

Nov. 18, 2015
MINUTES OF THE CALENDAR and BUSINESS MEETINGS
COMMUNITY EDUCATION COUNCIL FOR DISTRICT ONE

Present for the November 18, 2015 Calendar and Business Meeting for the Community Education Council for District 1 (CEC1) were Marco Battistella, Aline Gnali, Luke Henry, Naomi Peña, David Post, and Arnette C. Scott. Absent were Moses Seuram (illness), Michael Stutman (family medical emergency), and Stephanie Thompson (unexcused absence). Superintendent Daniella Phillips and Cynthia Cartagena, the new Borough President appointee to CEC1, were also in attendance.

The meeting was called to order and Cynthia Cartagena introduced herself as the parent of a D1 student. Miho Watabe from Class Size Matters gave a D1-specific talk on class sizes and class size reduction funding. She noted that D1 parents rank smaller class sizes first in their list of school improvement priorities and that class sizes in D1 have increased significantly in K-3rd grade classrooms (since 2006) and 4th-8th grade classrooms (since 2009). She provided information about the many schools in D1 with large class sizes, and she related class size increases to budget cuts, a reduction in teacher hiring, the DOE's elimination of early grade class size reduction funding (2010), colocations, and other factors, including differing definitions of class size caps (UFT vs. Blue Book vs. Contracts for Excellence goals). Miho responded to audience questions about class sizes, and CEC members invited interested community members to help organize around the issue of class size reduction.

Superintendent's Update:

Superintendent Phillips offered several updates, including:

- A preview of a November 20th Showcase Schools meeting at PS 188, which will focus on the community school model.
- A preview of a D1 Principals' Meeting on November 20th, to be attended by the Chancellor. The meeting will feature a discussion of the LEAP program, a workshop on alternative and authentic assessments, and a tour of South Street Seaport's resources.
- A preview of the Socioeconomic Integration Pilot Program (SIPP) grant's work group meetings on November 19th. The Socioeconomic Status Integration Work Group and the Family Resource Center Work Group will meet and discuss the current enrollment system, supports that might increase parent satisfaction, and the needs of at-risk families in the district. Work group members explained that they are looking for broad participation inclusive of each school community within the district.
- A recent presentation by School for Global Leaders (a Learning Partners Program school) for the Teaching and Learning department. The presentation focused on inquiry teams and collaboration.
- A D1 elementary principals' meeting last month at Shuang Wen School, where school leaders practiced low-inference observations.
- PS 15's participation in the "Renewal Room" process, in which renewal schools engage in cycles of data review. PS 15 will soon share a problem of practice with colleagues and D1/central staff to get feedback and share ideas with other renewal schools.
- An upcoming (November 23rd) training at PS 15 on the Renzulli school-wide enrichment model.
- Star Academy and the Neighborhood School's Town Hall focused on construction and building issues.
- The Chancellor's recent visit to Star Academy.

- District 1's Pre-K/K fair on December 2nd. So far, 8 local CBOs providing Pre-K services are scheduled to attend.
- The December 7th hearing on the proposed consolidation of PS 134 and PS 137.
- The December 16th PEP vote on the proposed consolidation of PS 134 and PS 137.
- A pilot program in which Pre-K and K waitlists in D1 will be managed at the school level. Schools will consider priorities when working through their waitlists.

Public Comment Period:

The parent of a student at PS 140 expressed her hope for increased funding for an additional guidance counselor at the school. Superintendent Phillips discussed the potential for a part-time position. Currently the school has one guidance counselor and two full-time administrators, one of whom is a principal who does not draw a salary from the school. Superintendent Phillips explained that actions are currently being taken at PS 140 to relieve the guidance counselor of non-guidance-related duties.

Committee Reports:

- CEC1's Capital Plan Committee discussed liaison visits to assess principals' capital plan requests. Jim Newman from FACE was asked to provide information about when the CEC would receive the current Blue Book and about when the Capital Plan hearing in D1 would take place. Mr. Newman said he will follow up on both requests. He noted that the Capital Plan update should be distributed by the last day in November.
- The CEC1 Charter Schools Committee discussed a letter directed to SUNY's Charter Schools Committee expressing concerns about the public comments process. A motion was made to officially approve the letter, the motion was seconded, and it was carried unanimously. The committee discussed a second letter to SUNY's Charter Schools Committee and to elected officials expressing concerns about Success Academy Charter Schools' discipline practices. A motion was made to officially approve the letter, the motion was seconded, and it was carried unanimously. The committee discussed an application by Manhattan Charter School II to merge with Manhattan Charter School in D1. The committee expressed concerns about the merger process, the school's request for SUNY authorization, and the likelihood that the school will underserve high-needs populations.
- The Class Size Committee discussed existing space issues in the building shared by Manhattan Charter School and PS 142.
- The Dual Language Committee discussed D1's difficulty finding certified teachers for dual language instruction. The committee is exploring local resources that might help to address the issue.
- The Safety/Bullying Committee will be meeting within the next month.

The CEC discussed a universal free lunch initiative and raised questions about how Title 1 eligibility would be assessed if schools no longer collected lunch forms.

A resolution was circulated to declare a vacancy for the ELL Parent Seat on CEC 1. A motion was made to adopt the resolution, was seconded, and was carried unanimously. Public comment was invited but none made.

CEC members looked at the D1 staff organizational chart. A question was raised about the staffing of the Family Resource Center: how predetermining the Center's staff fit in with the grant's requirement to conceive of the center through a community planning process.