

**Youth, Education & Libraries Committee  
Meeting Minutes  
September 9, 2015**

**Committee Members Present:**

Judith Insell, Tisha Jackson, Yvonne Stennett, Tina Glover, Deirdre McIntosh-Brown  
Jen Silverman (public member)

Meeting called to order by Committee Chair- Judith Insell at 6:45 P.M  
Introductions were made by all present.

***Presentation: The School at Columbia***

**Head of School, Amani Reed, with support from Columbia University Staff**

The focus of Mr. Reed's presentation was to outline the admissions process, from start to completion and fielding questions about the process.

The Head of School, Amani Reed, came prepared to fully explain the admissions process to our committee and the general public...Many questions were asked re: the lottery & financial aid process.

The YEL Committee requested that the "tracking" of the applicants be more thorough (providing zip codes of applicants), so that the committee would be able to determine whether families from CB9 (School District 5) were actually applying to the school, given that the catchment for applying is School Districts 3 & 5.

The YEL Committee also made it very clear to the Head Master and the Columbia University staff that many families in the CB9 area do not trust their admissions process and that the School at Columbia needs to be more transparent about the lottery system and the financial aid process.

Head of School Reed and the Columbia University Staff agreed to work closer with the YEL Comm. to help the CB9 community to get a better sense of the process.

The YEL Committee suggested the following:

- After the initial lottery numbers have been drawn, re-set the lottery numbers (beginning @ no. 1) for the families that continue on in the process (receiving an application, financial aid form, etc). Provide the families continuing on in the process with status updates as to where their lottery number is in the "line up" to be accepted to the school.
- Since the School at Columbia claims that their admissions process is "Blind," refrain from having the school visit until after a child has completed the entire admissions process and has received an acceptance confirmation.
- In keeping with the "Blind" admissions process, have the financial aid process take place after a child has completed the entire admissions process and has received an acceptance confirmation.

The YEL Committee will follow up with the School at Columbia throughout the course of this school year to monitor, as best we can, what transpires in this year's admissions process.

**<http://theschool.columbia.edu>**

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***Community Presentations:***

- **George Bruce Library, Lauren Bradley** (Library Rep.)

Ms. Bradley presented highlights from September calendar

<http://www.nypl.org/locations/george-bruce>

- **Manhattan Staten Island AHEC:**

**West Harlem Health Mentoring Program, Mayra Leon** (Program Manager)

Ms. Leon presented an overview of the program. The organization is looking to recruit youth from the West Harlem area.

<http://msiahec.org>

***Updates:***

**Teachers College Community School (TCCS)**

Nancy Streim (Teachers College) and the leadership team of TCCS were invited to present that this month's meeting. Unfortunately, they were unable to attend. They have committed to presenting at the October committee meeting.

***Committee Discussions:***

**Absentee YEL Committee member Clarence Jackson:** The issue of Mr. Jackson's non-attendance has been brought to the attention of the CB9 Board Office and the past CB9 Chair Rev. Georgette Morgan Thomas and current Chair Padmore Jean. The board office and Chair Jean are investigating the issue and will follow up with the committee.

**Establishing strong relationships with Superintendents of School District 5, Gale Reeves and School District 6, Manny Ramirez, as wells as CECs for School Districts 5 & 6:**

The YEL Committee desires to be more interactive with these concerned parties, since we all have the common goal of supporting the children and families of West Harlem with the highest quality education.

**Committee "Vision & Goals for 2015-16":**

- Make a stronger focus on the needs of the schools in the CB9 area, examining policies and procedures for the area schools. The YEL Committee will strive to make school visits, connect with school administrations and parent bodies, in hopes to better support the students and their families.
- Some discussion was had re: partnering with the spring College Fair taking place @ Riverbank Park (as it is spearheaded by Winston Majette). The committee chair will reach out to Mr. Majette to start a dialogue about the possible partnership.
- The committee will endeavor to present at least one "Town Hall" or "Forum" during this school year, to address educational issues of concern with the general public.

Meeting adjourned at 9:15 P.M.