

Community Education Council



NYC Department of Education

Parent Volunteer Organization

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Council Executive Board

President

Cynthia McKnight

First Vice President

Ben Greene

Second Vice President

Faraji Hannah-Jones

Recording Secretary

Dr. Meryem Bencheikh-ellis

Treasurer

Shawneka Pass

Council Members

Alicia Gittens
Kimberly Steger
Jordan Feigenbaum
Lisa Dipietra

Borough President Designee

Cynthia McKnight
Ben Greene

Superintendent

Meghan Dunn

Chancellor

Melissa Aviles-Ramos

CEC 13

Business & Calendar Meeting

December 17th, 2024 7:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m.

Hybrid Meeting

CEC District 13

Business & Calendar Meeting Minutes

Date: December 2024

Time: 7:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m.

Location: Hybrid Meeting

I. Call to Order

The December Business & Calendar Meeting of CEC District 13 was called to order by **President Cynthia McKnight**.

II. Roll Call / Attendance

CEC Members Present:

Cynthia McKnight (President), Ben Greene (First Vice President – via Zoom), Faraji Hannah-Jones (Second Vice President), Dr. Meryem Bencheikh-Ellis (Recording Secretary), Kimberly Steger (via Zoom), Jordan Feigenbaum (via Zoom), Alicia Gittens (via Zoom)

A quorum was established.

District Leadership & Guests:

Meghan Dunn, Superintendent, District 13

FASE representatives, principals, PTA leaders, and community members

III. Superintendent's Report

Superintendent **Meghan Dunn** provided remarks and year-end updates.

District Celebrations – “D13: I Am Seen”

- December 13 was recognized as **D13 Day**, continuing the district’s monthly tradition of honoring community members.
- For December, District 13 celebrated and recognized **School Safety Agents, School Secretaries, and School Aides** across all schools and district offices.

District 13 Saturday Scene (Launching January 11, 2025):

- Open to all District 13 students in **4th and 5th grade**
- Program will run for **13 consecutive Saturdays (January–May 2025)**
- Hosted across District 13 middle school campuses
- Enrichment offerings include choir, karate, yoga, drumline, woodshop, hydroponics, drones, ceramics, printmaking, podcasting, filmmaking, African dance, and DJing
- Transportation and meals will be provided; priority given to Title I students

Superintendent Dunn noted appreciation for the community’s flexibility as the **School Construction Authority (SCA)** presentation was rescheduled for **January 21, 2025**.

IV. Enrollment & Dual Language Discussion

- Superintendent Dunn clarified requirements for **dual language program enrollment**, emphasizing the 50/50 model (English speakers and target-language speakers).
 - District 13 currently offers **French and Spanish dual language programs**.
 - Enrollment priorities are determined by a DOE-wide system including district residency, sibling priority, zoning, and language status.
 - Native speakers of the target language receive priority placement when available.
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V. Budget & Motions

Transportation Line Item Amendment:

- A motion was made to amend the CEC budget to include a transportation reimbursement line item for the administrative assistant.
- Discussion included anticipated needs for travel related to food pick-up, events, and district activities.
- An amendment was proposed and approved to set the transportation line item at **\$750**.

Vote:

- Motion carried unanimously.
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VI. Council Governance, Vacancies & Voting Procedures

- Council members raised concerns regarding **CEC vacancies remaining unfilled for more than 60 days** and whether this aligns with education law requirements.
- Representatives from **FASE** were present and provided clarification and guidance on vacancy procedures and compliance.
- Discussion highlighted the importance of transparency, clarity, and consistency in council processes.
- In response to confusion experienced during recent votes, council leadership committed to:
 - Clearly explaining voting rules and requirements prior to future votes
 - Ensuring all members understand thresholds, procedures, and outcomes
- Council leadership emphasized that all voices are valued and encouraged continued engagement and participation.

VII. School & Community Updates

- Updates shared regarding high school and middle school outreach, including college readiness, financial aid workshops, and school open house information.
 - Council emphasized the importance of distributing school information through CEC communication channels to families district wide.
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VIII. Safety, Student Support & Advocacy Discussions

- District leadership and council members discussed increased concerns related to **student emotional well-being and trauma-informed supports**, particularly at the high school level.
- Concerns were shared regarding heightened anxiety among students and families related to broader social and political climates, including immigration-related fears.
- District leadership reaffirmed that **schools remain safe spaces** and emphasized existing protocols, guidance, and resources available to support students and families.
- Brooklyn North High School District Office shared that principals are receiving guidance on supporting students experiencing fear or distress, and that families may be connected to additional legal and community-based resources as needed.

Project 2025 & Advocacy Conversation:

- Council members engaged in an informational discussion regarding Project 2025 and the importance of proactive advocacy and contingency planning.
 - The discussion was exploratory in nature and focused on ensuring District 13 remains informed, prepared, and responsive to potential policy impacts on students and families.
 - No formal action or vote was taken on this item.
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IX. Public Comment No public comments were submitted.

X. Adjournment