



COMMUNITY EDUCATION COUNCIL DISTRICT 3

154 West 93rd Street New York, New York 10025 - Room 204 Tel (212) 678-2782 Fax (212) 678-2804 Email: CEC3@schools.nyc.gov

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Middle School Committee Meeting

January 30, 2018 9 am

Joan of Arc Complex, 154 W 93rd Street, Room 204

Changes to Middle School Admission Process

The committee discussed changes coming to the Middle School Admissions policy for Fall 2019. As per the DOE Diversity Policy (Equity and Excellence for All: Diversity in New York City Public Schools, 2017) the city is eliminating revealed Middle School ranking for all schools. District 3 currently uses revealed rankings; a number of district middle schools only select students who rank them first or first /second. This will change for the class entering Middle School in September 2019.

Recommendations by April 2018

The time line for implementation is clear from the DOE ("Admissions process for students entering middle school in Fall 2019"). Both CEC 3 and the District Superintendent's Office intend that any changes in admissions process and rubrics are settled and public in time to be published in the DOE's Middle School Directory. Changes need to be submitted to the Directory by May 2018. To be fully prepared for that date the Middle School Committee hopes to have its set of **recommendations by April 2018**.

Blind Choice to increase options

Currently D3 families must weigh how they rank their Middle School choices, often families feel this limits their options as some D3 schools will only look at applicant who have listed them as first choice. It is believed that if the schools cannot see how a student ranked them families will be less strategic in their ranking and more "honest".

Currently 68% of students receive one of their top 3 choices, this increases significantly for students with high state test scores (88% of students with a state test score average of 4 receive a match to one of their top 3 choices) See: https://docs.wixstatic.com/ugd/a806f4_1dc6b7032ec041c3bcb4267468ce1872.pdf

Blind choice to increase diversity

Although the intent of a move to blind choice is to increase diversity on Middle Schools, the committee once again expressed skepticism that a move to blind choice on its own would achieve such a change. The DOE Office of Enrollment presented to the CEC 3 Calendar Meeting on December 13, 2017. Copy of the presentation can be found here:

https://docs.wixstatic.com/ugd/a806f4_d11955dfb017455699445573d48a8480.pdf

The Three avenues the Office of Enrollment delineate to increase diversity are:

- Geographic Diversity
- Income Diversity
- Academic Diversity

The Middle School Committee intends to explore all of these potential avenues. District 3 looked at addressing income diversity in Middle School admissions during the Spring of 2016. It was not pursued at that time. One of the potential problems associated with targets for income diversity was that economic status and academic performance, as measured by State Test scores, are strongly correlated in District 3. The 2016 plan was further complicated by concern that there are a limited number of students with low economic status and high test scores, if this small pool of students all attend only the handful of schools in high demand in the district it hurts the academic diversity in other schools.

Matthew Angell, District 3 Field Support Liaison, introduced the idea of implementing “floors” for a minimum percent of students with lower academic status (i.e. Levels 1 & 2 on State Test Scores). See the data at: <https://www.cec3.org/middle-school-committee>

The superintendent’s office has been meeting with Middle School Principals to discuss the options for increasing diversity. The principals continue to work with the superintendent to figure out the details of how such a diversity plan could be implemented. Schools which have traditionally interviewed students may continue to do so but set a different set of criteria around who would be interviewed. For example, a school which previously interviewed all students who ranked them as first choice may decide to interview all applicants who have state test scores of 1 & 2. Individual schools are still developing how they will choose to structure this portion of their admissions process.

Parent Voice

CEC 3 continues to amplify parent voice. The Middle School committee is hosting a series of meetings to discuss changes to Middle School Admissions and to solicit parent feedback. The next Middle School Committee Meeting will be on **February 27th, 6:30 pm** at the Joan of Arc Complex, 154 W 93rd street.

The D3 Superintendent’s Office is seeking direct feedback from parents to understand parent’s preferences and concerns. To facilitate this communication the Superintendent’s office has set up a dedicated email address. **Please be sure to email the office at D3feedback@gmail.com with your opinion!**