



## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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# CHANCELLOR CARRANZA ANNOUNCES DISTRICT 3 MIDDLE SCHOOL DIVERSITY PLAN

NEW YORK – Schools Chancellor Richard A. Carranza today announced a districtwide plan to increase middle school diversity in District 3, which includes the Upper West Side and South Harlem. This is the first districtwide middle school diversity plan in New York City, and will prioritize 25 percent of seats for students from low-income families with lower academic performance in middle school admissions. The plan will go into effect for students entering 6<sup>th</sup> grade in 2019.

“Students benefit from integrated schools, and I applaud the District 3 community on taking this step to integrate their middle schools,” said **Schools Chancellor Richard A. Carranza**. “I hope what we’re announcing in District 3 will be a model for other districts to integrate schools across the City, and I look forward to working with parents and educators as we implement this plan and strengthen middle schools across the district.”

The development of the District 3 middle school diversity plan has been driven by local parents and educators, including the District 3 Community Education Council and its Middle School Committee, District 3 Superintendent Ilene Altschul, and elementary and middle school principals. As part of its citywide school diversity plan, [Equity & Excellence for All: Diversity in New York City Public Schools](#), the DOE is serving as a technical advisor and providing support to community school districts in the development of districtwide diversity plans – including District 3, District 1 in Manhattan, and District 15 in Brooklyn.

The District 3 middle school diversity plan prioritizes middle school seats for students who qualify for the federal free or reduced-price lunch program (FRL) and who are lower-performing. An FRL-eligible student may be defined as lower-performing based:

- 30 percent on final 4<sup>th</sup> grade ELA course grade
- 30 percent on final 4<sup>th</sup> grade math course grade
- 20 percent on NYS ELA test score
- 20 percent on NYS math test score

Students who are FRL-eligible and lowest-performing based on the above weights are considered to be part of **Group A**, while students who are FRL-eligible and lower-performing are considered to be part of **Group B**.

This admissions scenario would give a priority at each District 3 middle school of:

- **10 percent of seats** to students in **Group A**
- **15 percent of seats** to students in **Group B**

- The remaining **75 percent of seats** are open to **all students**

Under this scenario, admissions methods would remain the same, meaning that school selection criteria would remain in place.

In response to community feedback, the superintendent and DOE have developed an implementation plan to support the admissions changes, including:

- New middle school outreach efforts, including increasing middle school tours, ensuring all elementary school parent coordinators and guidance counselors visit all District 3 middle schools, and encouraging families to list at least five choices on their middle school applications.
- New implicit bias for all District 3 middle school staff and culturally relevant education training for District 3 middle school teacher teams, leveraging the DOE's new \$23 million commitment to this work. The City aims to offer training to all DOE staff members by 2021-22.
- New training for District 3 middle school staff in academic intervention strategies and ensuring that each student receives consistent support from one adult in each District 3 middle school.

Both the District 3 admissions changes and implementation plan will be continuously reviewed to ensure they are advancing the goals of diversity and equity in the district. Based on DOE projections, the admissions changes are expected to impact approximately 300 families in their first year.

“District 3 values diversity and equity across all of our schools, and I thank our CEC and educators for their efforts to put this plan into place,” said **Superintendent Ilene Altschul**. “I am excited to work closely with parents, school staff, and DOE central staff to implement this plan and to better serve middle-school students across our district.”

“The District 3 middle school diversity plan, including the move to blind ranking and a strong implementation plan, represents meaningful change for our schools,” said **Kim Watkins, President of Community Education Council 3**. “I thank Kristen Berger, my fellow CEC members, and parents and educators across the district for engaging in challenging conversations around equity and diversity over this past school year, and for participating in the complex work ahead of us. The announcement we’re making today is a result of community effort and empowerment, and it really drives home the fact that it takes a village for our public school system to work.”

“District 3 is demonstrating that we value equity as a community,” said **Kristen Berger, 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President of Community Education Council 3 and Chair of its Middle School Committee**. “This plan gives us an opportunity to increase access to, and awareness of, a wider range of middle schools for students across the district. It’s the result of a robust community conversation, and it includes the feedback and concerns of community members and educators. I look forward to working with the CEC, Superintendent Altschul, and our school leaders to make this plan a success for the kids and families of District 3.”

“A good school is not defined by the highest test scores, but by its capacity to help students learn. We’re all part of the same District 3 community, and this is an opportunity to embrace each other and our diversity. The bottom line is that we all have to work at diversity, and so I’m excited that all our schools – and our educators and families – are taking on this challenge and doing their part to do right by our kids,” said **Marlon Lowe, principal of Mott Hall II**.

“We live in a diverse City and a diverse world, but our kids won’t grow to understand and appreciate diversity if they’re not in a diverse climate. It’s troubling to see segregation in one of the most diverse school districts – and cities – in the nation, and it’s time to change the status quo. That’s why I support this effort to increase diversity across our District 3 middle schools – it’s going to help better educate our kids, and help move our district and our City forward,” said **Carland Washington, principal of West Prep Academy**.

“Diversity is an important learning tool that enhances our children’s educational experience, and this plan represents a real step towards creating greater diversity in middle schools across District 3,” said **Henry Zymeck, principal of The Computer School**. “This plan will lead to more District 3 middle schools that have the kind of diversity that benefits kids – and that parents are looking for. Ultimately, I believe this plan will result in more middle schools that are viewed as great choices for all of our kids.”

“This plan moves New York City’s schools in the right direction,” said **Manhattan Borough President Gale Brewer**. “Given its demographics, District 3 certainly has the potential to be a model for the rest of the City, but that will largely depend on implementation and community buy-in.”

"Every student deserves the opportunity to be challenged in an academically exceptional, diverse, and supportive learning environment. Because New York’s schools are some of the most segregated in the country, every student does not have access to the opportunity to go to a great school. Integrating D3 middle schools is but a first step toward achieving equity in education and greater diversity in schools. All children will benefit from more diverse school systems, and the steps we take today will help shape our children’s future and the future of this city for years to come. We must do more than tinker around the edges, and each and every school needs access to resources designed to meet their distinct needs and ensure their future success.

I am proud to support these efforts, and will continue to work with members and leaders of the school community to ensure that every student in my district, regardless of circumstance, has the opportunity to attend an exceptional public school in their community," said **Assemblymember Linda B. Rosenthal**.

“The diversity plan is a positive step toward addressing the fundamental inequity created by the proliferation of screened schools,” said **Council Member Helen Rosenthal**. “The many hoops a 10 year-old must jump through to attend middle school in our district have resulted in a segregated and inequitable public school system. I wholeheartedly support this new enrollment policy and look forward to continued discussion and progress to ensure our public schools provide equal opportunity for every child in our community.”

“This equity work by the DOE and Community School District 3 is an important first step in confronting the problem of segregation,” said **David E. Kirkland, Executive Director of the NYU Metro Center**. “To be clear, we owe a vital debt to the organizers and equity advocates who have petitioned for decades for fairer schooling and greater access to opportunities for our most vulnerable students. While no plan is perfect, I am pleased that the DOE and District 3 are beginning to heed the voices of the people. This sensitivity is developing into innovative solutions for a stronger implementation plan to support changes to admissions. It is leveraging new logics for controlling choice in ways that recognize that concentrations of vulnerability and privilege deeply comprise educational equity. I believe this work – as well as the work going on in Community School District 1 in Manhattan and Community School District 15 in Brooklyn – can prove to be a model for integration efforts across the City, and perhaps beyond it.”

Earlier this year, the City announced the first districtwide diversity plan in District 1 in Manhattan, and it has had encouraging results in its first year. A diversity working group in District 15 in Brooklyn is currently working on a districtwide plan to increase middle school diversity. This school year, there were 49 DOE schools and programs across the City participating in Diversity in Admissions pilots, which give priority in admissions to high-needs students.

The District 3 middle school diversity plan and these efforts align to the Mayor and Chancellor’s Equity and Excellence for All agenda, building on efforts to create more diverse and inclusive classrooms through [Equity & Excellence for All: Diversity in New York City Public Schools](#), the City’s school diversity plan.

Together, the Equity and Excellence for All initiatives are building a pathway to success in college and careers for all students. Our schools are starting earlier – free, full-day, high-quality education for three-year-olds and four-year-olds through 3-K for All and Pre-K for All. They are strengthening foundational skills and instruction earlier – Universal Literacy so that every student is reading on grade level by the end of 2nd grade; and Algebra for All to improve elementary- and middle-school math instruction and ensure that all 8th graders have access to algebra. They are offering students more challenging, hands-on, college and career-aligned coursework – Computer Science for All brings 21st-century computer science instruction to every school, and AP for All will give all high school students access to at least five Advanced Placement courses. Along the way, they are giving students and families additional support through College Access for All, Single Shepherd, and investment in Community Schools. Efforts to create more diverse and inclusive classrooms are central to this pathway.

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Contact: Chancellor’s Press Office (212) 374-5141