

# SEI WORK GROUP REPORT

March 29,  
2016

# **SOCIO-ECONOMIC INTEGRATION WORK GROUP MANDATE**

# MANDATE

- Review the research on SES integration; identify key factors that should be taken into account in defining SES diversity
- Review the essential features and best practices of successful choice-based SES conscious student assignment plans
- Identify SES and any additional “at risk” factors that would be used to define the status of the entry-grade applicants
- Examine unique factors and circumstances for CSD 1
- Examine how students are currently assigned and the extent to which schools are enrolling a SES integrated student body
- Set measurable entry-grade SES integration goals for the target school and other schools with the same entry-grade level
- Review current application process and identify any inequities and deficiencies that need to be addressed
- Review the computerized student assignment procedures and identify how these procedures may need to be altered
- Beta test the efficacy of the CSD 1 Pilot Program’s SES conscious choice-based student assignment
- Draft a memorandum that sets forth the findings and recommendations for the implementation of CSD 1’s SES conscious choice-based student assignment policy

# DIVERSITY AND ENROLLMENT

# The Benefits of Socioeconomically and Racially Integrated Schools and Classrooms

The Century Foundation

# Academic and Cognitive Benefits

- \* Students in integrated schools have higher average test scores.
- \* Students in integrated schools are more likely to enroll in college.
- \* Students in integrated schools are less likely to drop out.
- \* Integrated schools help to reduce racial achievement gaps.

# Civic and Social-Emotional Benefits

- \* **Attending a diverse school can help reduce racial bias and counter stereotypes.**
- \* **Students who attend integrated schools are more likely to seek out integrated settings later in life.**
- \* **Integrated classrooms can improve students' satisfaction and intellectual self-confidence.**
- \* **Learning in integrated settings can enhance students' leadership skills.**

# Economic Benefits

- \* School integration efforts produce a high return on investment.
- \* Attending an integrated school can be a more effective academic intervention than receiving extra funding in a higher-poverty school.
- \* School integration promotes more equitable access to resources.
- \* Diverse classrooms prepare students to succeed in a global economy.



# KEY DISTRICT DATA

- 70% of children in poverty; rate of poverty not evenly spread
  - lowest rate of poverty is 21% (EVCS)
  - highest rate is 100%, at four schools (Roberto Clemente, Anna Silver, Nathan Straus, Island School)
- racial segregation is also extreme
  - % of white students ranges from 1% (Roberto Clemente) to 55% (EVCS)
  - % of black students ranges from 4% (Shuang Wen) to 32% (Roberto Clemente)
- % of ELLs ranges from 1% (EVCS) to 17% (Shuang Wen), followed by 16% (Island School)
- unfair to at-risk students clustered in certain schools and to children at schools who are not being exposed to a cross-section of their peers.

# DEFICIENCIES IN THE DOE'S "DIVERSITY BLIND" ASSIGNMENT LOTTERY

- The Work Group and Michael Alves (the admissions planner and controlled choice expert) engaged in an analysis of the District's 2010-11 to 2015-16 Pre-K and K applicants and assignment data.
- The DOE's diversity blind assignment lottery matches applicants to a school of choice before diversity-related information is known about the student.
- FRL eligibility, ELL, SWD, and temporary housing status is only obtained/entered into the DOE's ATS system *after* student is registered in matched/assigned school.
  - This is incompatible with a diversity conscious choice-based student assignment policy, which would require newly enrolling students to register in the school district *before* they are assigned to a school and provide child's and family's SES related information.
- Analysis of the DOE lottery datasets clearly shows SES & racial/ethnic stratification of D1 elementary schools starts with Pre-K and K student assignment.
  - 8 District schools have the highest concentration of FRL students and have enrolled either none or fewer than 9 white students over the past 5 school years. And there does not appear to be any indication that any efforts have been made to make these schools attract a more diverse student applicant pool.
- The above findings strongly support the need for District 1 to adopt a diversity conscious choice-based student assignment and targeted school improvement plan.

# SEI WORK GROUP: PURPOSE AND PROCESS

# WHY AN SES CHOICE-BASED STUDENT ASSIGNMENT POLICY?

- **The best response in this district to achieve the benefits of diversity.**
- **We are uniquely suited for this remedy as a small, un-zoned district of choice.**
- **This district previously pioneered a form of controlled choice.**
- **It would advance educational opportunities in every school.**
- **In use in many school districts throughout the country: e.g. Champaign, IL, Cambridge, MA, and Wake County, FL.**

# WHAT IS AN SES CHOICE-BASED STUDENT ASSIGNMENT POLICY?

- **A lottery for district schools (as we have now)**
  - *Only students new to Pre-K or K would be enrolled through this assignment policy.*
  - *Parents and guardians rank their school selections.*
  - *Sibling priority and grandfathering (as we have now).*
- **Application questions that describe student socio-economic or at-risk status.**
  - *The school district would weight certain factors.*
- **Through specialized algorithms and computerized lottery systems, choices would be a generated.**

# PARENTS' CHOICES

- Choice is a fundamental precept of a SES choice-based student assignment plan.
- We looked at data provided by Michael Alves on SES Kindergarten Assignment Lottery results. We also looked at DOE data. As a point of comparison, in school districts implementing controlled choice, in 2012-2013:
  - *Cambridge, MA – 85.4% of parents received 1 of their top 3 choices*
  - *Champaign, IL – 93.6% of parents received 1 of their top 3 choices*
  - *Wake County, FL – 95.5% of parents received 1 of their top 3 choices*

# SEI WORK GROUP PROCESS

- 1. We met approximately bi-monthly since October, for up to 3 hours at a time**
- 2. A workgroup comprised of 7 parents, 3 teachers, and 4 administrators**
- 3. We reviewed the research examining:**
  - **The basis for focusing on socio-economic factors**
  - **The legal foundation and context for socio-economic integration**
  - **Best practices in devising recommendations for a SES choice-based admissions policy**

Abstract

In this chapter I examine whether and how the relationship between family socioeconomic characteristics and academic achievement has changed during the last fifty years. In particular, I investigate the extent to which the rising income inequality of the last four decades has been paralleled by a similar increase in the income achievement gradient. As the income gap between high- and low-income families has widened, has the achievement gap widened? And if so, have the achievement gaps for low-income families also widened?

The answer, in brief, is yes. The achievement gap between high- and low-income families is roughly 30 to 40 percent larger among children born twenty-five years earlier. In fact, it appears that the income achievement gap has been growing for at least fifty years, though the data are less certain for the period before 1970. In this chapter, I describe and discuss these trends in socioeconomic achievement and find that the income achievement gap appears to have widened in a number of other important findings.

“The Widening Academic Achievement Gap Between the Rich and the Poor: New Evidence and Possible Explanations.” Sean Reardon

C. Recommendation for Socioeconomic Integration: Controlled Choice

The controlled choice plan implemented by the Cambridge Public School System represents a workable solution to the resegregation problem facing public schools. An effective socioeconomic integration plan gives parents some say in where their child goes to school. Polls indicate, parents would prefer to send their child to school close to home.<sup>210</sup> For this reason, a controlled choice plan in a small school district that would not require busing, would not rule out the implementation of controlled choice. Busing would be necessary. As practice has shown, busing tends to overlook their concerns with busing if the cost of their child increases.<sup>211</sup> Also, giving parents a choice of schools can ease some of the negative feelings associated with busing, and allow parents to be able to set a limit on how far they are willing to

“After PICS: Making the Case for Socioeconomic Integration.” Nancy Conneely

Socioeconomic Student Assignment Plans

Opportunities for Low-Income Families and Racial Diversity in K–12 Public Schools

BY CAROL ASHLEY

Perhaps intentionally or perhaps not, the current educational emphasis on charter schools often obfuscates issues of race and class. While charters may offer additional choices to parents, the success of some standout charter schools and networks should not stand for the proposition that charters are the answer to the education equity challenge. The very real issues of postdesegregation resegregation and inequitable funding loom over the quality of education available to the vast majority of African American, Latino, and low-income students in urban and now many suburban school districts. Socioeconomic student assignment plans offer another choice and opportunities for students to attend high-quality public schools with racially and economically diverse student populations.

For the last 15 years I have worked with community groups to advocate better educational opportunities for African American and Latino students and when necessary to bring litigation on their behalf. Here I share my experiences and resulting belief that choice student assignment plans incorporating socioeconomic and achievement factors are important tools for antipoverty and education advocates seeking to advance educational opportunities for African American, Latino, and low-income students.

Purpose and Mechanics

Socioeconomic student assignment plans consider the income levels of student families as part of the process of enrolling students in public schools.

Already in use in many school districts throughout the country, the plans offer students residing in low-income neighborhoods with low-performing schools the possibility of attending better-performing schools outside their neighborhoods.

LOTTERY. In contrast to neighborhood mandatory school assignments for students, socioeconomic plans are based in a choice methodology. Through an application process, parents and guardians rank their school selections. Either through application questions that describe student household income or the highest attain-

ment of education within the household, compilation of publicly available census tract data, or use of students' free and reduced lunch status as a proxy, school districts weight or assign plus factors to students. In addition to considering low-income status, districts typically offer an option for families to elect a sibling's school or a school within walking distance from a student's home. Through specialized algorithms and computerized lottery systems, lists of first, second, and third choices are typically generated for families. Most families accept one of their three

Socioeconomic student assignment plans offer another choice and opportunities for students to attend high-quality public schools with racially and economically diverse student populations.



“Socioeconomic Student Assignment Plans.” Carol Ashley



# SEI WORK GROUP PROCESS

**4. We reviewed district-specific DOE enrollment and assignment data, looking at questions such as:**

- **What is the current algorithm for K enrollment?**
- **How is enrollment handled after an application deadline?**
- **How many applicants are assigned based on existing priority levels?**
- **How many applicants get 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> choice?**
- **How many students who start at PS 15 graduate PS 15? How many come in through different grades?**
- **What % of entire D1 is ELL? Title 1? Special Education? Pre-k?**
- **What % of students roll over from Pre-k to K?**
- **How do the current computerized student assignment procedures work?**

**5. We compared perspectives:**

- **staff vs. administrative vs. parental concerns,**
- **elementary vs. middle school issues,**
- **considerations of race, income, at-risk status, and personal experiences**

## Data Request and Data from Office of Student Enrollment

Wednesday, December 16, 2015

Mr. Robert Sanft  
 Chief Executive Officer  
 Office of Student Enrollment

Dear Rob,

The Community Education Council of District 1 initiated and supported a district-wide exploration of Socio-Economic Status-conscious, choice-based student admissions policies through a series of community engagement workshops, an independently-commissioned research study, and advocacy. Now, with an award of a Socio-Economic Integration Pilot Program grant to District 1 by the New York State Education Department, D1 has a unique opportunity to implement a school-wide enrichment model at Roberto Clemente School P.S. 15, pilot changes to D1's current student assignment policy with targets for increasing student diversity and integration at P.S. 15, and develop a dist family resource center. This grant will support the district goal of improving student divers across D1 schools. The members of the grant workgroup planning the pilot changes to inc economic integration are required by the grant to look closely at the district's current Pre-K (Pre-K) and Kindergarten (K) enrollment policies, including, necessarily, the data behind ap enrollment. For that reason, and reinforced by the support and direction of our Superint reaching out to your office to move forward in planning the proposal.

With the idea that it is integral to the success of the SIPP grant to build a collaborative relat OSE and your data analysts, and one that can endure throughout the planning period and implementation period of the grant, we would like to schedule a preliminary meeting with We hope to work with your team to get the data needed by the SIPP grant and, assuming reasonable, have the entirety of the data by January 4<sup>th</sup>. We have listed our requests belo attached a spreadsheet to facilitate your responses. We would also appreciate your assisti refining our requests where necessary and your guidance in our examination.

1. What is the current algorithm for District 1 Pre-K enrollment? What is the current District 1 K enrollment? Have they changed over recent admission cycles (2012-2014, 2014-15)?
2. What percentage of District 1 Pre-K and of K applicants and students received their choice? Please provide aggregate and school-by-school data for at least the last 3 admissions cycles.
3. What percentage of District 1 Pre-K and of K students were admitted based on each priority levels of assignment? Please provide aggregate and school-by-school data the last 3 available admissions cycles.

School Year	Applicants and Offers by School				Offers Overall % of Applicants - Choice 1-3 Offer Anywhere (Including Other Schools)	% Offers to School by Priority Group **						
	Total Applicants	% of Applicants - Choice 1-3 Offer to this School	% of Offers to this School - Choice 1-3	% of Accepted Offers to this School - Choice 1-3		1	2	3	4	5	6	7
2010-2011	33	36%	86%	100%	100%	0%	6%	6%	0%	21%	3%	0%
2011-2012	25	52%	100%	100%	100%	12%	8%	0%	32%	0%	0%	0%
2012-2013	31	58%	100%	100%	100%	0%	3%	0%	13%	3%	6%	0%
2013-2014	88	34%	100%	100%	70%	9%	1%	1%	17%	1%	1%	3%
2014-2015	94	39%	88%	100%	94%	14%	3%	2%	7%	2%	0%	16%
2015-2016	95	22%	95%	100%	88%	8%	0%	1%	9%	0%	1%	2%
2010-2011	78	51%	100%	100%	100%	10%	9%	1%	5%	9%	12%	5%
2011-2012	71	53%	100%	100%	100%	18%	0%	3%	11%	11%	15%	0%
2012-2013	74	45%	94%	100%	99%	12%	5%	3%	5%	7%	14%	0%
2013-2014	139	35%	94%	100%	69%	8%	1%	1%	5%	6%	1%	16%
2014-2015	167	30%	94%	94%	86%	8%	1%	2%	10%	3%	4%	4%
2015-2016	134	32%	84%	93%	84%	7%	1%	3%	7%	7%	3%	10%
2010-2011	159	56%	99%	98%	96%	7%	9%	4%	6%	21%	13%	0%
2011-2012	180	62%	100%	100%	93%	17%	3%	6%	22%	4%	6%	0%
2012-2013	217	50%	100%	100%	89%	17%	1%	2%	23%	2%	5%	0%
2013-2014	270	39%	97%	100%	72%	11%	1%	3%	11%	3%	2%	10%
2014-2015	307	33%	97%	99%	85%	10%	3%	3%	14%	0%	2%	2%
2015-2016	245	37%	96%	97%	82%	12%	1%	3%	12%	4%	6%	0%
2010-2011	31	42%	100%	100%	100%	3%	32%	0%	3%	3%	0%	0%
2011-2012	29	53%	100%	100%	100%	10%	7%	0%	14%	14%	14%	0%
2012-2013	35	51%	90%	100%	97%	17%	3%	0%	14%	3%	14%	0%

# DEFINITION OF SOCIO-ECONOMIC STATUS

# DEFINING SES

- We reviewed the different academically sound ways of arriving at the definition of a child's socio-economic status:
  - using compilation of publicly available census tract data,
  - using students' free and reduced lunch status as a proxy,
  - using another low-income indicator, or
  - using some multi-faceted definition of socio-economic status (SES)

# RECOMMENDATION

- ***We recommend using both household income and household educational attainment to define socio-economic status. We also recommend identifying students that are most at-risk, independent of their SES status.***

# PRIMARY FACTORS

## Educational Attainment of Guardian

Please select the highest level of education for the guardian in the household.

Select Level:

- None
- Elementary
- Some High School
- High school degree
- Some college, no degree
- Associate degree
- Bachelor's degree
- Master's degree
- Professional degree
- Doctorate

## Free/Reduced Lunch

<b>INCOME CHART</b>			
<b>For Free or Reduced Price Meals</b>			
Effective July 1, 2015 to June 30, 2016			
Household Size	Annual	Monthly	Weekly
1	21,775	1,815	419
2	29,471	2,456	567
3	37,167	3,098	715
4	44,863	3,739	863
5	52,559	4,380	1,011
6	60,255	5,022	1,159
7	67,951	5,663	1,307
8	75,647	6,304	1,455
For Each Additional Family Member Add	\$7,696	\$642	\$148

# SECONDARY FACTORS

- **ELL (English Language Learner) status - A primary language other than English**
- **Students in Temporary Housing**
- **Students with Special Needs**
- **Single-Parent Household (under consideration)**

# HOW WOULD THIS WORK?

- These primary and secondary factors would each have point allocations that contribute to a child's overall "at risk" status.
- Once identified, these "at risk" factors would be "weighted" into the District's socioeconomic choice-based lottery assignment algorithm.



# OTHER KEY FEATURES

- **Grandfathering of current students**
- **Sibling priority**
- **Consistency:** All assignments would be subject to the District's definition of socioeconomic integration, including assignment to any Dual Language program or Gifted & Talented program.
- **Choice:** All parents would rank their school choices in order. The WG hasn't yet concluded whether applicants would be required to make a certain number of choices (likely 3 or 5, pending feedback from the beta test).
- **Stability of Assignment:** Once enrolled, no student would be mandatorily reassigned to another school.

# GOALS

# ENTRY-GRADE (PRE-K AND K) INTEGRATION GOALS

- As mandated by the grant, the SEI WG was to “set measurable entry-grade SES integration goals for the SES target school and all of the other CSD 1 schools with the same entry-grade level.”
- **We recommend all schools have an equal distribution of students identified as at-risk [within +/- 5%], for SES groups and for each of the at-risk subgroups pending results of the beta tests (students from single parent households, students in temporary housing, English Language Learners, and students with disabilities), as measured against the composition of that year’s entry-grade enrollment.**
  - This goal is not the same as that outlined in the grant, which sets enrollment targets for at-risk students, rather than a distribution compared to district averages.

# NEXT STEPS

- Distribute some summary of the presentation; and make the resources we have used and summary conclusions when reached available to all online and over email
- Next meeting of April 6<sup>th</sup>
  - Collection of community feedback
  - Submission of preliminary recommendations to Michael Alves, beta testing, and feedback
- May meeting
  - Further refining based on feedback
- June meeting
  - Signing-off on Michael Alves' recommendation to the community reflecting our contribution to the planning process

# APPLICATION PROCESS

# APPLICATION RESEARCH/CONSIDERATIONS

- We reviewed other SES admission plans, enrollment timelines and applications, and the results of a K Fair survey that we collaborated with the Family Resource Center to create.
- Because the timeline and application work dovetails with the more comprehensive work of the FRC WG around family needs and would benefit from their planned survey, we proposed a subgroup of the SEI team to work with the FRC going forward.
- Our initial view:

# REGISTRATION AND APPLICATION PRELIMINARY RECOMMENDATIONS

- **Registration and application processes:** All students entering District 1 would need to go through a district registration process prior to any application for placement.
  - *All registrations and later application should happen at the FRC.*
  - *The registration would be the point at which SES data is gathered.*
  - *After the initial student registration families could begin the process of application.*
- **Application questions:** The questions on the application form (e.g., income questions regarding household size, residency, indicators of ELL or disability status) should be designed to be both sensitive and useful.
- **Existing systems:** Where possible, systems the DOE has in place (on existing applications or as otherwise utilized) should be used to collect this information.
- **Timeline:** The period in which parents and guardians can both register and apply for schools should be expanded significantly (pending beta testing).
  - *Families register: October - March*
  - *Families apply to schools: March - May*
  - *Matching and notification process: May 1 - May 15*