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CAMDEN CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT

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PRESS RELEASE

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Following Community Feedback, Superintendent to Hold Listening Tour Focused on Improving Enrollment in Camden Public Schools

Regular parent complaints about different applications and deadlines for City schools underscores need for improvement; listening tour to explore how

September 4, 2015 – Office of the Superintendent, Camden, NJ – Superintendent Rouhanifard today announced a neighborhood-by-neighborhood listening tour to focus on the challenges parents face with enrolling their children in Camden public schools. This issue is as complex as it is persistent—parents originally raised concerns during the Superintendent’s 100-day listening tour nearly two years ago, but only incremental gains have been accomplished in the face of this multi-faceted challenge.

“Right now, parents need to navigate 17 different applications and deadlines in order to find the right public school for their child, and that’s not right,” said Superintendent Rouhanifard. “It is in our collective self-interest for parents to be able to access the best school for their child. We can and will untangle and ultimately streamline this process, and I look forward to hearing parents’ feedback.”

When the Camden Commitment was released in January 2014, enrollment was listed as one of the steps the School District would take to accomplish Promise 4: Serving Parents. Since that time, incremental progress has been made—the intra-District special transfer process is now less arbitrary, to give one example—and more substantial gains need to be made for the 2016-17 school year.

“Right now, the enrollment process is really confusing—there are so many applications and deadlines, it’s hard for parents to figure out,” said Evelyn Jimenez, a Camden parent whose children attend Camden County Technical School and Catto Family School. “If it’s the same city, why should the process look so different? I’m hopeful that CCSD can figure out a simpler way for families to access schools in Camden.”

Meeting information for the first two meetings follows:

When: Tuesday, September 15, 6:00-7:30 p.m.

Where: North Camden Community Center, 6th & Erie Streets

Community Host: Advisory Board Members Felisha Reyes-Morton & Theresa Atwood

When: Thursday, September 17, 5:00-6:30 p.m.

Where: New Life Ministries, 1721 Haddon Ave.

Community Host: Advisory Board President Kathryn Blackshear

Information on additional meetings will be posted shortly on www.camden.k12.nj.us and www.facebook.com/camdenpublicschools.

“It doesn’t matter whether you’re a charter school leader, a parent, a student or a concerned citizen—this issue impacts everyone,” said Ron Brady, school leader at Freedom Prep Charter School. “Instead of having different application timelines and processes across all schools in the city, we are eager to explore another option that levels the playing field for all families across Camden.”

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