



DISTRICT 3 COMMUNITY EDUCATION COUNCIL

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

Joseph A. Fiordaliso
President

Theresa L.C. Hammonds
First Vice President

Noah Gotbaum
Second Vice President

J. Conrad Fagan
Secretary

Barbara Denham
Treasurer

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Donna Veronica Gill

John Fitzsimons, Ph.D.
Michele Sweeting-DeCaro

Zoe G. Foundotos
Tyree Etheridge, *Student Member*

Ilene Altschul
District 3 Community Superintendent

CEC3 Strategic Guidelines 2013-2015

Date adopted: 01/15/2014

Community Education Councils (CECs) in the City of New York play an essential role in shaping education policies and advocating for a high quality education for all of the City’s public elementary and middle school children. Every school district in the City of New York has a CEC. They are state-mandated, parent elected bodies with a range of advisory responsibilities. These responsibilities include, but are not limited to, evaluating District Superintendents, giving feedback on the Department of Education’s (DOE) capital plans and budgets, advising the Chancellor on the needs of their district’s Pre-K to 8th grade schools, co-hosting hearings for changes to charter and school Education Impact Statements, and reviewing and evaluating schools’ space planning and instructional programs. CECs must also approve all changes to their district school zoning lines.

CECs were established in 2002 to replace the Community School Boards following the establishment of Mayoral Control. They are comprised of 11 adult members and one high school student member; 9 parent members are elected bi-annually by the District’s Parent-Teacher Association officers and 2 members are appointed biannually by the Borough President. One of the adult members must be a representative of the English Language Learners community; another must be a representative of the Special Needs community. The district superintendent appoints the non-voting high school member, who must be a senior residing in the district and has demonstrated leadership qualities.

The District 3 Community Education Council (CEC3) is the parent advocacy group representing Pre-Kindergarten to 8th grade students and their families in District 3. In addition to its role as an advisory body, CEC3 sees its most important function as representing the interests of the families of District 3’s thirty-two (32) public elementary and middle schools before the DOE and the mayor’s office.

CEC3 has undertaken a strategic goal-setting process to identify its core mission for the 2013-2015 terms. CEC3 views this document as a guideline, but also as a living document that will evolve over time. While we anticipate that our mission will remain the same, our specific goals and objectives may evolve based on the needs of the District.

Mission:

Community Education Council 3 (CEC3) of New York City believes that every child is entitled to a high quality education, a safe and healthy school environment, and equal educational opportunities. The mission of CEC3 is to promote and support the educational needs of District 3 elementary and middle school students by representing and advocating for District 3 families to the NYC Department of Education.

Ways to Affect Change:

CEC3 recognizes that New York City school districts will have a unique opportunity to guide and affect positive change with the election of the new De Blasio mayoral administration. We plan to do this by continuing to work together with other CECs; the D3 Presidents’ Council; City-wide Councils on High School, English Language Learners and Special Education; and current elected officials and other

community organizations to educate the new administration on how to give families a voice in their children's education.

Core Function Areas:

CEC3 has identified seven core function areas of importance. These core function areas directly support CEC3's mission.

1. School Liaisons:

Every CEC3 council member represents several elementary and middle schools in District 3. The role of the Liaison is to establish and maintain a working relationship with leadership of their assigned school.

Goal:

- To encourage change by ensuring as liaisons that CEC3 council members are bringing the challenges, successes and needs of schools to the larger District 3 community.

Strategies:

- To visit our assigned schools at least once per quarter and to report back findings at CEC3 Business and Calendar meetings.
- To create task and actionable items based on liaison reportage;
- To report out to all stakeholders resolved action items and successes.

Areas of Focus:

- *Co-Locations*- Many public schools in District 3 are co-located within the same building. This means that, in a city where space is at a premium, schools must sometimes share buildings and its resources, i.e., janitorial and security services, entryways, gyms, playgrounds, music rooms.
- *Environmental/Health/Building issues*: Several pressing issues require continued focus by CEC3 for the 2013-2015 school-terms, including:
 - School grounds safety and aesthetic needs;
 - PCB remediation: particularly ballast removal in the remaining district schools in need of this very important remediation.
 - Replacement and conversion of boilers burning heating oil #6 to boilers running on fuel oil #2, which will reduce toxic emissions and improve the high asthma rates in D3.

2. Engage, Edify and Unify Parents:

CEC3 asserts that parents need to be constantly engaged; properly informed and sincerely regarded to be strong advocates for their children's educational development. Parents and families who are exposed to and aware of DOE educational policies/process and committed to partnering with their child's teachers/school are empowered to make better decisions for their children's education. The parents/families within District 3 schools are considerably diverse and stem from broad ethnic and socioeconomic backgrounds.

Goals:

- To encourage, inform and empower parents;
- To influence education policy that will benefit and progress the learning experiences of all children in the district.

- To unify the district around common goals and aspirations.

Strategies:

- To form committees that will research and evaluate pedagogy that is appropriate for students in the district;
- To advocate against any educational initiatives the council deems inappropriate for the children in District 3;
- To provide opportunities for parents to connect and share experiences and ideas; and to coalesce around district-wide initiatives.

Areas of Focus:

Common Core Testing- CEC3 believes that the Common Core Standards in its current iteration may be flawed and that the DOE’s reliance on test scores to evaluate teachers and determine our children’s proficiency is unjust. The council intends to actively advocate for sound policy by using a 3-pronged approach with which to analyze and assess Common Core effectiveness:

- The Curriculum and Testing
- Resources
- Implementation Methodologies

ELL/Students with Disabilities- CEC3 believes that students with disabilities have suffered disproportionately as a result of co-locations. These children have a unique set of needs that require special space, resources and services. The council intends to actively advocate for sound policy by:

- Evaluating needs for space, resources, and the impacts of co-locations on this fragile population;
- Collaborate with CEC 75 to protect school spaces dedicated to serve children with special needs.

Student Privacy- New York State DOE has contracted with inBloom, a not-for-profit organization that will collect student data and store it in a cloud managed by Amazon.com.

- The council intends to actively advocate for sound policy against this encroachment on student and family privacy.

3. Elected Officials:

CEC3 recognizes and appreciates the continued support of city, state and federal elected officials representing parts of District 3. CEC3 seeks to work in partnership with our elected officials on issues of importance to District 3. CEC3 recognizes that support from elected officials may be critical to its own advocacy efforts and when practicable will seek this support.

Goal:

- To partner with officials in District 3 whose mission it is to grow progressive, dynamic, high-functioning schools and families.

Strategies:

- To seek support for advocacy issues as they relate to the following areas of focus for the council.

Areas of Focus:

- Co-locations
- Establishment of new charter schools to be co-located;
- Ensuring adequate funding for district-wide initiatives, and local school needs.

4. **Partnering with other CECs:**

CEC3 faces similar challenges as other CECs. CEC3 believes that sharing experiences and supporting the advocacy efforts of other CECs will make all CECs more effective and give CEC councils a stronger voice with DOE. CEC3 hopes this level of collaboration and the resulting raised profile of CECs will lead to increased parent engagement and encourage families to become more active participants in their children's education.

Goals:

- To work in concert to raise the profile of all CECs;
- To increase parent engagement across the city;
- To share communications and resources,
- To learn about the issues they face and the needs of their districts.

Strategies:

- Attend and participate in city-wide Community Education Council meetings, initiatives and hearings.
- Offer letters of support for other CEC initiatives, and
- Collaborate on city-wide initiatives designed to strengthen CEC's and parents.

Areas of Focus:

- Advocating for the return of more breadth and depth to the responsibilities of the Community Education Council (CEC);
- Advocating for modifications to the current Panel for Education Policy (PEP);
- Assessing and analyzing the school Network structure and issuing a report on its level of effectiveness.

5. **Resolutions:**

Resolutions are one of the most effective documentable ways for CEC3 to advocate pursuant to its mission.

Goal:

- To articulate the positions of CEC3 effectively and precisely on issues affecting parents and schools in the district.

Strategies:

- To use targeted language and messaging when writing resolutions;
- To seek to establish CEC3's resolutions as foundational policy and effective advocacy tools;
- To publish resolutions in places where all stakeholders in the district can be made aware of their existence.

Areas of Focus:

- The council will actively decide throughout its term to write strong resolutions on issues it deems in need of this remedy.

6. Media:

CEC3 views the media as an important partner in spreading its advocacy message and in helping to inform parents and families on educational issues affecting their children.

Goal:

- To cultivate positive relationships with members of the media;
- To create a standard practice of circulating information to the media.

Strategies:

- To cultivate a contact list of media members to whom information can be immediately reported, i.e. newly voted on resolutions;
- Create a new media luncheon or dinner to discuss education policy and local issues;
- Identify and engage local education bloggers as media players;
- Encourage CEC3 member interaction with media reps. Create frameworks for members to use when speaking publicly and on the record regarding CEC3 positions on issues and education policy.

7. Establishing New Schools:

Studies conducted in the last 2 years have shown that D3 is in need of middle school seats. The current 2013-2014 third grade enrollment in D3 is 20% larger than the current eighth grade enrollment (source: 2013 testing data). Also, while most high schools are city-wide schools, there are some high schools that give preference to students in the district in which they are located. There currently exists a significant disparity in the distribution of district priority seats in Manhattan high schools.

Goals:

- To mitigate the shortage of middle school and dedicated high-school seats in the district.

Strategies:

- To support initiatives such as the establishment of a middle and high-school in the district; and to,
- Advocate, support and provide resources for existing district middle-schools and high-schools needing such to survive grow and thrive.

Areas of Focus:

- On December 11, 2013, CEC3 passed a resolution Vol. 13 (P) No. 10, (please see attached) which calls for a 6th through 12th grade school that will open in the Fall of 2015. The council intends to further involve itself in the creation of this new school by:
 - Ensuring the tenets of the resolution as set forth are established and adhered to,
 - Monitor the progress of the schools creation, as well as, the selection of its leader; and,
 - Ensure that the pedagogy of the school is in keeping with the mission of the council and the community it will serve.
- Identify existing middle-schools in the district whose goal it is to grow and seek to offer the kinds of support said schools may need to effectuate those efforts.

- Assess current situation at Wadleigh High School, and in conjunction with district, school and community stakeholders create an actionable whole school improvement plan to strengthen this District 3 based middle to high-school.

As your 2013-2015 Community Education Council in District 3 (CEC3), we hope that you find our goals for the specified term to be in alignment with the needs of your families and school communities. If there is an issue we have failed to address in this outline of our intentions, please do not hesitate to contact us via email at CEC3@schools.nyc.gov . We will be happy to review your request and include it as part of our goals for the next two years if it is in keeping with the needs of a majority of schools in the district.

Thank you for your interest and support.