



THE NEW YORK CITY DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

ANITA SKOP, *Community Superintendent*

COMMUNITY SCHOOL DISTRICT 15
131 Livingston Street, Brooklyn, NY 11201
718-935-4317

February 12, 2020

Dear Colleagues, Families and Members of the District 15 Community:

As you are probably aware, the DOE has been partnering with CEC 15 and school communities since spring 2019 to develop a collaborative rezoning and admissions plan that aims to increase diversity and integration, reduce overcrowding, and advance equity. This planning has involved seven zoned schools: P.S. 38, P.S. 261, P.S. 32, P.S. 15, P.S. 29, P.S. 58 and P.S. 676 Red Hook Neighborhood School. The engagement process has been community-driven, representing a new form of engagement for the DOE and entailing extensive outreach across this area of the district. Many planning meetings were held with CEC members, principals, and SLTs, along with public community meetings that ranged from presentations to small group discussions.

In conversations over the past year, a central piece of feedback that stood out was the need for more time to consider potential plans and further empower historically underrepresented communities in the process. This feedback ultimately resulted in a commitment to undertake Participatory Action Research (PAR) and Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) training, to develop equitable potential rezoning plans for elementary schools in both the Carroll Gardens/Gowanus/Red Hook area of District 15, and ultimately in Sunset Park. This process will seek to deeply understand communities' priorities and desires around equity and access in order to inform the assumptions that will ultimately underlie the DOE's rezoning proposal.

At last week's CEC meeting, I shared that we have selected two organizations to lead this important work in collaboration with the DOE. The DOE has selected Brooklyn College and CUNY's Public Science Project to lead PAR, under the direction of Maddy Fox. They have a history of experience in this process. The PAR team will gather recommendations from the community regarding the Carroll Gardens/Gowanus/Red Hook sub-zone by the end of the school year. In addition to DOE led community engagement in Sunset Park this spring, Maddy and her team will help develop the framework for a Sunset Park PAR process to begin in Summer/Fall 2020. The DOE has also selected the NYU Metro Center to lead related DEI work, under the direction of Matt Gonzalez. Matt will support the PAR process by ensuring PAR researchers and community members are equipped to embark on conversations around equity and integration.

In the coming days, a communication will be sent to the CEC and broader community providing additional detail on the process and outlining information on next steps. This will include a call for potential community researchers who will ultimately help design and lead the PAR process. If anyone in the community has feedback or questions please reach out to me, your Superintendent, at 718-935-4317 or by e-mail at askop@schools.nyc.gov.

Sincerely yours,

Anita Skop
Community Superintendent-District 15