Diverse and Equitable: What School Diversity Could Look Like in Our District

CEC 1’s executive summary of the diversity workshops held in District 1 over the past year and how community consensus will drive admission planning going forward

Wednesday, June 10
Diverse and Equitable:  
Creating a Diverse and Equitable Community School District 1  

Introduction

As recently documented, New York City has one of the most segregated school systems in the nation. Sadly, the schools of Community School District 1 have reflected that finding for some years. In fact, having recognized this reality for some time and the inequities these conditions beget, CSD 1 families have dedicated themselves to rectifying this tacit segregation. CSD 1, with its great ethnic, racial, and economic diversity, has a long history of parent and community advocacy. School diversity and equity of access has been the unheeded cry and demand of the families of CSD 1 for many years. That advocacy, coupled with years of inaction from the DoE, gave rise to this year’s diversity workshops, dedicated to defining and building a consensus that diversity conscious admissions are necessary in CSD 1 and represent our best hope for a better and more equitable school system and shared future. This report details the steps leading up to the implementation of the diversity workshops, the structure and purpose of the workshops, and the yet-to-be awarded but likely New York State Department of Education grant for the planning and implementation of a Socioeconomic Integration Pilot Program.

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Community Education Council For District One
A History of Advocacy
Advocating for Diversity & Equity in our Schools

Introduction to Student Assignment History in D1

Community School District One is both geographically and numerically very small, with a proportionately large number of school buildings that are largely shared (85%) by schools in a variety of configurations. CSD One, while ethnically, racially and economically diverse, has a long history of parent and community advocacy around school diversity and equity of access. From 1991-2002, the former elected Community School Board removed zones/catchments and implemented measures of fairness for lotteries in oversubscribed schools, based on gender, race, ethnicity; eventually adding linguistic, socioeconomic and academic diversity. The goal was to allow all families equal access to our neighborhood schools so that all of our schools would eventually serve and reflect our diverse neighborhood. In 2004, under mayoral control and centralization, the NYC DoE imposed a market-based open enrollment system with no measures or controls for fairness or equity. As a community, we have, with the support of our elected official, asked the DoE to work with us to return to a system that is built on parent choice but that also allows us to achieve our community values of equity and diversity. We have held summits and forums, protests and press conferences, organized petitions, work groups and task forces. We have proposed improvements to the admissions policy in many ways-not just for D1 but even for the rest of the city. But we are still operating under the open enrollment/ market based system imposed on our community 10 years ago. As former school’s Chancellor Dennis Walcott, once put it - for the last administration- Choice was equity. However, a data study we commissioned in Fall 2013 shows that admissions policies matter.

Looking at our schools from 1999-2011, we see that under open enrollment more D1 families chose to attend our neighborhood schools but the schools have also become increasingly segregated by race, socioeconomic status and academic performance. Using data from NYSED from 2012-13 it is clear how that stratification manifests itself in our schools:

Students in Temporary Housing: one of the most academically at-risk groups is largely concentrated in a few schools that serve 3-4 times the district average (13%) while many schools serve very few Students in Temporary Housing. Economically Disadvantaged Students: a measure used by the State Education Department to identify low income families, another factor that correlates

The district average of Students in Temporary Housing for 25 Pre K – 8 D1 schools is 13%. In four schools, Students in Temporary Housing make up 20%-43% (up to 3 times the district average) of the schools’ demographics. On the other end of the spectrum, in 8 schools fewer than 5% of students live in temporary housing.

Students in Temporary Housing

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</tr>
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<td>P.S. 137 John L Bernstein</td>
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Sources: ATS Download, 4.1.14, Table 2 of School Allocation Memorandum

June 2015 – CEC 1 Report | #diversifiesd1 |
with lower academic outcomes. The average for D1 is 79%, yet in many of our schools 90% -100% of the students are low income, while a few schools serve fewer than 50%. **Title One** is distributed in much the same way. **English Language Learners:** a sub group that correlates statewide with lower academic performance is also concentrated in a few schools that serve again 3-4 x the district average (10%) while a number of schools serve fewer than 5% ELLS.

Interestingly **Students With Disabilities,** another at risk subgroup, is somewhat less unevenly distributed. While a few schools serve few Students With Disabilities (because of their admissions priorities as Gifted and Talented or Dual Language schools) most of our schools are fairly distributed around the average (9 above, 9 below) because for a number of years our District Leadership Team has worked with Office of School Enrollment to monitor the school averages to ensure that all schools are serving our Students With Disabilities (because of their admissions priorities as Gifted and Talented or Dual Language schools) most of our schools serve a noticeably larger percentage of Asian students above the average:

3. A few schools reflect the district demographics- more or less- such as Tompkins Square Middle School that purposefully uses its ability to select students to achieve diversity- academic, socio economic and racial/ethnic;

4. Around ¼ or 6 schools serve a significantly higher percentage of white students than the district average (13%)

Looking at these same groups and their student achievement levels as measured by the standardized state tests, we see strong academic correlations among them as well. How can we talk about "value added" or "school quality" when schools are not operating on a level playing field? In a choice-based district this dynamic can only be self-perpetuating- as it has been, as the data makes clear. In January 2014 CEC 1 held a community charrette to envision a new school for D1 in the huge Essex Crossing Development that is soon going to change the face of the Lower East Side. Diversity was an uncontested and unifying value that emerged -along with the need for a Pre-K – 8th grade Spanish Dual Language program steeped in STEAM, gardening and play based curriculum, portfolio evaluation and assessment. As follow up, in March 2014 we piloted a workshop to engage parents on the topic of school diversity and integration.

Based on the success of the pilot, CEC 1 launched a series of 6 community workshops held over the past academic year to allow D1 community members to work towards consensus on school diversity. This report is the summary of that process and the outcomes that indicate the parameters the D1 community agrees makes for a diverse school.
Community Outreach

Outreach Plan and Efforts

Targeted School and Community Clusters
Each session was made up of parents, teachers, administrators, and other staff members from a cluster of 6-7 D1 Elementary and Middle schools. Community residents and leaders, as well as a few select HS students, also participated. Schools were grouped so that each workshop session would reflect the diversity of the neighborhood. The initial clusters consisted of schools that are diverse-by-design but are losing that diversity under market-based choice enrollment. Those clusters also included several highly segregated (apartheid level) schools to allow for a potential composition reflective of the district population.

Later sessions targeted schools that were highly segregated in different and complementary ways, such that the participants in the sessions were quite diverse. This mix of highly segregated but differentiated school communities often produced some of the richest and most informative exchanges. The final sessions targeted the residents of the NYCHA housing developments and clients of the CBOs/ Settlement Houses that serve the community’s most at-risk families. The low attendance at the final sessions suggests the extent of the natural reach of the CEC. The outreach efforts, which included flyering inside of and in front of libraries, laundromats, grocery stores, after school programs, girls and boys clubs, parks, housing development plazas, and pedestrian crossroads, were extremely well received. Even those recipients that did not sign up for or attend the event expressed an appreciation that the most affected communities were being sought out for input on an essential and impactful issue.

10/25/14 TNS (PS 363), STAR Academy (PS 63), PS 34, PS 19, Eastside Community HS
11/15/14 TSMS, Earth School (PS 364), PS 64, PS 20, School for Global Leaders, EVCS (PS 315), CWS (PS 361)
2/28/15 HSSIS, UNMS, CASTLE, PS 140, PS 142, NEST
3/21/15 PS 15, PS 138, PS 137, PS 134, PS 110, Shuang Wen Academy (PS 184)
4/11/15 NYCHA: Riis, Wald, Baruch, Bracetti, LES 1 and II, Vladick, LaGuardia, Rutgers, SP extension
5/30/15 CBOs/Settlement Houses: University, Henry Street, Grand Street, Educational Alliance

Flyers
Flyers and reminders were emailed to each school community on a regular basis, including each school’s Parent Coordinator, Principal, PTA President, and individual parent body leaders and members. CEC staff and members distributed flyers for each session outside of each school in the targeted clusters at morning drop-off, afternoon pick-up, and at the end-of-day afterschool pick-up. The flyer distribution was another opportunity to address the shared problem of school segregation and to discuss how the CEC was looking to create community consensus over how to begin to address it. CEC 1 members and staff also attended various school events and programs to distribute flyers and engage families, particularly targeting family nights, community days, fairs and fundraisers, and PTA and SLT meetings. Participants were recruited via outreach at these community events and through these community networks.

Eventbrite
Each flyer advertised a link to an Eventbrite rsvp management page that allowed for electronic management of guest lists and facilitated messaging for reminders. All who reserved a spot for a session but did not attend as planned were invited to additional sessions via Eventbrite.
Workshop Participation
200+ RSVPs, 136 Attendees, Family and Staff from Most D1 Schools

RSVPs/Attendees
There were over 200 RSVPs to the 7 sessions, indicating the success of the outreach. Many of these were the result of direct contact and a conversation leading to a shared enthusiasm for tackling D1’s lack of school diversity. Representation was greater from those schools with well-resourced PTA’s, disproportionately low Title 1 populations, and strong ties to the CEC membership. Overall, participants were primarily families of D1 students, and, secondarily, staff or administrators with a history of commitment to D1 schools.

A Breadth of Views
Participants were encouraged to stay for the whole workshop and, for many, work and family obligations were cited as interfering with their ability to make the Saturday afternoon commitment. Unforeseen work and family obligations likely also account for the difference between reservations and attendance (136 participants out of more than 200 reservations), which includes several people who may have attended more than one session. Attendance at Sessions III and IV, which included schools with high concentrations of at-risk student populations, reflects both limited outreach abilities and possibly restricted resources to attend the workshop. For example, workshop IV included 2 schools with disproportionately large populations of Students in Temporary Housing. Some schools whose community member reserved a place at the workshop, but ultimately did not have a confirmed attendee, include PS 134, PS 137, PS 188, PS 110, PS 140, and 3 middle schools, UNMS, CASTLE, and School for Global Leaders. These communities will continue to be approached for participation in diversity and equity planning. Interestingly though, workshops with fewer attendees often resulted in the most complete participation, frank conversations, and exchange of opinions. The trust and rapport that was quickly established in these small settings compensated for any lack of additional voices. Too, while opinions and approaches differed among participants and across workshops, there was not so wide a variety as to suggest undiscovered outliers. The robust participation, on the whole, seemed to fairly reflect the sum of the views held across D1 quite well.
Building Consensus

The Workshop

Introduction/Ice Breaker
As participants arrived, the small group facilitators invited them to build a favorite childhood memory using found objects. Grounded in the work of James Rojas, an urban planner, community activist, and artist, this hands-on activity functioned to level the playing field among participants and engage their brain in unexpected ways. Regardless of language facility or fluency, all participants could delve into their own memories to explore essential parts of themselves, representing-through the simple objects-their experiences in the world. Used in over 400 hundred workshops by thousands, the methodology is an innovative way to engage the public in the design and planning process. Participants self-reflected, constructing their memory using the small, colorful, tactile objects. Green yarn became grass, blue poker chips became the ocean, and hair rollers became schools, parks or homes. Participants were asked to take one minute to explain their model to the group and through this process, share and learn about each other, creating an atmosphere of trust and openness. Often participants found that even though they have grown up in different settings, they often share similar memories of family, nature, pets, or other vibrant early experiences. In this way the group celebrates its own diversity and discovers shared values.

Learning Session I and Breakout Activity: “What Does Diversity Look and Feel Like in School?”
Michael Alves, a nationally known expert in diversity-conscious student assignment planning, explained the different student assignment methodologies and how they fare on diversity outcomes. He defined school diversity within the larger legal context, then provided an overview of Controlled Choice: what it is, how it works, and how it is legally permissible, transparent, and produces fair outcomes. Participants then moved into a small group activity: What Does Diversity Look and Feel Like in School?” Facilitators split the participants into 2 large groups of 15-20 and then divided each group up into teams of 3-5 people, to partake in a short warm up exercise. Using a talking piece, each participant described in a word how she was feeling at that moment in order to help gauge the temperature of the room and to create openness and trust through the act of sharing in a circle. Participants were then invited to work together to design and build diversity in schools. What does diversity in a school look like or feel like? Participants collaborated to pull together their best ideas, learning to comprise without restraints and to build off of each other. This facilitated open activity is a safe way to start a difficult conversation about race, ethnicity, socioeconomics, and educational factors that must be tackled to work on the issue of school diversity. The small group teams next presented their models and concepts to the larger group of 10-14 people. The larger groups were next brought back together and the group facilitators recapped the themes raised in the small group work for the reunited participants, highlighting any unifying or polarizing elements and discussions.

Learning Session II and Breakout Activity: “Framing School Diversity”
Michael Alves presented an overview of the key features of diversity conscious choice-based student assignment plans. By examining the

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Mix the Full Range of Student Achievement Levels
Utilize Seat Capacity Efficiently: Avoid Over and Under Enrollment
Represent a Diverse Mix of Race & Ethnicity
Allow Preference for Siblings
Distribute Socioeconomic Status Equally (family size/income/parent education level)
Ensure each school serves equitable proportions of Students with Disabilities
Allow Grandmothering of currently enrolled students
Ensure each school serves equitable proportions English Language Learners
Allow preference for some Proximity Based Choices
Ensure each school serves equitable proportions Students in Temporary Housing
Set Aside Seats for Over the Counter Students (who enroll after the lottery process)
Providing Adequate Transportation to Support Choice
Other

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various elements of the Controlled Choice framework, participants learned to identify the key elements that could be included in a diversity conscious choice-based student assignment plan and begin thinking about how the seats in D1 schools could be allocated to achieve the D1 diversity goals.

Key diversity elements include: student achievement levels; efficient utilization of seat capacity; socio-economic status; race & ethnicity; sibling status; family income; language dominance; special education status; gender; English language learner status; proximity; and other participant-suggested factors. Part of the community outreach process was to uncover any D1 community specific needs or values that should be included in any future planning process. After a short break, the large groups returned to the facilitators and moved back into the recently established teams of 3-5 people to participate in the next hands-on activity.

**Framing School Diversity:** Each participant was asked to work independently to prioritize his or her own personal values, in rank order, from the list of factors used to create a diversity framework. Each team then negotiated to arrive at a consensus over their team’s top 5 priorities, through the sharing of individual priorities. The teams reported back to the larger group on their process and the outcomes of their team prioritization exercise. Next, in a large group consensus building activity, each individual was asked to use 5 votes to reflect priorities using stickers distributed among the priorities on a frame representing ‘our schools’. Facilitators then shared out how each larger group arrived at that particular frame of elements.

**Building Consensus**

The teamwork that people engaged in to try to reach consensus over 5 common priorities was one of the most interesting and inspiring portions of the workshop. Since participants were asked to devise an individual prioritization beforehand, a quick go-around with everyone sharing their priorities presented striking differences among the members. As participants explained their choices, the discussion would slowly devolve into a deep conversation about race, ethnicity, income disparity, academic achievement, access to information, cultural differences, and dissimilarities in life experiences. Led by the effort to find common ground, individuals would refine their point to its essential, and, in the essentials, found agreement. The struggle in balancing diversity goals with family & community friendly priorities was played and replayed across groups and personality dynamics. Once compromise had been reached on those most essential points, the prioritization of the priorities was jostled anew, with different arguments and persuasions put to the test among teammates that acted to encourage participants to referee and moderate themselves. The conversations also saw trading of opinions on the feasibility of achieving any agreed-upon goals. At the end, and no matter the original differing points of view, all groups and through every workshop came to some agreement on the 5 priorities. Presenting the priorities to the larger group was another opportunity to build consensus, with the loudest initial opponent to a group priority often making the strongest case for its inclusion to others. Finally, as teammates enjoyed the satisfaction of achieving the group priorities, they were given stickers (5 dots) to use as individual “votes” for the elements they wanted to prioritize. Instructed to place all, some, or just 1 on any single or combination of elements, as they wished, many participants “voted” for a different set of priorities from that agreed upon as a group. The impression many were left with is that group members were willing to adopt another’s perspective and understanding and were also able to impart their own view to others. Additionally, after voting, most participants reviewed the votes of the others, a sign of the genuine curiosity, reflection, and respect the consensus building exercise had fostered.

After the vote, participants completed workshop evaluations while the workshop instructors Michael and Lisa discussed potential next steps for D1’s diversity-conscious admission planning process.
Results and Priorities

Socio-Economic Status; Race and Ethnicity

The Data

The table below represents the aggregate vote totals of all workshop participants. Each participant was able to vote for up to 5 elements to prioritize in designing a D1 controlled choice admission policy. Socio-economic status, along with race and ethnicity -not always in that order- was clearly identified as the paramount and central consideration in achieving D1’s diversity goals. Conversations and questions from participants around this priority centered on the precision of any low, medium, and high continuum of definitions of SES and gave way to an understanding of a need to prioritize other interrelated measures. Achieving a mix of students with disabilities and student achievement levels were also dominant concerns. One or the other was the secondary vote getter to SES and Race and Ethnicity in all but 1 workshop. Equal access and representation by students in temporary housing and English language learners were further priorities for participants in designing a D1 controlled choice admission plan. Among family & community friendly assignment priorities, participants identified retaining sibling assignment and current school enrollment (grandfathering) as priorities. Other family and community friendly assignment priorities may have received more votes but for the slightly varied treatment of these topics across workshops. Some participants felt and were assured by the instructors or facilitators that items such as sibling assignment and grandfathering would be part of any plan, in effect leaving them potentially 2 extra votes. Others, unclear in their workshop as to why it was included if not to be voted upon, cast a vote if these factors happened to be a priority to them. In any case, observers across the workshops were left with a strong sense that sibling priority and grandfathering would have to be part of any diversity conscious admission plan.

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Data Omitted

In addition to not capturing any variations in the presentation of priorities from workshop to workshop, the tabulation cannot capture the priorities of those who did not participate. To the extent that those voices are disproportionately made up of families with a diversifying SES, or Student in Temporary Housing, Students with Disabilities, English Language Learners, or Over the Counter assignees, the tabulation might be expected to reflect a prioritization of these groups in any diversity conscious admission plan.
Evaluating the Workshops

Diversity Workshop Evaluation Feedback

Starting with the pilot and through the next 5 workshops, participants were asked to complete written evaluations, which were reviewed after each session to improve and refine the workshop structure and experience. A small percentage of comments—less than 20%—addressed the work of the small group facilitators. These comments were largely positive and included numerous references to how good, great, terrific, or excellent they were (just over half of the facilitator-specific comments were of this nature). The facilitators were praised for their helpful explanations, mirroring of participants, ability to create productive discussions, and accurate summaries of the small group work.

Across all the sessions, but diminishing with each successive workshop, participants lamented the lack of time for more sharing, deeper discussions, and consensus building. The tension between creating a safe space for difficult discussions and driving participants to negotiate shared consensus-based values was a common theme. As the facilitators and workshop organizers refined and perfected the workshop, particularly by lengthening time for discussions, comments regarding time allotment became less frequent. In the larger sessions it was generally felt that the 3-hour workshop was too short, and many participants wanted to see more time for Q&A and informal discussions. To accommodate this request, written questions were encouraged, collected, aggregated, and then reviewed at the end of each session. People were also invited to stay for informal discussions after the workshop ended.

Time management was also less of a concern when the attendance numbers dropped (from groups of 20-35+ to those in the single digits), coinciding with harder-to-reach participants targeted for a workshop. The need to highly structure the workshop and move rigidly from activity to activity also diminished in correlation with group size. A few participants indicated that better facilitation was needed to provide clear instructions and ground rules or norms for safe-space discussions, but these minority opinions more accurately reflected issues with the workshop materials and structure, as demonstrated by their diminished frequency as the workshop was refined and improved. For example, some of the materials were rewritten in response to comments at the first session asking to clarify technical terminology.

Another dominant theme was a need for clarity around next steps, for concrete solutions, and for details of how to achieve school diversity. The workshop organizers tried to address this need by indicating from the start how results could be implemented with the DoE. Without direct power or an indication of DoE buy-in though, it was difficult to assure participants that the DoE would act or even facilitate the implementation on the district level as was called for repeatedly. Consequently, many felt there needed to be more emphasis on movement building in the workshop, to bring the DoE, staff, especially teachers, as well as students into the room to bring about the change. A number of participants sought greater details about the logistics and algorithms that a controlled choice plan would require and were looking forward to sharing that information with the larger D1 community.

Nearly all participants remarked with enthusiasm and gratitude on how much they learned from the presenters and each other. Most commented on the rich diversity of the participants in each session, which was said to have fueled open discussions, allowed for new perspectives, and created meaningful consensus-building opportunities. The materials and data presented were thought to be clear and convincing and participants felt they had learned a great deal about student assignment methods, especially controlled choice. Participants were also impressed by the power of collaboration and the consensus that could be built from diverse perspectives. The small group activities and rich exchanges they afforded were the most appreciated, yet the general view was that the workshop was well structured between hands-on activities, active participation, and passive instruction-based learning. While some loved the building exercises, others felt the ice-breaker activity was too “touchy-feely” and not the best use of time. Most appreciated the guest speaker, planner Michael Alves, but some thought his presentation needed to be abridged or made more interactive. Translation was provided when needed, but workshop materials were not translated, representing a huge barrier to full participation by the D1 community.

While some found the Saturday meeting times inconvenient, a shorter workshop at an alternative time (an evening workshop, for example) was not feasible given that the 3-hour block was already considered too short and functioned as a minimum duration. Overall, participants were grateful for the experience. Many would have liked there to have been more community members working together with them on building consensus to help implement the district-wide views and values around school diversity.

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Next Steps: A Planning Grant
6 Month Planning Grant, Community Engagement in Planning

NEXT STEPS: CSD1 SOCIOECONOMIC INTEGRATION PILOT PROGRAM GRANT

Community School District 1 (CSD1) has submitted a proposal to the New York State Department of Education for $1,250,000 for the planning and implementation of a Socioeconomic Integration Pilot Program (SIPP) that is designed to help achieve the socioeconomic integration, targeted school improvement, and community and family engagement goals for a CSD 1 diverse and equitable future. The proposal, which was reviewed by the Department of Education and submitted to the NYSED on February 13, 2015, was developed by Community Superintendent Daniella Phillips, CEC President Lisa Donlan and other CSD1 stakeholders with assistance from Michael Alves. The proposal has been favorably reviewed by the NYSED and when awarded will provide funding for a six month planning period for the development of the CSD1 socioeconomic integration and targeted school improvement plan, followed by a 30 month implementation period that will end in February 2018.

SIPP Program Model

CSD1’s proposal was designed in accordance with the SIPP RFP’s Community Innovation program model and it incorporates the SIPP program’s school improvement requirements by magnetizing the P.S. 15 Roberto Clemente elementary school, which is a Title I PreK through 5th grade school serving 89% low-income students that has been identified by NYSED as a “priority” school and is the target school for this SES integration program. The Community Innovation Model is well suited for CSD1 in light of the “unusual circumstance” that all D1 schools are unzoned, choice-assigned schools and the community has demonstrated a long standing commitment to school diversity, bolstered by the recent authentic, inclusive and transparent community engagement process on school diversity.

CSD1’s proposal complies with the RFP’s requirement for “a choice-based admissions policy that will promote socioeconomic diversity in the [target] school’s entry grade through consideration of at-risk factors for each applicant.” And the proposal addresses the RFP’s concern “that increased socioeconomic integration in the target school does not result in the increased socioeconomic isolation in other schools within the district” by including district-wide feasibility study, planning and coordination for the development and implementation and of a race neutral choice-based socioeconomic integration student assignment and entry-grade admissions policy not only for Roberto Clemente but also for all of the District’s 1 schools with the same PreK and K entry-grades as the target school. The policy will be designed in accordance with the Guidance on the Voluntary Use of Race to Achieve Diversity and Avoid Racial Isolation in Elementary and Secondary Schools that was jointly issued by the U. S. Department of Justice and U. S. Department of Education’s Office for Civil Rights on December 2, 2011 and will promote socioeconomic diversity and avoid racial isolation in a way that is equitable and fair to all students and practicable to implement.

Planning Period

CSD1 will conduct a six month school and community based planning process that will result in the thoughtful adoption and implementation of Renzulli school wide enrichment program at the Roberto Clemente P.S. 15 targeted elementary school; the study, review and pilot proposal of a permissible, educationally sound and equitable districtwide choice-based socioeconomic integration policy, and a community wide Family Resource Center that will facilitate the equitable implementation of the District’s Socioeconomic Integration Pilot Program. The planning process will be transparent, data-driven and informed by research-based best-practices and CSD1’s on-going and inclusive community engagement and diversity planning efforts that embraces all segments of the community.

The planning process will be carried out in collaboration with the NYC Department of Education with assistance and guidance from outside experts who have years of experience in designing and implementing diversity conscious, choice-based student assignment and magnet school admissions policies.

The Community Superintendent, Daniella Phillips, will work with the Roberto Clemente School Leadership Team, the District 1 Leadership Team, and other community stakeholders to develop and implement the targeted school improvement plan, conduct a feasibility study and develop a pilot proposal for the district wide SES integration policy, and plan for the Family Resource Center. As required by the RFP, the Community Superintendent will convene a diverse Planning Team that will function as a subcommittee of the District’s Leadership Team and will be organized into four work groups that will help facilitate the development of the following key components of the District’s Socioeconomic Integration Pilot Program: 1) Target School Improvement, 2) SES Integration, 3) Family Resource Center, and 4) Program Monitoring and Evaluation.

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The work products that will be produced by the Planning Team and the community engagement workshops will be synthesized and drafted into a comprehensive socioeconomic integration and target school improvement plan that will be thoroughly reviewed by the Community Superintendent, Community Education Council 1, the District’s Leadership Team, the Target School’s Principal and Leadership Team, NYC DOE officials and other key school and community stakeholders. Once this process is completed, the drafted plan will be further reviewed through a districtwide community engagement process. Upon completion of this comprehensive and transparent review process, the proposed Plan will be submitted by the Community Superintendent and the NYC DOE to the NYSED for approval and implementation. The proposed Plan will set measurable integration goals for the target school’s PreK and K entry-grades and the 17 other schools with the same entry-grades, and it will establish achievement benchmarks and goals for the target school’s low-income and other at risk students. The Plan will be submitted to the NYSED on September 1, 2015 and will include the specific activities that will be strategically carried out during each school year of the Plan’s thirty month implementation period that will end on February 28, 2018.

**CSD1 Key Planning Activities**

- Organize the planning team into four working groups: 1) SES integration 2) target school improvement, 3) Family Resource Center and 4) program monitoring and evaluation.
- Conduct community-wide forums and informational meetings that explain the purpose of the SES integration pilot program and how all segments of the community will be fully informed and engaged during the planning process.
- Create a link in the CSD1 website that contains pertinent and accurate information about the SES integration pilot program planning process.
- Conduct monthly planning team meetings for the purpose of sharing information on the status of the work groups’ activities and community engagement workshops and the inter-group coordination of resources and assistance.
- P.S. 15 School Improvement

SES Target School Work Group and School-Based Community Engagement

- Review the research and best practices of the Renzulli school-wide enrichment program that will be designed to magnetize the Roberto Clemente elementary school and improve the achievement of low-income and at risk students and attract higher SES students.
- Review the research on “turn around” schools and identify the lessons that should inform the SES target school enhancement effort.
- Plan intervisitations to NYC public schools that have already successfully implemented Renzulli SEM model, including at least one that has a district Gifted & Talented program, so as to learn from experiences of similarly-configured elementary schools as P.S. 15.
- Convene a school-wide informational meeting that discusses the need for the SES integration pilot program and how the program presents the opportunity to enhance and improve the education of the school’s low-income and other at risk students. The meeting will also emphasize that all the students currently enrolled in the Roberto Clemente school will be allowed to remain in the school and that the SES choice-based student assignment plan that is being formulated will only affect newly enrolling students that do not have an older sibling already enrolled in the school and that any parents who want to transfer their child out of the Roberto Clemente school will be given a priority to attend another CSD1 school that has a higher achievement level and fewer low-income students.
- Assess the educational needs and achievement level of the target school’s low-income and at-risk students.
- Identify and describe the measures that are currently being implemented to improve the achievement of the target school’s low-income and at risk students.
- Review the target school’s current student enrollment data and identify the school’s under represented diverse student population groups that would be recruited to voluntarily attend the school.
- Conduct a facility use analysis and determine the target school’s actual enrollment and the classrooms that will be needed for the Renzulli school wide enrichment program.
- Conduct focus groups on the attractiveness of the SES target school’s Renzulli whole-school enhancement program with the parents of the entry-grade students that will be recruited to enroll in the school.
- Conduct focus groups with administrators and teachers and identify the professional development and resources that will be needed to support and sustain the successful implementation the Renzulli school-wide enhancement program.
- Draft a written memorandum that sets forth the work group’s findings and recommendations for developing and implementing the Roberto Clemente Renzulli school-wide enrichment program.
- Family Resource Center
Navigating School Choice – Increasing Academic Achievement

FAMILY RESOURCE CENTER

Family Resource Center Work Group

- Review how Family Resource Centers are organized and operate in other school districts that are implementing choice-based SES conscious student assignment plans.
- Conduct focus groups and an on-line survey that elicits community input on how the FRC can best meet the needs of the district’s diverse families.
- Define the mission and purpose of the community district’s Family Resource Center.
- Determine a suitable location and space for the FRC.
- Identify the information that will be made available to parents and via what medium (i.e., printed brochure, on-line website, etc.).
- Determine how the FRC should be staffed and organized to best meet the needs of the community district’s diverse families.
- Determine how the FRC can assist the Roberto Clemente SES target school in recruiting higher SES parents and students.
- Identify and partner with other community agencies and organizations that are providing assistance and education related services to low-income families and at risk children.
- Draft a written memorandum that sets forth the criteria and resources that will be needed for the development and implementation of the Community District’s Family Resource Center.

Monitoring and Evaluation

- Identify the quantitative and qualitative data and information that will be needed to document and assess the implementation of the SES Integration Pilot Program.
- Identify the methodologies that will be used to gather and analyze the information.
- Determine the timeline for the dissemination of bi-annual program progress reports.
- Identify the metrics that will be used to determine whether the program achieved its intended goals.
- Socio-Economic Integration

SES Integration Work Group and Community Engagement Workshops

- Review the research on SES integration and identify the key factors that should be taken into account in defining socioeconomic diversity.
- Review the essential features and best practices of successful choice-based SES conscious student assignment plans and identify the key elements and features should be replicated and included in the development of CSD1’s SES conscious choice-based student assignment policy.
- Identify the “at risk” factors that should be used to define the socioeconomic status of the entry-grade applicants and other newly enrolling students and voluntary transfer applicants. Factors to be considered will include the applicants’ family income, parents’ highest educational attainment level, the number of adults in applicants’ household, the demographic characteristics of the applicants’ residential neighborhood and other factors that would be determined by the work group and community engagement workshops.
- Identify unique factors and circumstances that should be taken into account in the development of the CSD1 SES conscious choice-based student assignment policy.
- Examine how students are currently being assigned to the CSD’s target school and other schools with the same entry-grade and assess the extent to which these schools are enrolling a SES integrated student body.
- Set measurable entry-grade SES integration goals for the SES target school and all of the other CSD1 schools with the same entry-grade level.
- Review the DOE’s current school choice application process and identify any deficiencies and inequities that need to be addressed in order to make the process more transparent and parent friendly.
- Review the DOE’s current computerized student assignment procedures and identify how these procedures would have to be altered in order to effectively implement the key elements and features of the CSD1 Pilot Program’s SES conscious choice-based student assignment policy.
- Beta test the efficacy of the CSD1 Pilot Program’s SES conscious choice-based student assignment policy utilizing a best practices proven entry-grade SES integration application and assignment software system.
- Draft a written memorandum that sets forth the work group’s findings and recommendations for the development and implementation of CD’s SES conscious choice-based student assignment policy.
2 Year Implementation Grant
Subject to the Planning Grant, a $1 million Implementation Grant

SES INTEGRATION PILOT PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION

The implementation of the Community District SES integration and target school improvement plan (Plan) will be carried out over a period of thirty months ending on February 28, 2018.

In accordance with the SIPP RFP, the timeline for the implementation periods of the SES Plan will conform to the beginning and ending of the following school-years:

- Implementation Period 1: 2015-16 SY
- Implementation Period 2: 2016-17 SY
- Implementation Period 3: 2017-18 SY

The specific activities that will be strategically and sequentially implemented during each implementation period will be delineated in the operations section of the CSD’s proposed Plan that will be submitted to the NYSED at the end of the Planning Period.
Follow Up Survey
Building and Refining Consensus

Survey
Following the Town Hall and through the end of June, community members are being surveyed on their awareness of segregation in D1, participation in the workshops, and potential interest in participating in the key elements of the planning grant. The CEC will be particularly targeting any schools that were not well-represented at the workshops. Feedback from the surveys, distributed online and by hand to parents, will be used to further build consensus, and refine and calibrate the community-led response to D1’s school segregation.

Acknowledgements
CEC 1 thanks many individuals and organizations for their support in bringing a diversity conscious assignment plan to D1, including our workshop facilitators, Orrick, Herrington & Sutcliffe LLP, and the custodial staff and school safety team at PS 20.