

**STATUS REPORT ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CSD1 SES INTEGRATION
WORK GROUP PLANNING ACTIVITIES**

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January 5, 2015

Review the research on SES integration and identify the key factors that should be taken into account in defining socioeconomic diversity.

Two important documents were provided to the SES Integration Work Group on November 11, 2015 that establish the legal and social science research basis for helping to identify the key factors that should be taken into account in defining socioeconomic diversity: “After PICS: Making the Case for Socioeconomic Integration” by Nancy Conneely in *Texas Journal On Civil Liberties* (Vol.14) 2008 and “The Widening Academic Achievement Gap Between Rich and Poor: New Evidence and Possible Explanations” by Sean F. Reardon, Stanford University, 2011.

The Conneely article sets forth the legal and policy rationale for the development of controlled choice socioeconomic integration plans in light of the U.S. Supreme Court’s 2007 decision in *Parents Involved in Community School v. Seattle District No. 1* that restricts using a student’s race as a basis for assigning students to remedy *de facto* segregation in public schools. The article was published in 2008 and discusses the limitation of using eligibility for the federal school lunch program to identify “low-income” students as a proxy for race in promoting socioeconomic desegregation in the wake of the PICs decision. This is significant given the fact that the vast majority of socioeconomic integration plans that have been developed since the PICs decision use eligibility for FRL as the sole indicator of a student’s socioeconomic status.

Reardon’s publication sets forth the social science evidence that strongly correlates children’s academic achievement with their family income and parents’ educational attainment. Reardon’s research has been widely recognized by scholars and policy makers and provides the peer-reviewed research-basis for the development of multifaceted socioeconomic integration plans. Reardon’s research has also been cited by the New York Times (see “Class Differences in Child-Rearing Are on the Rise”, December 17, 2015 and “Education Gap Grows Between Rich and Poor”, February 9, 2012) and his work directly informed the development of Champaign’s nationally recognized multifaceted controlled choice socioeconomic student assignment plan (see [The Future of School Integration](#), Century Foundation 2012).

The SES Work Group was also provided a copy of an article entitled Socioeconomic Student Assignment Plans: Opportunities for Low Income Families and Racial Diversity in K-12 Public School that was published in 2014 by Carol Ashley that documents the efficacy and benefits of the controlled choice SES plans in Wake County NC and Cambridge, MA. This article is significant due to the fact that Carol Ashley was a plaintiffs' lead attorney in the Champaign desegregation case and is now the national director of enforcement at the U.S. Office for Civil Rights.

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.

An overview of the key features and best practices of successful socioeconomic controlled-choice plans were set forth in the document I authored entitled "Fulfilling the Promise of Brown and Diversity Conscious Choice-Based Assignments" that was provided to the SES Work Group on October 27, 2015.

This document was intended to give the SES Work Group a framework for understanding the difference between a segregative "diversity blind choice-based" student assignment policy and a desegregative "diversity conscious" controlled choice assignment plan. This document was also used as a framework for guiding the discussions of the participants and facilitators that took place during the seven diversity workshops that were conducted by the CSD 1 Community Education Council during the 2014-2015 school year. These workshops yielded important results that directly informed the development of the proposal for the CSD1 Socioeconomic Integration Pilot Program Grant. Key components of the SIPP grant that were addressed by these workshops include the need for a multifaceted definition of socioeconomic integration that encompasses family income, parents educational attainment level, students in temporary housing, English Language Learners and promotes racial and ethnic integration. The workshops also strongly supported the need for a community-based Family Resource Center and a transparent and family friendly school choice application process.

Champaign, IL

A copy of a 2012 memorandum I authored describing the details and best practices of the multifaceted Champaign Socioeconomic Controlled Choice Student Assignment Plan was provided to the SES Work Group on December 14 that includes the District's multifaceted definition of socioeconomic integration for Low and Non-Low SES students and it identifies the SES factors that are self-reported by parents when they register their children and apply for a choice-based assignment. The document also discusses the allocation of available seats for SES integration and it describes the logic and features of the AECG, Ltd proprietary SES conscious

Kindergarten lottery assignment algorithm that has been used to assign students since the 2009-10 school year.

A copy of the Champaign Elementary Student Registration and Schools of Choice application form was also provided to the SES Work Group on December 14 that sets forth the SES related information that parents self-report when they newly register their children and apply for a choice-based assignment. The information that is obtained in the Champaign registration and SES application form is reviewed and validated prior to running the District's Kindergarten SES assignment lottery is in sharp contrast to the sparse and diversity-blind information that D1 Kindergarten parents are required to provide on the DOE's "Application for Admission" form for the Kindergarten assignment lottery that is conducted prior to parents having to register their children in the NYC public schools. Ensuring that all of the key information that is needed to assign students to an integrated school is included in a District's school choice application and admission form has been well established as a best practice and essential feature of an equitable choice-based student assignment policy.

I have also provided the SES Work Group a power point that describes the key features of the AECG, Ltd on-line transparent and user friendly controlled choice application software system that we developed for Champaign and Wake County, NC. The system allows parents to view and access key information about schools they can rank order for their child before they submit their application, including each school's available seats, the schools their child has a priority to attend, and the number of parents that have selected each school as their first choice. All the data is maintained on a real-time basis and the system allows parents to change their ranked choices at any time during the application period. The system also tracks the number of students that have selected each school as their first choice by SES status. This feature enables each school to track the extent to which it is achieving its SES integration goals and to conduct targeted recruitment efforts as needed during the application period. Best practices indicate that this system works best during a two to three school choice application period.

Champaign Data Sets

The results of the Champaign multifaceted SES Controlled Choice Kindergarten assignment lotteries were provided to the D1 SES Work Group during its December 8 planning session. The results were delineated in 12 data-sets that document the accommodation of parents' rank-ordered choices that were achieved under the race CC plan (1998-2008) and the SES CC plan (2009-2015) and that were further disaggregated by SES status and racial ethnic group for the 2012-13 school year. The data also documented the SES integration that has taken place under the SES plan and the re-segregation that would occur by SES and race if the SES plan was rescinded and replaced by a nearest-school assignment policy. Data was also provided that analyzed the demographic characteristics of the 2012-13 Kindergarten lottery applicants by race, gender, educational program and the following SES related factors: meal price eligibility, family income level, parents' highest educational attainment, the applicant's pre-school experience, and

the number of adults and minor children in the household. These data clearly indicate that the most “at risk” Kindergarten applicants were children from a low-income, single-parent family whose parent’s highest educational attainment was a high school diploma or less. These data also document that only 2.5% of the parents declined to self-report their family’s gross income level and only 0.8% declined to indicate their educational attainment.

Rochester, NY and Lee County, Fl.

The Rochester controlled choice plan is an example of a SES Plan that has been in effect in New York State since 2001 and the Lee County Plan is a good example of a comprehensive controlled plan that was originally adopted in 1997 to resolve a federal desegregation lawsuit and which was locally amended in 2009 to promote socioeconomic segregation and prevent racial re-segregation. The Lee County Plan is significant because it focuses on improving student achievement and for its extensive parent outreach and public schools marketing strategies in the face of increased competition from Charter Schools. On the other hand, the Rochester Plan, which was well designed with extensive community input in 2001, unfortunately demonstrates the limitation of using only a student’s eligibility for a free or reduced lunch as the single criteria for SES integration in light of the fact that all of the students in the Rochester City School District are now FRL eligible and for the failure of school officials to implement the targeted school improvement component of the Plan.

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.

The SES Integration Work Group has reached the point in the SIPP planning process where it should identify the factors that ought to be included in defining a student’s socioeconomic status. Research and proven best practices strongly suggest that a child’s SES status is primarily determined by three inter-related factors: family income, parents’ educational attainment, and the number of adults in the child’s household. As clearly demonstrated by the Champaign data, there is a direct correlation between children’s gross family income and their parents’ educational attainment with over 80% of the students whose parents have only a high school diploma or less being eligible to receive a FRL, which includes over 70% of the students who reside in a single parent household. Moreover, the Champaign data strongly validates the contemporary social science research that educational attainment is now the primary predictor of a family’s income.

As discussed during the December planning session, a multifaceted definition of socioeconomic status enables CSD 1, which currently has 70% of its students receiving a Free or Reduced lunch,

to identify the low-income students who are *most* “at risk” when they enroll in the District’s elementary schools.

A multifaceted definition of socioeconomic status that identifies the CSD1 students that are most and least “at risk” will encompass all students and will enable the District to allocate seats in each school by students SES status and it will enable the District to set assignment priorities for ELL students and other special student population groups.

Identify unique factors and circumstances that should be taken into account in the development of the CSD1 SES conscious choice-based student assignment policy.

The identification of students residing in temporary housing is an “at risk” factor that clearly should be included in the SES Work Group’s proposed socioeconomic integration policy. What makes this issue “unique” is the fact that CSD1 students in temporary housing, which account for 11% of the District’s students, are heavily concentrated in certain schools that are low performing and highly segregated.

As the planning process continues and more information is obtained from the Parent Survey that has been designed by the Family Resource Center Work Group and from other on-going data collection activities additional issues are likely to emerge that will need to be addressed by the SES Work Group.

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.

These activities cannot be adequately carried out until the SES Work Group’s request for information and data pertaining to the implementation of the DOE’s lottery admissions policy for CSD1 Pre-K and K students is obtained and analyzed.

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.

This activity is dependent upon obtaining and analyzing the qualitative data and information that will be provided by FRC Work Group’s Parent Survey of CSD1 parents who have gone through the DOE’s school choice application process and currently have children enrolled in D1 public schools.

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.

These activities cannot be professionally carried out until the AECG, Ltd contract for SIPP services is approved by the PEP.

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.

In light of the protracted delays that have occurred in implementing the approved SIP Work Group's SIPP planning activities the drafting of the written memorandum setting forth the work group's findings and recommendations for the development and implementation of CD's SES conscious choice-based student assignment policy will most likely be completed in March 2016.