



## **District 3 Model CEC Middle School Students Discuss Important Public School Issues**

*2020 - 2021 School Year  
Mondays, 3:30-5:00 pm  
Joan of Arc Educational Complex  
154 W 93rd, Room 204*

Middle School Student leaders convene to debate critical issues in public education today: access and equity, career readiness, standardized testing and more! Guided by and in collaboration with elected parent leaders of District 3, Model CEC will give students a voice in the conversations that affect them the most!

New York City public schools are governed by the Department of Education, which reports directly to the New York City Mayor, and by laws that are enacted by the New York State Legislature and Governor. Locally, there are 32 school districts in New York City's five boroughs, six of which are in Manhattan. Each district has a Superintendent, who oversees all of the schools in the district. Each district also has a Community Education Council, made up of 11 members of the parent community, and they are elected by the PTA's from schools in the district.

A CEC's main duties are supporting elementary and middle schools, approving elementary school zone line changes, and advocating for communities across a wide array of issues. CEC's meet at least one time per month, and sometimes vote on resolutions that call for support or changes from the Department of Education and/or lawmakers.

District 3, on the Upper West Side and Lower Harlem, includes 30 elementary and middle schools from 59th Street up to 122nd Street, between the far west side of Manhattan to Fifth Avenue. District 3 is one of the most diverse districts in NYC, and is one of the most segregated. The Model CEC aims to engage student leaders in District 3 middle schools in the most relevant issues that we face. Open to up to three members of each of District 3's middle schools, delegates will learn and discuss important issues. Here are a few possible issues that students could be interested in discussing:

1. COVID19 abruptly changed all of our lives this year. Closing schools without a plan, the pause of grades, standardized tests, remote learning and technology, public health related issues for reopening schools and many other changes continue to impact public schools. How should we move forward?
2. The UWS Elementary School rezoning and the Middle School Diversity Initiative were two recent contributions to greater access and equity in District 3, but many of our schools remain segregated. New York City's School Diversity Advisory Group released an extensive report in 2019 about this issue and made several recommendations that could substantially change enrollment in our schools. What other changes do you think might work in District 3?
3. What role should the school play in the life of the community? Young people, teachers, and staff spend many hours of their days at school, but after dark, school buildings are empty. Could community schools be used in the community better?

4. Students take standardized tests every year between grades 3-8 in New York. Why do you think this is? How does it affect you in the classroom?

The Model CEC program will breakdown into three segments:

- **Monday, October 26 (3:30-5:00 pm) Information Session**

Learn more about Model CEC from former members and special guests! Delegates meet, get to know one another, brain storm issues of concern to public schools and students in District 3 and beyond and discuss potential cohorts.

- **Mondays, November-June (3:30-5:00 pm)\***

At the end of the second week, delegates will split into cohorts, select issue topics, and select speaker and note takers. The groups break out into discussions about their main issue. The group's job is to summarize their issue to their colleagues and if possible, make at least one recommendation or initiative for change. Organizing around this change through a resolution, campaign for coalition building, and outreach to elected officials and other decision makers will be the final phase of the session, which will end with a presentation to CEC3 and District 3 stakeholders in the spring of 2021.

*\*Model CEC will not meet during holidays, may be subject to additional schedule shifts as needed.*