter 216 of the Laws of 2017 - Students with Disabilities Resulting from Dyslexia, Dysgraphia, and Dyscalculia - Neal Zephyrin

Motion approved by all 10 members present

8. Charter Committee Report - Antonia Ferraro, Charters Committee Chair

a. Vote on [LEEP Statement for Board of Regents](#)

- LEEP Dual Language Academy Charter School public hearing will be on October 11.
- Antonia Ferraro presented a drafted statement for CEC15 vote on to present during the public hearing. She read the statement out loud.
- There was a suggestion to fact check some of the data on the statement.
- Vote on the statement was tabled for Oct. 9 Calendar Meeting.

b. Discussion on CEC15 Statement regarding Charter Schools in D15

- Antonia Ferraro drafted an official CEC15 statement on charter schools to be used as a framework on charter schools.
- The official statement will be turned into a resolution.



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9. Public Comments

- No public comments

10. Adjournment

Meeting adjourned by unanimous consent at 9:22 p.m.

- Minutes submitted by Francisca Andino, Administrative Assistant