Department of Education
Carmen Fariña, Chancellor

Testimony of the New York City Department of Education
On Diversity in New York City Schools
Before the New York City Council Committee of Education

December 7, 2017

Testimony of Deputy Chancellor Josh Wallack

Good morning Chair Dromm, and Members of the City Council Committee on Education. My name is Josh Wallack, and I am the Deputy Chancellor for Early Childhood Education and Student Enrollment at the New York City Department of Education (DOE). I am joined by LaShawn Robinson, Executive Superintendent of DOE's Office of Equity and Access. We are pleased to be here today to discuss the Mayor and Chancellor's commitment to school diversity, and our ongoing work to make New York City's schools more diverse and inclusive. I thank the Council for the opportunity to testify today, and for your work on this important issue.

In June, we released New York City's first citywide school diversity plan, Equity & Excellence for All: Diversity in New York City Public Schools. The plan includes the following policy statement reflecting our commitment to diversity:

The New York City Department of Education (DOE) is committed to supporting learning environments that reflect the diversity of New York City. We believe all students benefit from diverse and inclusive schools and classrooms where all students, families and school staff are supported and welcomed. This work is essential to our vision of Equity and Excellence for all NYC students.

When the Department speaks of diversity, we acknowledge that diversity comes in many forms – racial background, socioeconomic status, home language, country of origin, immigration status, ability, special needs, religion, gender, gender expression, sexual orientation, housing status and cultural background and experience. We believe – and the research is clear – that all students benefit from diverse, inclusive schools and classrooms.

The plan includes three initial goals to measure diversity and provide a yardstick for our progress as a City:

1. Increase the number of students in a racially representative school by 50,000 over the next five years, up from 303,412 students in racially representative schools today;
2. Decrease the number of economically stratified schools by 10 percent (150 schools) in the next five years, down from 1,118 economically stratified schools today; and
3. Increase the number of inclusive schools that serve English Language Learners and Students with Disabilities

The plan also lays the foundation for the community engagement and collaboration that must be the primary driver of the work to make schools more diverse and inclusive going forward. While

we have made, and will continue to make, system-wide changes, we made a clear commitment to provide more formal support to community school districts in the development of district-wide diversity plans. There will be no one-size-fits-all solution to this challenge, and we believe that the most valuable work will be done through partnerships with families, educators, and community leaders in all our communities and neighborhoods.

That brings me to a powerful example of this approach. With this commitment to partnership in place – and more importantly, the extensive work and advocacy of parents, community leaders, and educators – we were proud to announce our first-ever district-wide school diversity plan in Manhattan's District 1 earlier this fall. The plan includes district-wide admissions policy changes and the creation of a new Family Resource Center where families can learn about the strengths of all District 1 schools and receive admissions support in their own language.

This fall, we also launched a community engagement process in District 15 in Brooklyn, and formed a diversity working group that will meet throughout the school year and lead at least three public workshops. We aim to announce a District 15 middle school diversity plan by the end of the current school year. We are hopeful that the work in Districts 1 and 15 can be models for making schools more diverse and inclusive in other parts of the City, and we are committed to working with local leaders across communities.

Alongside this district-based work, we announced in the diversity plan that we would create a citywide School Diversity Advisory Group. The Advisory Group's role is to evaluate our initial plan and goals, and make formal recommendations on policies and practices to increase school diversity.

Throughout the fall, we've had several planning meetings with the group's Executive Committee. Today, we announced the full Advisory Group, which includes educators, parents, students, advocates and researchers, DOE representatives, and members of the business and labor community. The Advisory Group is co-chaired by Maya Wiley, José Calderón, and Hazel Dukes.

The first meeting of the full Advisory Group is scheduled for this coming Monday, December 11; at this meeting, the group will review the diversity plan, discuss topics for the Advisory Group to explore further, and map out plans to solicit more ideas and feedback. Members of the Advisory Group will also host town halls over the course of 2018 in every borough to solicit feedback from community members. We are looking forward to this upcoming meeting, and will continue to update you on the Advisory Group's progress in the coming months. We welcome your further engagement, particularly as the Advisory Group seeks input from community members.

In addition to the policy statement, goals, and Advisory Group and district-based work, the diversity plan also includes a series of immediate, concrete actions to address segregation and increase diversity. The actions include several changes to student admissions policies and

procedures, and efforts to ensure diversity and inclusivity within new and existing schools and programs.

I would like to highlight a few of these actions:

- We are eliminating the Limited Unscreened high school admissions method, through which students would receive priority on their high school application for attending an information session or open house. This created a burden for families, and the data clearly showed that low-income students, English Language Learners, and black and Hispanic students were less likely to receive the Limited Unscreened priority than their peers.

  Eliminating Limited Unscreened is one of several actions to make our admissions processes easier and fairer for families – and, in particular, to reduce the burden on low-income and non-English-speaking families.

- We are eliminating "revealed" middle school ranking that encourages families to apply to middle school strategically and not apply to highly competitive programs. We are creating online applications for middle and high school, and expanding our NYC School Finder mobile tool – which has already been used by 160,000 users since it launched last fall – to all admissions processes. We are also working with schools towards more equitable admissions models, and trying to make school tours more accessible to all families – including by having them during evenings and encouraging schools to offer "virtual" tours online.

- We have expanded our Diversity in Admissions pilots, through which schools give priority in their admissions processes to low-income students or English Language Learners, in order to foster a more diverse student body. With support from the City Council, we started these pilots at just 7 elementary schools two years ago. Now, 42 elementary, middle, and high schools have a Diversity in Admissions pilot in place, and we plan to include community-based Pre-K providers for the first time in 2018.

- We expanded initiatives supporting increased diversity at the City's eight specialized high schools. This includes doubling the number of schools participating in the Specialized High School Admissions Test (SHSAT) School Day, where we offer the admissions test during the school day at middle schools. It also includes continued expansion of our DREAM program – a free afterschool program that prepares students for the SHSAT. We have seen encouraging results already from this program: DREAM program participants comprised 6 percent of black and Hispanic students who took the SHSAT last year, but 26 percent of black and Hispanic students who received offers at the specialized high schools.

- We are committed to diversity as a factor in school rezoning going forward. This builds on re-zonings in District 3 in Manhattan and District 13 in Brooklyn where diversity was a critical part of the conversation.

As we think about how to make schools more diverse and inclusive, however, it's also critical that we focus on what's going on inside each school and its classrooms. Beyond simply leveling the playing field for admissions, we must work to make each of our 1,800 schools a high-quality and welcoming option for all families. Inside each school, we must work to ensure that all our students – regardless of their background – have access to rigorous coursework and enrichment. This is the kind of work we're investing in through our Equity and Excellence for All agenda; LaShawn Robinson, who leads much of this work in our Office of Equity and Access, will speak to it in her testimony.

I would also like to take a moment to thank the Council for its leadership on making our schools more diverse and inclusive, especially Speaker Mark-Viverito, Chair Dromm and Council Members Lander and Torres. In particular, the School Diversity Accountability Act provides important oversight for our work – it provides the mechanism for us to measure our progress towards the initial goals in the diversity plan.

I want to close by emphasizing that school diversity is a priority for this Chancellor and this administration, and by thanking you again for the opportunity to testify today about what we are doing to advance that priority.

While the City has taken significant steps to foster schools that reflect the diversity of our City, we know there is so much more work to do. We know that the strides we've made so far would not be possible without the advocacy and voices of the community at-large, including members of the Council. And we ask for your continued advocacy, feedback, and partnership as we move forward with the diversity plan, the School Diversity Advisory Group, and particularly our district and community-driven work.

Thank you again, and it's my pleasure to introduce LaShawn Robinson.

Testimony of LaShawn Robinson, Executive Superintendent.

Good morning Chair Dromm and members of the Education Committee. My name is LaShawn Robinson, and I am the Executive Superintendent of the DOE's Office of Equity and Access.

The Office of Equity and Access plays an important role in advancing the City's Equity and Excellence for All agenda. As Deputy Chancellor Wallack discussed, our office leads much of the work to ensure that every child – regardless of their background or what neighborhood they live in – is provided with equal opportunity and access to rigorous, high-quality coursework. Specifically, we support Advanced Placement (AP) for All, Lead Higher, College Access for All at the middle school level, and DREAM Expansion.

AP for All is designed to ensure that by fall 2021, students at all high schools will have access to at least five AP classes. The initiative is currently in 152 high schools, including 60 that offered no AP courses before the initiative.

With initiatives like AP for All, we are telling our students that we believe in them and their ability to go on to college and careers. By ensuring rigorous and high-quality coursework – and by making our schools more equitable in the coursework they offer – we make all our high schools more attractive options for students and families.

In its first year, AP for All accounted for 32.1 percent of the citywide increase in the number of students taking one or more AP exams. AP for All schools account for 50.8 percent of the citywide increase in Black and Hispanic students taking at least one exam, and 29.2 percent of the citywide increase in Black and Hispanic students passing at least one exam.

Our AP for All work aims not only to ensure that all students have rigorous courses at their school, but that underrepresented students are participating in those courses. We need to make sure not just that our schools are diverse, but that underrepresented students have the same opportunities within schools.

To this end, we have joined the Lead Higher initiative, which supports schools nationwide to identify low-income and Black and Hispanic students who are qualified for AP courses but are "missing" from them.

In 2016–17, Lead Higher worked with 24 NYC high schools that already offer several AP courses to identify approximately 1,400 underrepresented students who were not taking these courses but could succeed in them. We have worked to enroll these students in AP courses this school year, and our goal is to onboard 15 additional schools into the initiative this school year.

In addition to the work of AP for All, my office oversees the DOE's DREAM-Specialized High School Institute (DREAM-SHSI) that began in 2012. DREAM-SHSI is a 22-month, extracurricular academic enrichment program designed to help low-income, middle school students develop the skills and strategies needed to succeed on the Specialized High Schools Admissions Test (SHSAT). While fewer Black and Hispanic students attend our specialized high schools than we would hope, the DOE has developed a six-point specialized high school diversity initiative to increase access to all of our specialized high schools.

As part of the six-point initiative, my office launched the DREAM Summer/Fall Intensive program. The program's goal is to increase diversity at the specialized high schools, and increase the number of high-achieving students, from the least-represented districts, who take the Specialized High School Admissions test and receive an offer to a specialized high school.

In the 2017 admissions cycle, students from the two DREAM programs made up just six percent of the Black and Hispanic students who took the SHSAT in 2016, however they made up 26 percent of the Black and Hispanic students who received offers to our specialized high schools.

Building on the promising results from the DREAM program, my office also established a Capacity Building Initiative (CBI) for SHSAT preparation that uses the same strategies as the DREAM program. This program provided training for 33 schools in underrepresented districts to provide SHSAT preparation; in the first year of the program this spring, over 1,000 6th and 7th-grade students enrolled in these school-based programs.

As an educator and former principal and high school superintendent, I would also like to speak briefly about the importance of culturally responsive strategies in teaching and the DOE's investments in this work. Culturally responsive teaching is good teaching that demands that students experience academic success, celebrates and acknowledges multiple perspectives, and supports citizenship skills in students by promoting questioning and critical thinking. Culturally responsive teaching ensures that every student gets what they need to be successful. Culturally responsive pedagogy is a priority for this administration, including through our *Passport to Social Studies* curriculum, our training for new teachers, and through a Council-funded initiative for culturally responsive training we will provide for 600 additional teachers this year. I want to thank Speaker Mark-Viverito and the City Council for this funding, and your commitment to this work.

Broadly, while we are headed in the right direction on issues of equity and access, we know we have more work to do and look forward to our continued partnership with the Council.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify today. We would be happy to answer any questions you may have.

The Mayor's Office of Operations
Written Testimony Submitted To the City Council Committee on Education
Oversight – Diversity in New York City Public Schools and Int. 1604-2017
Thursday, December 7th 2017

The Mayor's Office of Operations thinks is it important to affirm to all New Yorkers that they have the right to be addressed by their preferred pronouns. Operations is providing testimony today about Int. 1604, which would requires the evaluation of forms that collect demographic information for pronoun inclusion, and to incorporate pronoun collection into select City-controlled forms wherever possible. Operations is coordinating the implementation of Local Law 128 and associated additional local laws of 2016, in partnership with the seven participating agencies named in that law, which Int. 1604 amends and which we will provide some introductory feedback.

Int. 1604 amends Local Law 128 of 2016, which, among other things, requires Operations to conduct an annual review of all forms by designated agencies that collect demographic information that the administering agency has the right to amend. It also requires Operations to report on the form evaluations annually, and to amend all forms that can be amended to include enhanced demographic information within 5 years. These bill negotiations took more than three years and addressed considerable operational concerns.

Given that the proposed legislation reflects the extended bill negotiations, Operations supports an amended version of Int. 1604. Operations looks forward to determining opportunities to include this information as the process of reviewing and updating City forms begins next year.

Additionally, the Commission on Human Rights interprets its protections against discrimination based on gender identity and gender expression, which have existed for 15 years, to include the right to be addressed by one's preferred pronoun. Repeatedly or intentionally misgendering someone is a violation of the Human Rights Law, and the Commission issued legal enforcement guidance in December 2015 outlining these types of violations. Incorporating pronoun review into the demographic form evaluation only strengthens the City's ability to uphold the Human Rights Law.

Operations looks forward to continuing this important work, and thanks the Council for their ongoing partnership.

United Federation of Teachers
A Union of Professionals

Testimony of the
United Federation of Teachers

By Janella Hinds, Vice President for Academic High Schools

Before the New York City Council Committee on Education
Regarding the Diversity Plan for New York City Public Schools

December 7, 2017

Good afternoon. My name is Janella Hinds, and I am the United Federation of Teachers' vice president for academic high schools. On behalf of the union's 200,000 members, I would like to thank Chairman Danny Dromm and the Committee on Education for holding today's hearing.

We deeply appreciate your oversight of New York City's recent diversity plan — Equity and Excellence for All — and its impact. Chairman Dromm, we always value your committee's call for greater accountability from the Department of Education.

From the outset let's all agree: New York City's public schools did not evolve overnight into a complex system with alarming degrees of segregation and student bodies in individual schools lacking the representation of those attending our public schools — the remedies, therefore, won't immediately materialize. The education bureaucracy is large, the gaps in representation are wide-ranging and the policies offered by our members and advocacy groups are controversial to some.

An approach to achieve representation of our public school students

When I last testified before the Education Committee on these issues in December 2014, the UFT agreed with Council Member Lander's bill requiring the DOE to report annually on the efforts it is making to increase diversity within schools and its progress toward that goal. Likewise, we supported Council Member Torres' resolution calling on the DOE to officially recognize the importance and benefits of school diversity. In our view, these were steps in the right direction.

I shared our UFT Specialized High Schools Task Force findings with our recommendations, which focused squarely on an aggressive set of admissions policy changes to address the severe underrepresentation of Black and Latino students in specialized high schools.

The scope of our report, however, reflected our broader conversations on the impact of the lack of equity and opportunity in the largely segregated New York City public schools. Unless we're framing our discussion and goal-setting around seeking an authentic representation of the

racial, ethnic and socio-economic demographics of our city's 1.1 million students in our over 1,700 schools, we're just playing at the edges.

The city's diversity plan falls short

Three years ago, the University of California, Los Angeles, report revealed for the nation that New York State had the most segregated public schools in the country. Five years ago, the NAACP Legal Defense Fund filed its federal civil rights complaint against the city's abysmal admission rates of Black and Latino students and the overall admissions process for selecting candidates for our city's specialized high schools. Despite these earlier warnings, the DOE's current efforts on diversity still lack a sense of urgency and fall short of making any significant impact on representation.

The district's plan includes strategies and goals which are a good start on addressing the issue of diversity — including, but not limited to, forming a school diversity advisory group to tackle citywide policies and practices, increasing the number of students in a racially representative school by 50,000 over the next five years and expanding the Specialized High School Admissions Test offered during the school day from 7 to 15 middle schools. The department also plans to review the policies at selective middle schools that exacerbate the low percentages of racial diversity at the high school level.

However, given the entrenched segregation citywide and the poor representation of diverse groups in the schools and programs with the highest rigor, the impact of many of these strategies and goals will only scratch the surface. For example, when there are approximately 400 middle schools and the DOE's plans offer special access for testing at 15 schools, the impact is negligible. While we appreciate the district's efforts to begin addressing this issue — especially the recent approval of a district-wide admissions plan aimed at creating greater integration within the elementary schools in District 1 — we would encourage the DOE to fully embrace these issues with bolder initiatives offering a greater system-wide impact.

The UFT stands behind its 2014 recommendations

As I mentioned earlier, our union's task force released a report in 2014 called *Redefining High Performance for Entrance Into Specialized High Schools — Making the Case for Change.* Making change, real change requires both bold initiatives and the political will to fund and mandate change. In the realm of gifted programs in elementary and middle schools that largely provide the applicant pool for specialized high schools and other screened schools, we need to broaden the definition of what constitutes the highest-performing scholars.

Specifically, our recommendations included:

- Creating a "power score" pathway (using a combination of grades, state exam scores, attendance and some version of a revised Specialized High School Admissions Test aligned to the curriculum) for entrance into a specialized high school;
- Creating a pathway that would target the top-performing 8th-graders at each and every New York City middle school, with the goal of offering a proportional number of seats to these students depending on the size of the school. This "top performer" ranking would

be determined by the grade point average. We proposed limiting this pathway during the first year only to one child per middle school— roughly 500 8th-graders initially, according to 2014 DOE figures. We'd recommend expanding this pathway in subsequent years;

- Leveling the playing field by providing free electronic preparation materials and other preparation methods for the entrance exam, as well as registering all students for the specialized high school admissions process, along with an easy opt-out;
- Changing the Discovery program for applicants who narrowly miss the "admit score" to make it mandatory for all schools, resulting in an intensive summer program for scholars; and aligning each Discovery Program with the skills needed for incoming 9th-graders specific to each school;

Additionally, we like the DOE recommendation to expand the applicant pool by better publicizing the specialized high schools admissions procedures. However, without redefining and broadening which scholars merit entrance into these sought after schools, the face of the student body will continue to look the same — three years later, five years later or beyond.

The UFT-DOE PROSE model shows early promise

The UFT's PROSE program (Progressive Redesign Opportunity Schools for Excellence) was conceived based on the tenet that the solutions to our public schools' challenges can be found within the buildings when the flexibility is given to the educators who know our children best. PROSE schools, in fact, were among the first to suggest to the DOE to use the flexibility of PROSE to address integration issues. Initially, the DOE rejected the premise. To its credit (and bowing to the relentless media scrutiny shining the light on the city's status as having the one of the most segregated districts nationally), the DOE in November 2015 announced a pilot program open to PROSE schools and other schools willing to tackle integration issues through adjusting their student admissions processes to increase and maintain the diversity of their student bodies.

The current 2017-18 school year finds approximately 30 PROSE schools included in the city's school integration efforts, including schools involved in the new district-wide integration efforts in District 1 such as the Neighborhood School and the Earth School. Over the past two years, these pilot schools and other PROSE schools have received grants funded through the UFT and the National Education Association to support their PROSE integration work. For example, educators at MS 447 have undergone professional learning sessions concerning diversifying and integrating their student enrollment and have offered summer bridge classes for incoming students entering the schools as part of their new admissions flexibilities, and staff at Brooklyn Latin High School have designed and implemented recruitment and Specialized High School Admissions Test preparation programs aimed at enrolling more students from their local middle schools. In addition, ongoing discussions are underway at an additional 10 other schools considering employing the PROSE model to have an impact on persistent segregation.

We champion utilizing the PROSE model as one approach because it elevates teacher voice and shifts school culture in positive directions. Simply changing the student ratios doesn't necessarily move the needle on true inclusion where diverse students and families feel

welcomed and supported. These approaches show promise, but given the sheer number of schools in the system, this too, barely cracks the surface.

Authentic inclusion is serious work — let's get it done

The UFT stands ready to join with the DOE as a serious partner in a serious effort. We seek solutions to ensure our schools represent the 1.1 million students equitably and with access to the full range of specialized and enrichment programs regardless of zip code, race, language or any previously conceived obstacle to entry.

The DOE's Office of Equity and Access formed a working group in 2014 conceived in part to address the specialized high school disparities and strengthen its policy and program approach to diversity more broadly. The union was invited to sit at the table, but the effort wasn't prioritized by the department. Our input into crafting the group's agenda enabling real collaboration wasn't sought or necessarily welcomed; plus the meetings were routinely rescheduled making it difficult to remain on track.

I've received recent notice that a reconstituted working group is set to meet on Dec. 11; our hope is that there's renewed resolve and these new efforts prove more fruitful.

Communities want to be taken seriously, to be brought to the table and to be part of a serious, committed discussion about how to bring diversity to all our schools — not just a few schools — and not small scale programs that effect few students. Our union is a proponent of empowering parent and teacher voice in order to ensure the best educational outcomes for our students. This is even more critical as the system seeks to break down barriers, open access and make our schools more representative of our students.

The DOE worked with parents in its efforts to diversify District 3 and bring greater choice and access. The process was long and contentious, but transparent and inclusive of stakeholders, and it is moving forward in positive ways. This is the type of hard work required in the school districts and in the neighborhoods with the highest-need students. That requires outreach, education and authentic inclusion; parents will see that diversity improves and enriches education.

Let's not let the floor be our ceiling

I'd like to leave you with a challenge to inject greater urgency into the efforts of our DOE partners. Small efforts yield small results. Let's not let the floor be our ceiling.

Our members seek real change marked by bold efforts. From our standpoint, the efforts so far have lacked the political will and impeded bold changes. We seek your support for substantive change that goes beyond window dressing.

Tip toeing around these disparities won't deliver the equity and access our students deserve, that our members want to provide and that our students' parents and communities expect.

Thank you.

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Testimony of

Grant Cowles
Senior Policy and Advocacy Associate for Youth Justice
Citizens' Committee for Children

Before the
New York City Council
Committee on Education

Oversight:
Diversity in New York City Schools

December 7, 2017

Good afternoon. My name is Grant Cowles and I am the Senior Policy and Advocacy Associate for Youth Justice at Citizens' Committee for Children of New York (CCC). CCC is an independent, multi-issue child advocacy organization dedicated to ensuring that every New York child is healthy, housed, educated, and safe.

I would like to thank City Council Education Committee Chair Dromm and all the members of the City Council Education Committee for holding today's hearing on diversity in New York City's schools. CCC appreciates the City Council's interest in ensuring that all New York City children, regardless of their race, ethnicity, gender, or neighborhood in which they live, deserve a high quality education.

We believe that segregated schools do not provide equitable opportunities for students, and we thus greatly appreciate the City Council holding this hearing to better understand the current state of diversity in the City's public school system. We also appreciate the efforts the Administration has taken to date to take some steps towards diversity in some neighborhoods and schools. Most importantly we thank the Council and the Administration for opening the door to having very important, and sometimes very difficult, conversations about how deeply segregated New York City's schools still are. Today's hearing will surely further this conversation and we look forward to continuing to partner with the Council, the Administration, parents, students, community members and other advocates to continue to move the needle on diversity in schools.

A) Diversity in Schools is Important

1) Academic Benefits for Children Attending Diverse Schools

Attending a diverse school has been proven to have profound benefits for the educational environment and student learning. National research continues to show that diversity improves academic achievement. The following are some of the research-based findings that come with diverse classrooms and schools[1]:

- Higher achievement in math, science, language, and reading.
- Higher achievement for students in all grade levels, but especially higher in middle and high school.
- No evidence of harmful or deleterious outcomes for any demographic, any age, or any subject area.
- Post-secondary benefits, including higher likelihood to graduate high school, enter and graduate from college, enter a STEM field, have higher occupational and income attainment, and possess workplace readiness and interpersonal skills.
- Intergenerational benefits for individuals who attended non-segregated schools whose children and grandchildren have better outcomes, even after controlling for the schooling environment for those children and grandchildren.
- Many non-academic benefits, including:
    - Enhanced capacity for navigating multicultural settings;

[1] *See* Mickelson, Roslyn Arlin. *Research Brief - School Integration and K-12 Outcomes: An Updated Quick Synthesis of the Social Science Evidence*. The National Coalition on School Diversity. Brief No. 5, October 2016. Available at http://www.school-diversity.org/pdf/DiversityResearchBriefNo5.pdf. Accessed on Nov. 28, 2017. (Collecting and summarizing the research on diversity in education.)

- Better health and wellness;
- And less juvenile and adult involvement with justice systems.

2) Diversity in schools particularly helps address the achievement gap for low-income Black and Latino students.

One of the key objectives for educators is to provide supportive environments in which students are able to learn basic education skills in reading and math, regardless of race or ethnicity. In schools across the country however, including New York City, Black and Latino students have not scored as high in reading and math compared to other students, creating what is commonly referred to as the achievement gap.[2] The achievement gap has been shown to be notoriously persistent, even with many positive initiatives that raise scores but still do not close this gap, leaving Black and Latino students still scoring lower than their peers.[3] On New York City's latest 3rd through 8th grade proficiency scores, the overall rate increased from the prior year by 2.6 points for English and 1.3 points for math, but there was still a wide gap by race, with 28.9% of Black students and 29.7% of Hispanic students proficient in English compared with 61% for Asian and White students, and 20.7% of black and 25.3% of Hispanic students proficient in math compared to 67.8% for Asian and 59% for white students.[4]

Addressing segregation is one of the few demonstrated methods that addresses the achievement gap.[5] Historically, the peak years of school desegregation in the 1970s and 1980s corresponded with the gap closing much more rapidly than in the decades that followed when desegregation policies were dismantled across the country.[6] Modern research shows that racially diverse schools lead to higher academic outcomes for all students, but its positive impact is greater for students who come from low-income backgrounds and for Black and Latino students.[7] The achievement gap has been found to be smaller for Black and Latino students in non-segregated

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[2] Camera, Lauren. "Achievement Gap Between White and Black Students Still Gaping." U.S. News (website). Jan. 13, 2016. Available at https://www.usnews.com/news/blogs/data-mine/2016/01/13/achievement-gap-between-white-and-black-students-still-gaping. Accessed on Nov. 28, 2017.

[3] Hanushek, Eric A. "What Matters for Student Achievement." *Updating Coleman on the Influence of Families and Schools.* Education Next (website). Vol. 16, No. 2, Spring 2016. Available at http://educationnext.org/what-matters-for-student-achievement/. Accessed on Nov. 28, 2017.

[4] Zimmer, Amy. "Students' Scores on State Tests Inch Up, but Racial Gap Remains Wide." DNA Info (website). Aug. 23, 2017. Available at https://www.dnainfo.com/new-york/20170823/civic-center/state-english-math-exams-scores-opt-out. Accessed on Nov. 28, 2017.

[5] "8 Ways to Close the Achievement Gap." Hanover Research. Available at http://www.hanoverresearch.com/2016/04/29/k-12-closing-the-achievement-gap/. Accessed on Nov. 28, 2017. *School Composition and the Black-White Achievement Gap.* National Assessment of Educational Progress, National Center for Education Statistics. June 2015. Available at https://nces.ed.gov/nationsreportcard/subject/studies/pdf/school_composition_and_the_bw_achievement_gap_2015.pdf. Accessed on Nov. 28, 2017. "Strategies for Closing the Achievement Gaps." National Education Association (website). Available at http://www.nea.org/home/13550.htm. Accessed on Nov. 28, 2017.

[6] Orfield, Gary. *Schools More Separate: consequences of a decade of resegregation.* The Civil Right Project, Harvard University. July, 2001. Available at https://www.civilrightsproject.ucla.edu/research/k-12-education/integration-and-diversity/schools-more-separate-consequences-of-a-decade-of-resegregation/orfield-schools-more-separate-2001.pdf. Accessed on Nov. 28, 2017.

[7] Mickelson, Roslyn Arlin. *Research Brief - School Integration and K-12 Outcomes: An Updated Quick Synthesis of the Social Science Evidence.* The National Coalition on School Diversity. Brief No. 5, October 2016. Available at http://www.school-diversity.org/pdf/DiversityResearchBriefNo5.pdf. Accessed on Nov. 28, 2017. (Collecting and summarizing the research on diversity in education.)

schools.[8] National research has also shown that the achievement gap on SAT tests correlate with segregation levels, and one study showed that changing from complete segregation to complete integration in a district could reduce the SAT achievement gap by as much as one quarter of the disparity.[9] The de Blasio administration has admirably set equity for students and closing the achievement gap as one of the priorities of the education system.[10]

3) Diversity in schools reduces racial bias among all students.

School diversity, starting in the preschool years, has also been shown to promote tolerance, appreciation, and positive attitudes towards diversity. Research has shown that racially diverse schools lead to the following specific outcomes[11]:

- Reduction in individual levels of racial and ethnic prejudice;
- Break in intergenerational perpetuation of stereotypes and fears of the "other";
- Increase in cross-racial trust and friendships among youths and adults;
- Enhanced capacity for navigating multicultural settings;
- And increased likelihood of choosing to live in integrated neighborhoods.

Schools with representative student populations can help address the very attitudes and prejudices that have historically led to segregated communities and schools.

B) Data Show NYC Schools are Not Diverse and are Segregated

Despite the research showing the value of school diversity, nearly half of New York City schools are segregated, defined as a school where 90 percent or more of the enrolled students are Black or Latino. New York City has some of the highest rates of segregated schools in the entire country.[12]

The citywide numbers do not reflect the level of segregation at the borough and school district level. Eighty percent of schools in the Bronx are segregated, including all 42 schools in District 7. In Brooklyn, 54% of schools are segregated, but the level of segregation is much higher in certain districts. All 29 schools in District 23, 94% of schools in District 18, and 93% of schools in District 32 are segregated.

The map on the next page shows the location of segregated schools, revealing that the vast majority of segregated schools are in community districts that have the highest levels of risk to

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[8] Kahlenberg, Richard D. "The Future of School Integration." The Century Foundation (website). Feb. 28, 2012. Available at https://tcf.org/content/book/the-future-of-school-integration/. Accessed on Nov. 28, 2017.

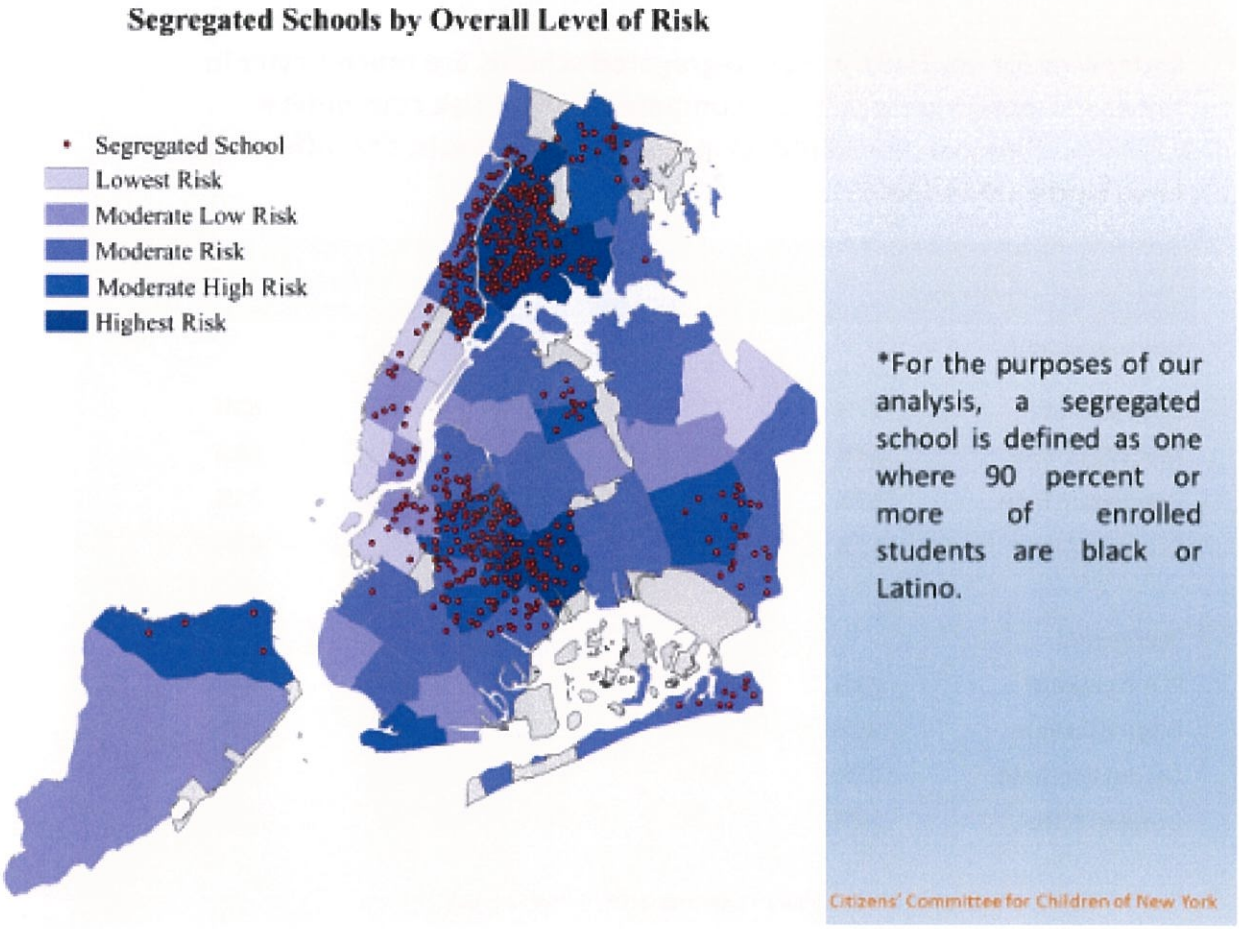
[9] Card, David and Jesse Rothstein. *Racial Segregation and the Black-White Test Score Gap.* Working Paper Series, National Bureau of Economic Research. March 2006. Available at https://www.nber.org/papers/w12078.pdf. Accessed on Nov. 28, 2017.

[10] *See* "Final Changes to the School Quality Reports for 2014-15." New York City Department of Education. Oct. 30, 2015. Available at http://schools.nyc.gov/NR/rdonlyres/4F6B6F94-9DE0-4AD6-8F34-7D900E13E5C0/0/201415FinalChanges10302015.pdf. Accessed on Nov. 28, 2017. (Making closing the achievement gap a specific measured objective for schools.)

[11] Mickelson, Roslyn Arlin. *Research Brief - School Integration and K-12 Outcomes: An Updated Quick Synthesis of the Social Science Evidence.* The National Coalition on School Diversity. Brief No. 5, October 2016. Available at http://www.school-diversity.org/pdf/DiversityResearchBriefNo5.pdf.

[12] Kucsera, John and Gary Orfield. *New York State's Extreme School Segregation: inequality, inaction and a damaged future.* The Civil Rights Project. March 2014. Available at https://escholarship.org/uc/item/5cx4b8pf. Accessed on Nov. 28, 2017.

child well-being, as measured by CCC's annual Community Risk Ranking.[13] The Community Risk Ranking ranks community districts from highest risk to lowest risk – and places them in one of five risk categories – based on data from 18 indicators, including child poverty, homelessness, crime rates, and other factors that influence child well-being.



Analysis conducted by CCC shows the potential impact of school segregation on academic performance. Across the board, outcomes for students in segregated schools tend to be lower than outcomes for students in non-segregated schools.

	Not-segregated	Segregated
ELA Pass Rate (3^{rd}-8^{th})	48.1%	23.8%
Math Pass Rate (3^{rd}-8^{th})	48.1%	19.6%
4-year grad rate	76.9%	63.5%
Dropout Rate	8.8%	16.6%

[13] *Community Risk Ranking: child well-being in New York City's 59 community districts.* Citizens' Committee for Children of New York. December 2016. Available at https://www.cccnewyork.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/12/2016-CCC-Community-Risk-Ranking.pdf. Accessed on Nov. 28, 2017.

Student outcomes are also affected by a combination of the neighborhood's risk level and whether it is segregated. In non-segregated schools, students perform better in lower-risk neighborhoods, as one might expect. However, in segregated schools, student performance does not improve as risk factors are reduced.

Outcomes for students in non-segregated schools are much better in lower risk community districts compared to high risk community districts. However, for students in segregated schools, the difference in outcomes is minimal.

	Highest Risk	Moderate High Risk	Moderate Risk	Moderate Low Risk	Lowest Risk
Not Segregated					
ELA Pass Rate	27%	37%	45%	55%	68%
Math Pass Rate	24%	34%	47%	56%	69%
Graduation Rate	67%	67%	73%	82%	81%
Dropout Rate	13%	10%	9%	5%	4%
Segregated					
ELA Pass Rate	21%	26%	27%	21%	22%
Math Pass Rate	18%	20%	22%	17%	20%
Graduation Rate	61%	62%	67%	68%	58%
Dropout Rate	12%	10%	10%	8%	12%

Citizens' Committee for Children of New York

C) Recent Efforts to Address Diversity in NYC's Public Schools

There have been many earnest attempts to address the discouragingly high rates of segregation in New York City schools. CCC strongly supports efforts to improve diversity, and there have been several recent notable initiatives.

The City Council passed the "School Diversity Accountability Act" in 2015.[14] This act required the NYC Department of Education (DOE) to publish school-level diversity numbers.[15] The Council recognized that tracking and reporting diversity data, so that elected officials, advocates

[14] Int. 0511-2014. NYC City Council. Sess. 2014. Available at http://legistar.council.nyc.gov/LegislationDetail.aspx?ID=1946653&GUID=7329D54A-4E94-443D-9411-BCF5CC0C65D8&Options=ID%7cText%7c&Search=511. Accessed on Nov. 28, 2017.

[15] Lander, Brad and Ritchie Torres. "Opinion: What Would it Take to Integrate Our Schools?" New York Times. Dec. 15, 2015. Available at https://www.nytimes.com/2015/12/15/opinion/what-would-it-take-to-integrate-our-schools.html?_r=0. Accessed on Nov. 28, 2017.

and the public can be aware of the facts, was a necessary and vital step for the City to ultimately address segregation in schools.

In 2016, the DOE created a "Diversity in Admissions" program for individual schools.[16] As part of this program, the participating schools set aside a percentage of their seats for students who are either English language learners, qualify for free or reduced-price lunch, or meet other criteria, such as having an incarcerated parent. Schools choose how many seats they will set aside for these students, with participating schools setting aside anywhere from 10% to 67%. After an initial pilot period with 7 schools participating, all schools now have the opportunity to apply for the program.[17] The most recent information available to CCC indicates that 21 schools are currently or planning to participate, including 11 elementary school, 3 middle school, 2 K-8, and 5 high schools.[18]

In the summer of 2017, the Administration announced a new, multi-pronged initiative to promote diversity. This initiative includes several strategies. It creates a clear policy statement that the DOE and all schools are committed to diversity. It eliminates "limited unscreened" admissions for high schools where preference was given to students who attended school open houses or high school fairs, which were shown to be attended disproportionally by white and Asian students. It set a goal to increase by 50,000 students over five years the number of students in non-segregated schools, and to decrease by 10% the number of economically stratified schools. It also created a school diversity advisory group. It expanded efforts for Black and Latino students to be admitted to specialized high schools (e.g. test preparation classes and second chances for those who just missed cut-off scores). It expanded the Diversity in Admissions initiative to private pre-K providers. And it established a community stakeholder engagement process in districts where school integration work was already underway.

The Administration also has controlled choice pilot programs in Districts 1 and 13.[19] Controlled choice is a method to desegregate schools whereby parents rank elementary or middle schools, and an algorithm matches students to schools that considers certain demographic factors in addition to parent preferences. Students who qualify for free or reduced price lunch, live in temporary housing, or are English language learners will have priority for 67% of seats for pre-K and kindergarten in every District 1 school.[20] Students without these criteria have priority for the remaining 33% of seats. This program grew from a New York State Education Department grant awarded in 2015 for a "Socioeconomic Integration Pilot Program." DOE is urging families to list at least 5 school choices on pre-K and kindergarten applications (currently about 40% put down

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[16] Veiga, Christina. "12 More New York City Schools will Experiment with Admissions Rule sto Boost Diversity." Chalkbeat (website). Oct. 20, 2016. Available at https://www.chalkbeat.org/posts/ny/2016/10/20/12-more-new-york-city-schools-will-experiment-with-admissions-rules-to-boost-diversity/. Accessed on Nov. 28, 2017.

[17] "Who are the 'Diversity in Admissions' Pilot Schools." Spotlight on NYC Schools, NYU Steinhardt (website). Sept. 12, 2017. Available at https://steinhardt.nyu.edu/site/research_alliance/2017/09/12/who-are-the-diversity-in-admissions-pilot-schools/. Accessed on Nov. 28, 2017.

[18] Id.

[19] Veiga, Christina. "With Critical Parents on Board, New York City Will Move Forward With District-wide Diversity Plan." Chalkbeat (website). Available at https://chalkbeat.org/posts/ny/2017/10/26/with-critical-parents-now-on-board-new-york-city-will-move-forward-with-district-wide-diversity-plan/. Accessed on Nov. 28, 2017.

[20] "Diversity Plan aims for District 1 Schools to Mirror the District." The Villager (website). Nov. 2, 2017. Available at http://thevillager.com/2017/11/02/diversity-plan-aims-for-district-1-schools-to-mirror-the-district/. Accessed on Nov. 28, 2017.

only 1 school) in order to create a more robust matching algorithm that can create a diverse student population.[21] DOE is also opening a family resource center in District 1 to educate families about school choice options to encourage applying for more schools.

An effort is also underway to rezone elementary school zones on the Upper West Side in Manhattan in an attempt to increase diversity.[22] The effort would reduce overcrowding at one school, while increasing racial and economic integration at 3 elementary schools that are currently highly segregated by race and economic background. The rezoning would effectively put more White, well-off students in the zone for PS 191, which is currently mostly low-income and Black and Latino, while putting more low-income and minority students in zones for PS 199 and 452, which are currently mostly White and affluent. This rezoning would only affect future students.

There are also several initiatives underway that are meant to increase diversity at specialized high schools. Through various methods, Black, Latino, and low-income students are provided assistance with the application process for admission into New York City's specialized high schools.[23] These methods include:

- The use of dedicated outreach teams that target low-income, high-achieving students;
- Pilot program for certain areas to administer the test for admission to specialized high schools on a school day in order to increase the number of test takers;
- Test preparation is offered through middle school programs serving low-income and youth of color;
- Provide more students with free tutoring by expanding and enhancing the DREAM program;
- Enrolling more low-income students by expanding the DREAM program;
- And encouraging more students that are accepted to specialized high schools to enroll in those high schools (73% of black and Latino students accept an offer of admission compared to 86% of Asian students).

D) Recommendations to Improve Diversity in New York City Schools

There is no question that addressing diversity and segregation in a City as large and complex and New York City is large undertaking. New York City has taken some important steps to begin to address diversity and we look forward to seeing progress in the coming years. CCC respectfully offers the following recommendations:

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[21] Hobbs, Allegra and Amy Zimmer. "City Introduces Controversial Plan to Diversity Schools in District 1." DNA Info (website). Sept. 13, 2017. Available at https://www.dnainfo.com/new-york/20170913/lower-east-side/diversity-plan-district-1-schools-controlled-choice. Accessed on Nov. 28, 2017.

[22] Taylor, Kate. "Rezoning Plan to Remake 3 Upper West Side Schools Will Proceed, City Says." New York Times. Nov. 9, 2016. Available at https://www.nytimes.com/2016/11/10/nyregion/rezoning-plan-for-3-upper-west-side-schools-will-proceed-city-says.html. Accessed on Nov. 28, 2017.

[23] "City Announces New Initiatives to Increase Diversity at Specialized High Schools." New York City Department of Education (website). June 9, 2016. Available at http://schools.nyc.gov/Offices/mediarelations/NewsandSpeeches/2015-2016/City+Announces+New+Initiatives+to+Increase+Diversity+at+Specialized+High+Schools.htm. Accessed on Nov. 28, 2017.

1) Implement and strengthen the DOE diversity plan.

The Administration and DOE's diversity initiative recently announced in the summer of 2017 is a positive step towards promoting greater diversity in New York City schools through multiple methods, as described above. CCC commends the Administration and DOE for recognizing the importance of diversity and undertaking this process to create a thoughtful set of proactive steps. CCC recommends that the DOE use this initiative as the springboard for continued action.

CCC recommends that the diversity goal should be increased, as we believe the current goal is too low. The DOE's goal is to have 50,000 more students in the next five years enrolled in non-segregated schools, and decrease the number of economically stratified schools by 10%. As reported in an analysis by the Center for New York City Affairs, however, these goals will be met naturally through current trends without any additional action.[24] Setting a goal that is already destined to happen, especially in light of how large the challenge of segregation is in New York City, is not enough.

2) Expand open enrollment and controlled choice admissions policies.

The DOE has begun new admissions initiatives to increase diversity, and CCC appreciates these pilot programs. CCC recommends that these programs be expanded to additional schools and school districts.

Open enrollment, also referred to as "unzoned schools," allows students to apply to any school within their district, in contrast to students being generally steered towards a single school in their zone. Open enrollment allows students to apply to schools that meet their needs, regardless of where they happen to leave, notably allowing more low-income and black/Latino students to apply for schools that traditionally had high-income or white students.[25] Open enrollment has the added benefit of addressing the larger challenge of a city that has intensely segregated neighborhoods by allowing students to attend schools in other parts of the district, creating more diverse schools overall.[26] CCC recommends that this model be expanded to additional districts.

The use of controlled choice is another admissions policy that is currently being rolled out in District 1. Controlled choice allows schools to set aside a certain number of their seats for students who meet select criteria that would increase student diversity, such as eligibility for free or reduced lunch, living in temporary housing, or being an English language learner. Controlled choice has been noted as a best practice for improving diversity, and has had local buy-in and support from District 1 school stakeholders and community.[27] CCC recommends this process be allowed to expand to additional school districts.

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[24] Mader, Nicole and Ana Carla Sant'Anna Costa. "No Heavy Lifting Required: New York City's Unambitious School 'Diversity' Plan." Available at http://www.centernyc.org/diversity-plan. Accessed on Nov. 28, 2017.

[25] Harris, Elizabeth A. and Ford Fessenden. "The Broken Promises of Choice in New York City Schools." New York Times. May 5, 2017. Available at https://www.nytimes.com/2017/05/05/nyregion/school-choice-new-york-city-high-school-admissions.html. Accessed on Nov. 28, 2017.

[26] *Improving Outcomes for All Students: strategies and considerations to increase student diversity*. U.S. Department of Education. January 19, 2017. Available at https://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/oese/oss/technicalassistance/finaldiversitybriefjanuary2017.pdf. Accessed on Nov. 28, 2017.

[27] Id. Brad Lander and Ritchie Torres.

3) Ensure pre-kindergarten and 3K programs do not unintentionally segregate students.
One of the great successes of the de Blasio Administration's first term was the creation of full school day pre-kindergarten programs for all 4-year olds regardless of income. The Administration also began to roll out a similar program for three-year olds, known as 3-K, in two school districts. Both programs utilize DOE schools and community-based organizations, with 60% of pre-K programs being housed in CBOs.

In addition to pre-K programs, the City contracts for subsidized child care programs in a system known as EarlyLearn. EarlyLearn provides low-income children with 8-10 hours of care per day year-round. A portion of the day is funded with pre-K funding (both before the expansion and now) and a portion of the day is funded with federal child care dollars. This makes EarlyLearn an important option for parents of preschool age children because it provides the wrap-around care hours of summer and evenings, which is critical for working parents.

While pre-K and 3-K are universal programs and thus have no income eligibility, federal child care programs require income eligibility. This means only the lower-income children (under 200% of the federal poverty line) can be enrolled in the EarlyLearn programs, where part of the day is pre-K and the rest of the day/summer is child care.

One of the unintended consequences of the pre-K expansion (and now the creation of 3K) is that lower income children are in the EarlyLearn classrooms for pre-K. While this is beneficial due to the hours of care it provides, it has also led to some income segregation of children because there is no income test for the pre-K classrooms but there is an income test for the families in the EarlyLearn pre-K classrooms (providing child care and pre-K). This can happen from one center to the next. and in some instances, one CBO facility can have a contract for EarlyLearn in one classroom and pre-K in the classroom next door—effectively segregating children by income.

CCC urges the Administration to address this issue in pre-K and be sure not to replicate this issue in the new 3-K program.

4) All diversity initiatives should include and focus on community involvement.
Community participation, input, and support for any diversity initiative is vital for its success. Parents, students, and community members must be heard, informed, and included whenever ideas about diversity are being discussed for a school or a school district. This may mean conducting outreach to solicit participation and educate community members about possible diversity ideas. This is particularly needed if a community does not have an existing engaged voice in the diversity discussion. Soliciting community engagement in these contexts can ensure initiatives include the necessary local support and address community concerns early.[28]

Community involvement may also mean listening to and working with communities when they are already in support for diversity initiatives. As seen in District 1's recent example, there had been overwhelming support for controlled choice admissions policies, but this opportunity was

[28] Veiga, Christina. "Finally, a School Rezoning Plan for the Upper West Side is Approved." Chalkbeat (website). Nov. 22, 2016. Available at https://www.chalkbeat.org/posts/ny/2016/11/22/finally-a-school-rezoning-plan-for-the-upper-west-side-is-approved/. Accessed on Nov. 28, 2017.

nonetheless delayed, causing frustration for many community stakeholders that diversity was not being addressed quickly enough.

5) Increase diversity at specialized schools.

New York City's specialized high schools offer a tremendous opportunity for accepted students. Yet, despite being theoretically eligible to all students, their enrollment underrepresents Black/Latino students, as these students are often in segregated schools that do not adequately support the application process. As noted earlier, DOE's existing programs to promote admissions opportunities for low-income and Black and Latino students to specialized high schools have been attempting to meet this critical need, and the DOE's recent diversity plan includes expanding these programs.

CCC recommends that DOE increase its messaging and communications about opportunities for specialized high schools to all students in segregated schools. Applying for specialized high schools requires a great deal of initiative from the student to go above and beyond, and thus it must require robust information, encouragement, and support from the schools and other stakeholders.[29] Authentic, credible messaging that reaches students is vital for them to have a realistic opportunity to apply.

In conclusion, CCC is grateful to the City Council for its commitment to addressing diversity in New York City's schools and promoting an equitable school environment for all students. We look forward to working with you to continue supporting diversity initiatives.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

[29] Stein, Elissa. "New York City's High School Diversity Conundrum: short-term quick fixes will not change diversity in specialized high schools." Mar. 10, 2017. Available at https://www.huffingtonpost.com/entry/the-diversity-conundrum_us_58c1dc90e4b0c3276fb782fd. Accessed on Nov. 28, 2017.

December 7, 2017

STATEMENT BY THE FAIR HOUSING JUSTICE CENTER (FHJC) TO THE NEW YORK CITY COUNCIL'S EDUCATION COMMITTEE AT THE OVERSIGHT HEARING ON "DIVERSITY IN NEW YORK CITY SCHOOLS"

My name is Chanera Pierce and I am the Policy Coordinator for the Fair Housing Justice Center (FHJC). The FHJC, a regional civil rights organization based in New York City, works to eliminate housing discrimination and supports policies and programs that foster more open, accessible, and inclusive communities. I speak on behalf of the FHJC to support IntegrateNYC, NY Appleseed, and the Alliance for School Integration and Desegregation (ASID) by affirming policies that reduce school segregation as a means of creating more inclusive communities.

The FHJC applauds the "Five R" framework that the IntegrateNYC students employ to address discrimination and segregation within their schools and we would like to offer up a 6th R: Residential segregation.

Social science research tells us that where you live often dictates what opportunities and access to resources you will have, and it impacts the long-term trajectory of your life. Children who live in high-poverty, racially-isolated communities often face social and economic disadvantages that do not properly equip them to succeed in the classroom. Additionally, these very same students are often overrepresented in lower-performing, under-resourced schools, thus widening the achievement gap and limiting their future mobility. It is difficult to desegregate schools if we do not desegregate our communities as well.[1] Therefore, *education policy is housing policy* and it is critical that we address them together to create and sustain inclusive, high-performing schools in every neighborhood.

Despite the fact that the Civil Rights Act of 1968 (known as the Fair Housing Act) provided tools to eliminate housing discrimination and reduce residential segregation, both persist at alarming levels. Families of color still face significant barriers when attempting to move to areas of opportunities so that their children can attend high-performing schools. These discriminatory barriers not only sustain segregated schools, but they have given NYC the dubious distinction of being the 3rd most segregated city for African-Americans and the 2nd most segregated city for Asians and Latinos in the nation.[2] We need policies and programs that will expand housing opportunities, such as siting more affordable housing in predominately white, low-poverty neighborhoods; enacting a co-op disclosure law; creating a regional mobility assistance program that would enable families with rental subsidies to move to opportunity-rich areas, and, of course, vigorously enforcing fair housing laws to eliminate persistent and systemic housing discrimination.

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[1] Rothstein, Richard. "The Racial Achievement Gap, Segregated Schools, and Segregated Neighborhoods – A Constitutional Insult". Race and Social Problems 6 (4), December 2014. Accessed Dec. 2017. http://www.epi.org/publication/the-racial-achievement-gap-segregated-schools-and-segregated-neighborhoods-a-constitutional-insult/

[2] The Persistence of Segregation in the Metropolis: New Findings from the 2010 Census, by John R. Logan (Brown University) and Brian Stutts (Florida State University), March 24, 2011.

We stand with our partners at NY Appleseed, IntegrateNYC, and ASID. Residential segregation is one cause of school segregation, but it is not the only cause. NYC's school choice system reinforces segregation in our public schools through its academic screening processes that allow white and affluent families to attend certain schools while relegating low-income families of color to others. When low-income students of color are limited to under-resourced, segregated elementary & middle schools, they cannot be expected to advance through the high-school screening process and gain access to high-performing high-schools. A discriminatory educational system harms students and segregated schools impede efforts to create more integrated residential living patterns throughout New York City.

Thank you very much.

DIVERSE
CHARTER SCHOOLS
COALITION

NYC City Council Hearing Testimony
December 7, 2017

Testimony: Sonia Park, Executive Director
Diverse Charter Schools Coalition

City Council members, thank you for the opportunity to speak to you today on this important topic on public school diversity.

I am Sonia Park, Executive Director of the Diverse Charter Schools Coalition.

We believe, like the NYC DOE, that all students benefit from diverse, inclusive schools and classrooms. But, as we all know, NYC public schools do not always reflect the diversity of the City, or the diversity of the communities in which they are located.

New York's diverse public charter schools are ready to partner and contribute their experience and expertise as part of the solution. I am hopeful that steps are now being taken that are more inclusive of charter schools and the families they serve.

Our New York diverse charter schools stakeholders have proven strategies to tackle segregation. Working against sometimes daunting odds, these school leaders, teachers, community organizations and parents have shown that it is possible to provide public school students with supportive and effective learning environments that are also diverse.

Charter schools often get blamed for contributing to the segregation of public schools. But our member schools -- more than 100 diverse-by-design public charters in 14 states and DC, serving over 25,000 students – demonstrate how charters are ideally positioned to push back on the forces that have contributed to school segregation (long before charter schools came about, by the way).

In our communities, diverse schools can invigorate and strengthen urban neighborhoods by breaking down the cultural walls that divide us. And diversity can be achieved through deliberate efforts via recruitment, admissions policies and school design. The impact can be powerful, providing greater opportunities for students to learn from one another and boost achievement.

In New York, charter schools can draw students from a wider area, overcoming the structural impediment behind the true cause of school segregation: neighborhood segregation. Charters can enroll students from across an entire CSD and are not bound by enrollment zones. For example, Brooklyn Prospect Charter Schools uses a weighted lottery to give preference to students from low-income backgrounds, which helps ensure a mixture of socioeconomic status and ethnicities in its elementary, middle and high schools. Brooklyn Prospect High School enrollment reflects the diversity of the community it serves, with a student population that is 40% Hispanic, 11% African-American, 31% White, 8% Asian & 8% multi-ethnic; 43% quality for FRL.

Another example is Community Roots Charter School. It's co-founder and co-director, Allison Keil, has worked for the past 12 years to ensure their student body is representative of CSD 13, where CRSC is located.

Charters have more flexibility to design their curriculum, offer family supports and take other steps to meet the educational needs of a diverse student body. Together these advantages allow charters to be more nimble, innovative and creative when it comes to creating schools with high levels of economic and racial diversity. In fact, some of New York City's most diverse schools are charter schools. Together, these diverse-by-design campuses already enroll close to half of the DOE's five-year goal for itself of 50,000 students in racially representative schools. The number of mixed-income public charter schools in New York City will grow in the coming years to serve an additional 2,400 students.

As public charter school leaders, we are dedicated to diversity because we know it works. Research continues to show that when we work to break down racial and economic barriers in our public schools, students benefit from diverse learning environments.

Students who attend mixed-income schools have higher test scores, are more likely to enroll in college and are less likely than peers in schools with similar poverty levels to drop out of college. Just as importantly, they gain valuable experience thinking in terms of "we" instead of "us" and "them." They're better prepared to live in, work in and contribute to the diverse world in which we live.

We advocates for diverse-by-design public schools were excited when Mayor de Blasio and the DOE announced their diversity initiative. They publicly recognized the problem and pledged to take concrete steps to address it. Though charter schools weren't mentioned in the plan we are committed to work and partner with the DOE.

We need the Mayor and DOE to move this important work beyond just talk. We need to have hard conversations with an eye toward action. Then the vision of diverse public schools can advance toward reality.

FAIR | PLAY

Testimony of Jose Miranda,
Fair Play Coalition,
Before NYC Council Committee on Education
School Diversity Oversight Hearing
Dated December 7, 2017

Good afternoon,

My name is José Miranda, and today I am here on behalf of the Fair Play coalition, a coalition of students, teachers, parents and advocates seeking to transform the Public School Athletic League ("PSAL") policies to ensure equal access to high school after-school athletic sports, and to all athletic fields and courts controlled by the New York City Department of Education ("DOE"). I am a lifetime New Yorker, a third-year student at Columbia Law School, and an avid runner.

The issue of equal access to sports is at the center of today's conversation about school diversity, and the need for greater school integration. Currently, after school sports are far more available to more integrated public high schools, meaning those with higher percentages of white students. The students at segregated schools often have very few options of after school sports to participate in. This unfair reality is exactly what has brought the members of Fair Play together.

I joined Fair Play because I know first-hand the importance that having the opportunity to partake in after school sports can have on a high school student; I remember clearly the first time I felt empowered through recreation. It was the final indoor track meet of my freshman year of high school. Before the start of my race, my coach pulled me aside to say, "Take a chance, I believe in you." I didn't win, but I did push myself harder than I ever had before. When I crossed the finish line shoulder to shoulder with the winner, it set free a latent source of courage and self-confidence which has served me all my life, and helped bring to where I am today.

Running helped me develop leadership, teamwork, and time management skills. It gave me a distinct advantage on college applications, and it was a healthy outlet during trying moments in my life. Running also instilled in me a deep appreciation for physical activity more generally. It is proven that regular physical activity has many physiological and psychosocial benefits -- it mitigates stress, reduces chronic diseases like obesity and heart disease, improves self-esteem, mood, and mental acuity, and fosters inclusion and community.

So during my internship this past summer at New York Lawyers for the Public Interest, when I learned that not all students are afforded a fair opportunity to engage in recreation, I was deeply disappointed. When I learned that one-hundred and eleven NYC public high schools offer zero sports teams, and that Black and Latino students are twice as likely to attend one of these schools, resulting in 17,000 students of color attending a school that offers no team sports, I was troubled. Because, I know that access to recreation is much more than just access to recreation; it's an opportunity for students to *thrive*.

Today I take this opportunity to speak about the inequitable access to sports teams based on race that is a sad but very real byproduct of the segregation we still see in today's schools because, as we discuss school integration, we must ensure that we move toward fairer distribution of resources (recreational and academic alike) among the future keepers of our city. Deep down, we all know that a child's ability to thrive should not depend on the zip code they live in or the color of their skin. But today in 2017 in New York City that is the case. Our city has a chance to show our kids that we believe in equity, and in ensuring their success. The Fair Play coalition fully supports "Diversity in New York City Schools," and you should too.

Thank you.

Testimony by Kaira Watts-Bey
12th Grade Student at The Urban Assembly School for Criminal Justice
December 7, 2017
New York City Council Hearing re: Oversight: Diversity in New York City Schools

Good afternoon Ladies and Gentlemen,

My name is Kaira Watts-Bey and I am a senior at the Urban Assembly school for Criminal Justice high school. I would like to thank the members of the City Council's Education Committee, as well as Generation Citizen, for providing me with the platform to be able to speak about my class' Action Civics project: racial inequality and underrepresentation in New York City public schools.

To give some background, Generation Citizen is a program designed to get civics education back into middle and high school classrooms in an action-oriented way and empower young leaders to exercise their civic duties. GC partners with schools to offer a twice weekly Action Civics class to educate secondary students about how to confront and take effective action to address community issues by engaging directly with politics. I am participating in GC this semester in my Government class.

A majority of the students at my school are Southeast Asian. Throughout my freshman, sophomore, and junior years, I noticed how although we were all coexisting with each other, we lacked unification. I observed how students were afraid to step out of their comfort zones, myself included, and felt more comfortable being friends with other students that were of the same ethnicity as them. One of my African-American friends told me she even heard other girls using the word "Kaali" to describe her, which one of my Pakistani peers explained to me is an offensive term used in her culture to describe people of darker skin.

Picture the men standing on the street with flyers trying to get you to buy the latest cellphone. Most of the time we walk by without even acknowledging them. No matter how much these people try to get our attention, they continue to go unnoticed. At the end of their work day they may have only successfully given away a handful of flyers. This is exactly what happens to minorities such as African-Americans, Hispanics, and Caucasians at my school when it comes to voting for school activities. If others aren't willing to listen to them, then their voices continue to go unheard due to lack of representation. This year, for example, all five of our homecoming nominees who were voted for by the students, were of the same ethnic group. I was shocked at the outcome of the ballot because it didn't accurately represent our school's diverse community. I knew something had to be done.

These past few weeks, my GC college volunteer, who we call a Democracy Coach, Nia has helped my class construct an effective Action Civics plan to address racial inequality and under representation in our school and create structural change. We came up with the idea of having a yearly Student Retreat to reunify students. The trip would consist of breaking off into small groups to have a chance to talk about issues students face at school as well as teach others

about their culture, religion or sexuality so that way misconceptions and stereotypes can be avoided. We felt the best way to unify the students was to show them how they are more similar to each other than they may have originally thought. The Student Retreat would also have a few team-building games to lighten the mood after such intense conversations. The hopes were that if the students can be more open and communicate with each other there would be less separation at school. Hopefully, if our Principal approves this plan it'll give the opportunity to educate all of the students on the different religions, cultures, and sexualities that they may have not been familiar with, as well as build new friendships. We would hope that other schools and districts can take the same efforts we are in making bridge building and diversity efforts a priority to ensure we are learning in spaces where everyone is equally represented and included.

GC has given me the proper tools to become a successful advocate and showed me that I shouldn't be afraid to stand up for what I think is right. Before we started this Action Civics project I was very shy. A few weeks ago, I would've never pictured myself in this room sharing our project with all of you. GC has taught me that anyone has the ability to effect change no matter who you are.

Thank you again for the opportunity to testify at today's hearing. I would be happy to answer any questions you may have about my action project or participation in GC's class this semester.

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New York City Council Committee on Education
Oversight Hearing on Diversity
December 7, 2017

We would like to thank the New York City Council's Committee on Education for holding this important hearing on the oversight of diversity in New York City schools.

We testify today to highlight the need for New York City Department of Education officials to focus on the inclusion of students with disabilities in *all* schools, while they implement new admission initiatives to increase the number of middle and high schools serving English Learners and Students with Disabilities.

INCLUDEnyc (formerly Resources for Children with Special Needs) has worked with hundreds of thousands of individuals since our founding 35 years ago helping them navigate the complex special education service and support systems, so that young people with disabilities can be included in all aspects of New York City life.

We commend the Department of Education on their efforts to better integrate students with disabilities through their Diversity in Admissions Plan. In our work, we see firsthand the need for diverse New York City schools, and how greater diversity helps close the academic achievement gap between nondisabled students and students with disabilities.

However, we believe that all schools must be held accountable for programatically, socially, and culturally supporting students with disabilities to achieve diversity and meaningful inclusion. The Department of Education must raise the proficiency and graduation rates for the 193,000+ school-age students with disabilities in New York City, foster better social and emotional skills among students, and increase the independent skills of students with more involved needs. The future of all our students depends on us doing this, and doing it well.

As a result, we recommend that the Department of Education does the following:

- Increase the number of members on the School Diversity Advisory group whose primary responsibility is to represent the interests of students with disabilities

-more-

- Add quantitative and qualitative measurements to the existing accountability structures, which include Learning Surveys, Quality Reviews, and School Quality Reports, that assess the extent in which a school meaningfully integrates students with disabilities with non-disabled students
- Require schools to track and report on inclusive activities that occur between co-located schools in buildings and their students

Thank you for taking the time today to consider this important matter. We look forward to partnering with you to improve equity and access for all young people with disabilities in New York City.

Sincerely,

Barbara A. Glassman

Barbara A. Glassman
Executive Director

Advocates for Children of New York
Protecting every child's right to learn

Testimony to be delivered to the New York City Council Committee on Education

Re: Diversity in New York City Schools

December 7, 2017

Thank you for the opportunity to speak with you. My name is Randi Levine, and I am Policy Director at Advocates for Children of New York. For more than 45 years, Advocates for Children has worked to ensure a high-quality education for New York students who face barriers to academic success, focusing on students from low-income backgrounds. We work on behalf of children who are at greatest risk for school-based discrimination or academic failure due to poverty, disability, race, ethnicity, immigrant or English Language Learner status, sexual orientation, gender identity, homelessness, or involvement in the foster care or juvenile or criminal justice systems.

Public education has the potential to bring together different groups of children and promote the values of diversity, inclusion, and opportunity that are so important to our city. Currently, enrollment across the school system perpetuates divisions by race and other attributes as well. New York City's children have a vast range of abilities and disabilities. They come from homes that speak more than 100 different languages, practice a wide variety of religions, and span the entire economic spectrum from extreme poverty to enormous wealth.

The UCLA Civil Rights Project found that New York City has one of the most racially segregated public school systems in the nation. School assignment systems that create and further this segregation need urgent attention. Beyond school assignment, however, we are alarmed by disparities in educational outcomes. For example, on the 2017 English Language Arts exam, while 61% of NYC's white and Asian students performed proficiently, only 29% of black and Hispanic students performed proficiently; only 10.7% of students with disabilities, 78 percent of whom are black or Hispanic, performed proficiently; and only 5.6% of English Language Learners performed proficiently.

The City should ensure that students from diverse backgrounds have access to high-achieving schools and programs and should also ensure that schools are prepared to provide an excellent education to all students who enroll. Schools need resources, training, and the development of specialized programs and supports. For example, to serve students and families from a variety of backgrounds, the City must ensure that school staff receive training in cultural competency and implicit bias. To ensure that

students with physical disabilities have the same school options as their peers, the City must increase the number of schools that are fully accessible. To serve students living in shelters, the City must increase the number of DOE social workers focused on providing the advocacy and counseling that many of these students need. To serve students with disabilities and English Language Learners, the City must ensure that schools have specialized programs that meet their needs. To improve school outcomes for students, it is important that the City examine school admissions policies and, at the same time, change what is happening inside those schools to ensure they are prepared to foster inclusion and serve diverse groups of students.

We appreciate the work of the City Council and look forward to working together to advance these goals. Thank you for the opportunity to testify. I would be happy to answer any questions.

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TESTIMONY OF THE NEW YORK CIVIL LIBERTIES UNION[1]

Before

THE NEW YORK CITY COUNCIL'S COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

On

DIVERSITY IN NEW YORK CITY SCHOOLS

December 7, 2017

[1] Research and drafting by Stefanie Coyle.

The New York Civil Liberties Union ("NYCLU") respectfully submits the following testimony on diversity in New York City schools. We would like to thank the Committee on Education for giving the NYCLU the opportunity to provide testimony today on this important topic.

I. INTRODUCTION

The NYCLU, the state affiliate of the American Civil Liberties Union, is a not-for-profit, non-partisan organization with nine offices across New York state and more than 210,000 members and supporters. The NYCLU's mission is to defend and promote the fundamental principles, rights, and constitutional values embodied in the Bill of Rights of the U.S. Constitution and the Constitution of the State of New York. Protecting and expanding students' rights is a core component of our mission, and through our Youth and Students' Rights program the NYCLU advocates for equitable access to quality education for all students.

Schools in New York City are among the most segregated in the entire country—a pressing civil rights issue that needs to be addressed. Students who attend racially isolated schools have lower academic outcomes, lower graduation rates, and are less likely to graduate from college.[2] And though the majority in *Brown v. Board of Education* focused heavily on the benefits of school integration for black students, there is also substantial evidence of the benefits to all children. Engagement with people of different races in schools is associated with lower levels of prejudice, better prepares students to live and work in diverse communities, improves critical thinking skills and academic achievement, and improves outcomes such as graduation rates and future income level.[3]

The *Brown* court recognized that education "is the very foundation of good citizenship."[4] Students that attend diverse schools are more civically engaged, thus positively contributing to our democracy.[5] These positive effects are not only felt in schools, but also in communities – children who attend integrated schools bring less racial stereotypes into their workplaces and integrated schools have higher level of parental involvement. For these reasons, racially integrated schools provide the opportunity to break the cycle of discrimination and disadvantage experienced too often by people of color.

The New York City Department of Education ("DOE") has an obligation to remedy the segregation in its school system that was created by discriminatory housing and economic practices and perpetuated by the failure to implement and maintain system-wide policies to integrate the schools.[6]

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[2] Brief of 553 Social Scientists as Amici Curiae in Support of Respondents, at 6-12, *Parents Involved in Cmty. Schs. v. Seattle Sch. Dist. No. 1, et al.*, 551 U.S. 701 (2007) (Nos. 05-908, 05-915).
[3] *Id.*
[4] *Brown v. Board of Educ. of Topeka, Shawnee Cnty., KS*, 347 U.S. 483, 493 (1954).
[5] *Id.*
[6] John Kucsera and Gary Orfield, New York State's Extreme School Segregation: Inequality, Inaction, and a Damaged Future, UCLA Civil Rights Project, March 2014, pp. 19-24 *available at* https://www.civilrightsproject.ucla.edu/research/k-12-education/integration-and-diversity/ny-norflet-report-placeholder/Kucsera-New-York-Extreme-Segregation-2014.pdf.

II. SCHOOL SEGREGATION IN NEW YORK CITY

Forty-five percent of all neighborhood elementary schools in New York City are more than 90 percent black and Latino.[7] One in eight NYC kindergarten classes is racially homogenous, meaning 90 percent or more of the students are of the same race or ethnicity.[8] And, according to a 2014 study by the Civil Rights Project at UCLA, 73% of charter schools across New York City were considered "apartheid schools" in which less than 1% of the students were white.[9]

In June 2017, the DOE issued a plan to increase diversity in its 1,800 public schools (not including charter schools). While the plan does not specifically mention the words "integration," "segregation," or "desegregation," it proposes concrete steps to increase diversity across the DOE and "defines diversity as a priority for the DOE."[10] The DOE proposed three goals: (1) to increase the number of students who attend racially representative[11] schools by 50,000 over the next five years; (2) decrease the number of economically stratified[12] schools by 10% over the next five years; and (3) increase the number of inclusive schools that serve English Language Learners ("ELL") and students with disabilities. Among its proposals to achieve these goals are the formation of a School Diversity Advisory Group, the elimination of "limited unscreened" school options in high school admissions, the elimination of revealed rankings in middle school, and including diversity as a factor in school rezoning.

While these first steps are important, the NYCLU is disappointed the DOE has not set more ambitious goals in the areas of school desegregation and integration. A study by the Center for New York City Affairs found that the DOE could reach its stated goals without implementing any of its proposals due simply to shifting demographic patterns.[13] This clearly shows that the DOE is not taking adequate responsibility to meet the challenge of desegregation.

Even within its very modest goals, we recommend the DOE make two changes to ensure the best possible outcome. First, the DOE should track its progress towards these goals and should publish the data by district in an easily digestible format. This will allow the DOE and the

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[7] Clara Hemphill and Nicole Mader, Segregated Schools in Integrated Neighborhoods: The city's schools are even more divided than our housing, *available at* http://www.centernyc.org/segregatedschools/.

[8] Elizabeth Harris, Racial Segregation in New York Schools Begins in Pre-K, Report Finds, N.Y. TIMES, Sept. 20, 2016, https://www.nytimes.com/2016/09/21/nyregion/racial-segregation-in-new-york-schools-begins-in-pre-k-report-finds.html.

[9] John Kucsera and Gary Orfield, New York State's Extreme School Segregation: Inequality, Inaction, and a Damaged Future, UCLA Civil Rights Project, March 2014, p. viii, *available at* https://www.civilrightsproject.ucla.edu/research/k-12-education/integration-and-diversity/ny-norflet-report-placeholder/Kucsera-New-York-Extreme-Segregation-2014.pdf.

[10] Equity and Excellent for All: Diversity in New York City Public Schools, June 6, 2017, *available at* http://schools.nyc.gov/NR/rdonlyres/D0799D8E-D4CD-45EF-A0D5-8F1DB246C2BA/0/diversity_final.pdf.

[11] Racially representative is defined as schools where black and Hispanic students make up between 50 and 90 percent of the student body. Currently, the DOE states that 30.7% of schools meet this threshold. *See id.*

[12] Economically stratified is defined as schools where the Economic Need Index is more than 10 percent from the city average. 70.6% of NYC schools already meet this criterion.

[13] Elizabeth Harris, Report Says Diversity Plan is No Challenge for City, N.Y. TIMES, June 28, 2017, *available at* https://www.nytimes.com/2017/06/28/nyregion/report-on-diversity-in-city-schools.html.

public to monitor efforts district by district and understand the state of segregation in each community.

Second, the DOE must tailor its policies to the needs of existing schools, particularly those schools that are achieving integration already. The DOE's diversity plan makes the mistake of treating every single school across the nation's largest district exactly the same and requiring them to adopt the exact same policies – abolishing both limited unscreened admissions models and middle school revealed rankings. However, some schools have been successfully utilizing those strategies as a tool for integration, and have the enrollment data to show for it. For those schools, the DOE's approach threatens to take away a key tool. The DOE's one-size-fits-all approach to a district of this size and complexity is oversimplified and under considered. We recommend the DOE study existing school models that have achieved greater-than-average integration and work on scaling those models, or at least find ways to preserve them, rather than paint every school with the same policy brush.

III. THE SOCIOECONOMIC INTEGRATION PILOT PROGRAM

In October 2017, the DOE announced a new initiative in Community School District One ("CSD 1") that is the first district-wide Diversity in Admissions pilot in the city. This innovative plan was made possible, in part, through a state Socioeconomic Integration Pilot Program ("SIPP") grant. Through CSD 1's plan, students in temporary housing, ELL students, and students who qualify for free and reduced-price lunch will receive a priority for 67% of the seats at each CSD 1 elementary school for both pre-K and kindergarten.

In 2015, representatives from the CSD 1 community proposed to use SIPP grant money to introduce a schoolwide enrichment model at one elementary school and to develop a districtwide student assignment plan using "controlled choice" to promote socioeconomic diversity throughout the District. The CSD 1 grant application, as submitted by the DOE and approved by NYSED, pointedly elected to move beyond the "Individual Magnet School" model option offered by SIPP and instead proposed a uniquely ambitious and impactful "Community Innovation" plan that included a promise to develop and implement a district-wide student assignment policy, beginning with grades pre-K and K, to address more fully the systemic problem of segregation. The NYCLU supported CSD 1's efforts by writing a letter to the DOE advocating for the implementation of CSD 1's full proposal – not just the magnet program. CSD 1's model of controlled choice can and should serve as an example for other CSDs around the city. Further, the DOE should closely monitor the implementation of CSD 1's proposal to ensure that the plan's goals are being effectuated.

The DOE should also support and encourage additional CSDs to apply for state SIPP grants. It can do this by publicizing the availability of these funds and supporting CSDs with their applications – providing model application materials, editing assistance, and connecting CSDs with individuals from CSD 1 who have successfully applied for and implemented a SIPP grant following a community innovation model. Further, the DOE should encourage other CSDs to apply for district-wide admissions pilots such as the one used in CSD 1. The former New York State Education Commissioner John B. King recognized that SIPP grants could be utilized to "reduce socioeconomic isolation in New York's schools by giving districts support to pilot

innovative programs to increase school diversity while improving student achievement." If the DOE is serious about desegregating its schools, then it must utilize all resources to do so, including state-level funding.

IV. THE CITY COUNCIL'S ROLE

The City Council has an important role to play in encouraging and promoting school integration by ensuring that the Mayor's budget includes adequate funding for school integration. In 2018, we hope the Council will ask the Mayor and the DOE to demonstrate how funds will be used for this purpose. In addition, Council should require that the Mayor's budget include funding for the DOE to create its own Office of School Integration that would include a Deputy Chancellor-level position and district-wide coordinators to promote integration and support schools with data needs, SIPP grant applications, and administration of admissions pilot programs.

The Council should also take action to pass Intro 1378, proposed by Council Members Brad Lander and Ritchie Torres in 2016, that would create an Office of School Integration at the New York City Commission on Human Rights. This bill is stalled in the Civil Rights Committee, but if created, the office could serve as an important counter-balance to the DOE's narrative on school integration, offering new information and recommendations about the causes of continued segregation. [14]

The City Council can also convene necessary stakeholders from multiple disciplines to discuss issues of school segregation in the City. Most experts agree that housing and educational segregation are inextricably linked; yet, most policies to address one of these problems are exclusive to the other. Although each community has different needs relating to education and housing, we cannot achieve inclusive, sustainable communities if reform is pursued in isolation. Therefore, we recommend that the City Council's Committees on Education, Housing and Buildings, Public Housing, Land Use, or other relevant committees, share information and collaborate, including holding joint hearings, to ensure that housing, zoning, economic, and education policies collectively support the integration of NYC schools. This cross-committee work should also ensure that the DOE's enrollment projections include information on proposed and actual construction in districts, information that the City possesses, which inevitably leads to increases in enrollment and impacts diversity.

V. SPECIALIZED HIGH SCHOOLS AND GIFTED AND TALENTED PROGRAMS

Eight high schools across New York City rely on the Specialized High Schools Admissions Test ("SHSAT") as the sole criterion for admission: Bronx High School of Science, Brooklyn Latin School, Brooklyn Technical High School, High School for Math, Science and Engineering at City College, High School of American Studies at Lehman College, Queens High School for Sciences at York College, State Island Technical High School, and Stuyvesant High School. The use of this high-stakes standardized test for some of the city's best high schools has

[14] Introduction 1378-2016, *available at* http://legistar.council.nyc.gov/LegislationDetail.aspx?ID=2895214&GUID=EB35F6D8-A94A-4A10-B34E-591A68726288&FullText=1.

perpetuated segregation. During the 2016-2017 school year, only 10 percent of offers for seats in these schools went to black and Latino students, despite the fact that they make up 70 percent of the student population citywide.[15] Out of almost 1,000 freshman spots at Stuyvesant High School, only 13 black students were offered admission last year. Across the city, 5,078 students scored high enough for admission to these schools and yet out of those, only 524 were black and Latino students. This is a widely publicized problem and is completely unacceptable.

Yet, the DOE has taken few steps towards correcting the problem besides offering test prep classes and administering the SHSAT on a school day. These strategies do not address the proven racially discriminatory impact of high stakes testing or the disproportionately poor quality of middle and elementary school education that black and Latino students receive across the city. In a study of 2012-2013 data, the Independent Budget Office found that 22% of middle schools had zero students who took an advanced course. In all but one of those schools, 80% or more of the students were black and Latino.[16] The DOE's claim that state law prohibits changes to the admissions policies is a falsehood, as state law applies to only three of the eight schools. The City Council should use its oversight authority to hold the DOE accountable for its policy, and should use its influence to get the state to act on the law for the remaining three schools.

The DOE's reliance on high-stakes testing for admissions into the Specialized High Schools is maintaining a segregated system. The DOE must eliminate the SHSAT as the sole criterion for admission to these high schools and round out the application to include other measures.

Likewise, the admissions system for Gifted and Talented programs ("G&T") perpetuates segregation within the DOE system by relying on a standardized test administered to four-year-olds. Prior to the 2007-2008 school year, CSDs were able to utilize a holistic system for evaluating admissions including teacher evaluations, classroom observations, and in-district exam scores. That year, the DOE eliminated the holistic admissions model and instead required children to achieve an exam score in the top 10% nationally. This change coincided with a significant drop in minority representation in G&T programs, from 31% black in 2007 to 13 percent black in 2008.[17] In 2014, more than 70 percent of students in G&T programs were white or Asian.[18] Again, this clear racial segregation is unacceptable. The DOE must limit the use of high-stakes testing, particularly among four-year-olds, and devise an admissions system for G&T programs that will promote diversity and desegregation.

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[15] Monica Disare, "Only 10 percent of offers at New York City's specialized high schools went to black and Hispanic students," Chalkbeat, March 8, 2017, *available at* https://www.chalkbeat.org/posts/ny/2017/03/08/only-10-percent-of-offers-at-new-york-citys-specialized-high-schools-went-to-black-and-hispanic-students/.

[16] Sarita Subramanian, Joydeep Roy, Stephanie Kranes, and Diana Zamora, "Advanced Courses & Regents Exams in Middle School: Demographics of the Students Who Take Them & Their Schools," March 2016, *available at* http://www.ibo.nyc.ny.us/iboreports/advance-courses-and-regents-exams-in-middle-school-demographics-of-the-students-who-take-them-and-their-schools.pdf.

[17] Elissa Gootman and Robert Gebeloff, Fewer Children Entering Gifted Programs, N.Y. TIMES, Oct. 29, 2008, *available at* http://www.nytimes.com/2008/10/30/nyregion/30gifted.html.

[18] Amy Zimmer and Nigel Chiwaya, See How Racial Segregation Persists at Gifted and Talented Programs, September 29, 2015, *available at* https://www.dnainfo.com/new-york/20150929/upper-west-side/map-see-how-racial-segregation-persists-at-gifted-talented-programs.

VI. RECOMMENDATIONS

The NYCLU recommends the following to increase integration and bolster school desegregation across the DOE:

1. Set more ambitious goals for school desegregation and integration;
2. Track and report progress towards the DOE's existing diversity goals by individual CSD in an easily comprehensible format;
3. Monitor implementation of CSD 1's diversity in admissions program;
4. Promote the use of SIPP grants among CSDs and encourage applications for district-wide admissions policies;
5. Increase supports for CSDs applying for state SIPP grants, including model application materials;
6. Ensure that the Mayor's budget includes adequate funding for school integration;
7. Create an Office of School Integration in the DOE and pass Intro 1378 to create an Office of School Integration in the NYC Commission on Human Rights;
8. Convene City Council housing and education committees to discuss, share information, and collaborate;
9. Revise DOE enrollment projections to include actual and proposed construction projects in each district;
10. Change admissions policies for the Specialized High Schools and Gifted and Talented Programs to reduce reliance on high-stakes standardized testing.

VII. CONCLUSION

We thank the New York City Council's Committee on Education for considering this testimony. The NYCLU is committed to supporting integration and school desegregation efforts across New York City so that all students, regardless of their race, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, ELL classification, and disability, have access to a high quality education.

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Testimony of Melissa Iachan,
New York Lawyers for the Public Interest,
Before NYC Council Committee on Education
Oversight Hearing on School Diversity
Dated December 7, 2017

Good afternoon, my name is Melissa Iachan, and I am a Senior Staff Attorney at New York Lawyers for the Public Interest. Thank you to Chair Dromm and the Education Committee for holding this oversight hearing on the critical issue of school diversity, and the need for meaningful school integration in our city. NYLPI has been involved in the fight for equity in public education in our city for many years. Most recently, we have advocated on behalf of students to ensure that their access to physical education and after school sports is not determined by their race, ethnicity, geographic area or school size. The issue of school diversity—and the serious lack of school integration in today's public high schools in New York City—is directly related to the starkly unequal access to after school sports that public high school students are faced with.

NYLPI has been working with students, organizers, teachers and coaches in our public high schools for a few years on efforts to raise awareness of the severe inequity in access to Public School Athletic League ("PSAL") sports teams, and to enact changes to our city's policies in order to ensure more equal distribution of resources tied to after school sports teams. The problems with the current system of allocating DOE-funded sports teams to schools is multi-layered, and results in an incredibly disproportionate result of large, more integrated schools having access to many more sports teams than many small, segregated schools.

Preliminarily, the system must be reformed to be more transparent. Currently, the PSAL has sole authority to determine which schools are granted the teams they request, and which team requests to deny, without making any sort of standard decision-making criteria or scoring system publicly available. NYLPI has submitted at least two Freedom of Information Law requests asking for specific analyses detailing the criteria

utilized in particular decisions the PSAL made over the past two years, and the DOE continues to refuse to provide or produce any such documentation. This lack of transparency, and the lack of any publicly available standard policy by which the PSAL makes its team-granting decision, on their own would be troubling. But this is even more concerning when you look at the results of the shrouded decision-making:

- Based on 2015 data, the 50 high schools with the most white and Asian students averaged **twice as many sports teams** as the 50 high schools with the highest percentage of Black and Latino schools.

- Based on the same data, the 50 schools with more white students averaged 19 PSAL sport team options per high school, while the 50 schools with the highest Black and Latino enrollment averaged about 8 PSAL sport team options per high school.

- Currently, there are at least 111 schools with zero PSAL sports team options. All of these schools are at least 97% Black and Latino.

I know some members of the City Council are just as outraged by these statistics as NYLPI and our partners in the Fair Play coalition are, including the co-sponsors of Intro 1010-A, which was drafted to bring more accountability and transparency to the PSAL's team granting process. However, that bill and all of its ambitions have simply faded away in this Council, as it was unfortunately not even given a hearing before this Committee.

It is our hope that today's important discussion on integration is an opportunity to shed light on this specific impact of how current school segregation, and the current Public School Athletic League systems, perpetuate discrimination and disproportionate allocation of DOE resources to the detriment of Black and Latino students in our city's public high schools. We hope this conversation continues into the next Council, and that Intro 1010-A will be reintroduced, and will have a chance to be heard in its own right, so that this body can help bring more accountability, justice, fairness, and equity into the Public School Athletic League.

Thank you.

TESTIMONY OF
NEW YORK APPLESEED

NEW YORK CITY COUNCIL
COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION
December 7, 2017

Good Afternoon,

My name is Matt Gonzales. I am director of the school diversity project for New York Appleseed, a nonprofit social justice center which advocates for integrated schools and communities. I am also a member of the New York City Alliance for School Integration and Desegregation (ASID) and serve as the Policy Coach for IntegrateNYC.

I am happy to say, New York City has finally taken small steps to disrupt the persistence of educational segregation in our City. And while many in this room (myself included) continue to feel that the steps taken have been largely inadequate, we must acknowledge a change in direction and tone on the issue of segregation. New York Appleseed has long taken the position that local communities must be the drivers and designers of ***Integration*** initiatives, but this has never meant that City leadership is absolved from responsibility.

As the City undertakes initiatives to promote school diversity, we call on the Mayor and Chancellor to commit to the **5 R's of Real Integration** as defined by IntegrateNYC. To capture the educational benefits of diversity, we must do more than just move bodies. We must move resources; we must move curriculum, pedagogy and school cultures, we must move discipline practices; and we must move our mindsets away from a multi-tiered educational system with winners and losers. Only then will we be able to do the work of uprooting racism and white supremacy from our education system. This effort will require investments by the DOE, but from this body as well.

We call on members of this committee, and the larger City Council to do three things.

1. Join us in educating yourselves, the Mayor, the Chancellor, and the City about the 5 R's of Real Integration.
2. Invest your time and resources into supporting integration initiatives in your districts.
3. Continue to refine and hold the DOE responsible for producing the School Diversity Accountability Report, as was articulated in Local Law No. 59 (see attached memo).

At a moment when the entire country seems to be moving into darkness, New York City has an opportunity to be a beacon of light that will lead this nation towards a better future. Mayor de

Blasio touts himself as a national leader of progressive politics. His approach to this and many others issues during his first time did not rise to that stature, but we are hopeful that the he will use his second term to be bold and decisive.

Thank you.

Testimony of Richard D. Kahlenberg
New York City Council Committee on Education
Oversight Hearing on Diversity in New York City Schools
December 7, 2017

Thank you for your invitation to testify before the New York City Council Committee on Education's Oversight Hearing on "Diversity in New York City Schools." I commend the Council for taking on this critical issue.

My name is Richard D. Kahlenberg. I am a senior fellow at The Century Foundation, a nonprofit public policy research organization, where I have researched and written about ways to promote equal educational opportunity through socioeconomic and racial integration for more than two decades. I am also a member of the Executive Committee of the New York City School Diversity Advisory Committee. I am speaking today as an individual and not on behalf of other members of the Advisory Committee.

When I began research on school integration in 1996, there were just two school districts in the United States that explicitly considered socioeconomic status in student assignment policies in order to bring children of different economic and racial backgrounds together to learn. Today, my colleagues Halley Potter, Kimberly Quick, and Elizabeth Davies have identified 100 districts and charter schools that do so, including several community school districts in New York City.[1]

Five decades of research suggest that a socioeconomically and racially diverse educational environment provides better educational opportunities for school children than economically and racially segregated schooling. This research finds two distinct benefits of integrated schools: (1) all students benefit from the exchange of ideas and learning that comes in a racially and economically integrated school; and (2) low-income students, in particular, benefit from avoiding the harms associated with concentrated school poverty.

Research finds that the benefits of diversity run in all directions. Amy Stuart Wells of Teachers College, Columbia University and her colleagues found in a 2016 Century Foundation report that school diversity benefits middle-class and white students as well as low-income students and students of color in numerous ways. There is increasing evidence that "diversity makes us smarter," a finding that selective colleges long ago embraced and increasing numbers of young parents are coming to appreciate at the K–12 level. The authors write: "researchers have documented that students' exposure to other students who are different from themselves and the

[1] See Halley Potter, Kimberly Quick and Elizabeth Davies, "A New Wave of School Integration: Districts and Charters Pursuing Socioeconomic Diversity," (Century Foundation, February 9, 2016). https://tcf.org/content/report/a-new-wave-of-school-integration/ ; and Halley Potter, "Updated Inventory of Socioeconomic School Integration Policies, Fall 2016," (Century Foundation, October 14, 2016) https://tcf.org/content/commentary/updated-inventory-socioeconomic-integration-policies-fall-2016/

novel ideas and challenges that such exposure brings leads to improved cognitive skills, including critical thinking and problem solving."[2]

Scholars also find benefits from avoiding schools that have concentrated poverty. It is possible for high-poverty schools to perform well, but it is exceedingly rare. Economically mixed schools are twenty-two times as likely to be high performing as high-poverty schools. Indeed, low-income fourth grade students given the chance to go to middle-class schools are as much as two years ahead of low-income students in high-poverty schools on the National Assessment of Educational Progress in mathematics.[3] Rigorous research in Montgomery County, Maryland finds that students in low-income families randomly assigned to public housing units (and corresponding public schools) in low-poverty and high-poverty communities performed far better over time in economically integrated than high-poverty areas, even though schools in high-poverty communities spent $2,000 more per pupil.[4]

Although there is close to a social science consensus that economically and racially integrated schools are good for children, there is an outdated but durable political consensus that little can be done about it. But lessons from other districts examined by The Century Foundations suggest that while school integration is often politically challenging, key steps—such as the use of choice and incentives—can smooth the path to community support.

As you know, schools in New York State have been identified as the most segregated in the country.[5] I am pleased that the Council, the Mayor, and the Chancellor have begun a process of seeking to address this problem in New York City. The 2017 report. "Equity and Excellence for All: Diversity in New York City Public Schools" was an important step forward, outlining concrete goals and steps for making schools more diverse.

Moving forward, I believe there are several key questions that public officials in New York City should consider:

1. Successful districts set concrete goals for school integration. How should the citywide diversity goals outlined in the "Equity and Excellence for All" report be modified given evidence

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[2] Amy Stuart Wells, Lauren Fox, and Diana Cordova-Cobo, "How Racially Diverse Schools and Classrooms Can Benefit All Students," (Century Foundation, February 9, 2016) https://tcf.org/content/report/how-racially-diverse-schools-and-classrooms-can-benefit-all-students/

[3] Richard D. Kahlenberg, "School Integration in Practice: Lessons from Nine Districts," (Century Foundation, October 14, 2016).

[4] Heather Schwartz, "Housing Policy is School Policy: Economically Integrative Housing Promotes Academic Success in Montgomery County, Maryland," in Richard D. Kahlenberg (ed), The Future of School Integration: Socioeconomic Diversity as an Education Reform Strategy (Century Foundation Press, 2012)

[5] John Kucsera, "New York State's Extreme School Segregation: Inequality, Inaction, and a Damaged Future," (UCLA Civil Rights Project, 2014) https://www.civilrightsproject.ucla.edu/news/press-releases/2014-press-releases/new-york-schools-most-segregated-in-the-nation

in a recent report by the Center for New York City Affairs suggesting the goals could be met without taking any action?[6]

2. New York City has a number of successful diverse schools in its pilot program. How broadly could this program fruitfully be extended?

3. New York City District 1 recently moved toward a "controlled choice" plan to promote diversity. In which other community districts would such a plan be feasible at the elementary and middle levels?

4. At the high school level, where choice is city-wide, could oversubscribed schools use a weighted lottery to promote socioeconomic (and thereby racial) diversity?

5 What can be done to diversify the selective high schools in particular? I worked with Chicago Public Schools on a socioeconomic integration program for selective enrollment schools that provides admissions based in part based on the socioeconomic status of the neighborhoods in which applicants reside. The Chicago selective schools are far more racially and ethnically diverse than are New York City's selective schools.[7] Could a version of the Chicago plan be implemented in New York?

6. Some charter schools, such as Community Roots and Brooklyn Prospect, are diverse by design. How can charters be provided incentives to promote diversity rather than segregation?

7. Former New York State Education Commissioner John King created a pilot program to use socioeconomic diversity as a turnaround strategy for struggling schools. Should those programs be expanded in New York City?

8. My colleague Halley Potter has written about the possibilities of better diversifying pre-K programs. What are the most promising steps that can be taken in that important arena?

9. Should the New York City Department of Education create a School Integration Liaison who is specifically (and solely) tasked with promoting school diversity system-wide?

10. Should schools be rewarded in accountability systems for improving diversity?

Integrating school buildings is only the first step. My Century Foundation colleague Kimberly Quick will testify about the ways in which New York City public schools can learn from other

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[6] Nicole Mader and Ana Carla Sant'Anna Costa, "No Heavy Lifting Required: New York City's Unambitious School 'Diversity' Plan," (Center for New York City Affairs, 2017)

[7] Richard D. Kahlenberg, "Elite, Separate, Unequal: New York City's Top Public Schools Need Diversity," New York Times, June 22, 2014. https://www.nytimes.com/2014/06/23/opinion/new-york-citys-top-public-schools-need-diversity.html?_r=0

districts about what policies could be adopted, once a school is desegregated, to ensure that children of all backgrounds are provided genuine equal opportunity.

As New York City considers a path forward, it may be helpful to consider the experience of other districts. I have attached, for the record, The Century Foundation's reports outlining 100 school districts promoting socioeconomic and racial integration; and lessons to be learned from nine case studies of school integration.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

THE NEW SCHOOL
CENTER FOR NEW YORK CITY AFFAIRS

Oversight Hearing on Diversity in New York City Schools
New York City Council Committee on Education, Thursday, December 7, 2017

My name is Nicole Mader and I am the Senior Research Fellow at the Center for New York City Affairs at the New School. I also stand before you today as a proud member of the Alliance for School Integration and Desegregation.

My research for the last few years has focused on school segregation in New York City's public elementary schools. Together with my colleague Clara Hemphill, the director of InsideSchools, we seek to combine quantitative analysis with reporting from over 15 years of visiting schools and helping parents navigate the city's school system.

What have we learned about segregation in our city's schools?

The city's elementary schools are even more segregated than its housing. We've all heard that housing segregation is the cause of school segregation, but our 2015 analysis found hundreds of schools that varied significantly from the racial and socioeconomic compositions of the zones and districts they serve.[1]

This suggests that **school choice also plays a role in school segregation**. Only 60 percent of students citywide attend their zoned elementary school; the rest go to dual language or gifted programs, charter and other unzoned schools, or schools in other zones or districts.[2] In the Harlem portion of District 3, for example, only one-third of students attend their zoned elementary school. The families who left were much more likely to be higher-income and white than those who stayed in their zoned school. This combination of zones and school choice, therefore, has allowed some schools to become enclaves of privilege while others face increasing concentrations of poverty and high student need.

Segregation is compounded at the middle and high school levels by admissions screens that admit students based on the attendance, behavior and academic performance. Just 8 percent of middle schools across the city have 60 percent of the students who move on to specialized high schools.[3] Only one quarter of the students at these selective middle schools are Black and Hispanic, while 75 percent of students at the rest of the city's middle schools are Black and Hispanic.

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[1] Hemphill, C. & Mader, N. (2015). *Segregated Schools in Integrated Neighborhoods: The city's schools are even more divided than our housing.* Center for New York City Affairs, available at http://www.centernyc.org/segregatedschools

[2] Hemphill, C. & Sant'anna Costa, A.C. (2017). "Restoring Parent Trust in Harlem's Beleaguered Public Schools," Center for New York City Affairs, Urban Matters, available at http://www.centernyc.org/parent-trust-harlem-schools. *Note: This analysis is based on non-public student zone assignment data provided by the DOE. These figures include all students in grades K-5, so may include students who moved to a new zone after enrolling in a school.*

[3] Mader, N., Cory, B. & Royo, C. (2016). "Diversity in New York's Specialized Schools: A Deeper Data Dive," Center for New York City Affairs, Urban Matters, available at http://www.centernyc.org/high-school-diversity-data

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What can we do about this?

Our research in 80 elementary schools that have become more integrated over time identified **many steps school leaders can take**, including:

- Recruiting diverse families,
- Making them feel welcome and empowered as leaders, and
- Designing admissions set-asides around the goal of sustaining diversity.[4]

But working at the school level alone will not solve this systemic problem. District leaders, community advocates, parents, students and other stakeholders need to work collectively to find solutions in their communities, like the new plan for balanced elementary admissions in District 1. And strong citywide leadership is necessary to support their work, measure progress, and reform policies that extend beyond district boundaries.

The DOE's Diversity Plan does not go far enough. Our analysis of the numeric goals set in that plan found that the city can meet them without making any policy changes, simply because of demographic shifts that are already occurring. The "racially representative" goal, for example, is set so low that it can be accomplished by moving only 1,112 students to different schools.[5] I've included our full report critiquing the DOE's plan as part of my written testimony.

The data currently required by the City Council's Diversity Accountability Act is also not sufficient. The Council should amend the Act to require published data on:

- All tracks or programs within schools, especially screened middle and high school programs,
- Applicants to each program, for comparison to those who ultimately enroll,
- Students attending schools outside their zones, not just their districts,
- Charter schools, and
- A more robust measure of socioeconomic status than Free/Reduced Lunch eligibility.

The City Council should also commit to a vision for "Real Integration" that extends beyond diversity to include each of the "5 R's" defined by the student activists of IntegrateNYC:

- Race & Enrollment
- Resource Allocation
- Relationships
- Restorative Justice
- Representation on Staff

Thank you for the opportunity to speak to you today about this important and urgent topic.

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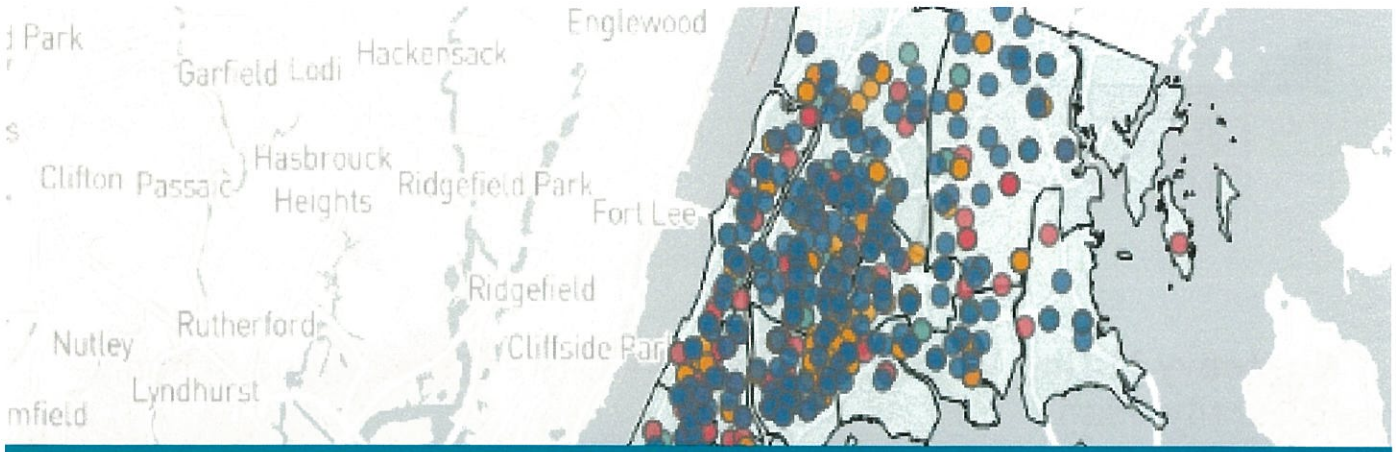
[4] Hemphill, C. & Mader, N. (2016). *Integrated Schools in a Segregated City: Ten strategies that have made New York City elementary schools more diverse.* Center for New York City Affairs, available at http://www.centernyc.org/integrated-schools-segregated-city

[5] Mader, N. & Sant'anna Costa, A.C. (2017). *No Heavy Lifting Required: New York City's Unambitious School 'Diversity' Plan.* Center for New York City Affairs, available at http://www.centernyc.org/diversity-plan



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NO HEAVY LIFTING REQUIRED

NEW YORK CITY'S UNAMBITIOUS SCHOOL 'DIVERSITY' PLAN

BY NICOLE MADER AND ANA CARLA SANT'ANNA COSTA

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No Heavy Lifting Required: New York City's Unambitious School 'Diversity' Plan

By Nicole Mader and Ana Carla Sant'Anna Costa

Earlier this month, the New York City Department of Education (DOE) released a long-awaited plan designed to increase diversity in the city's public schools. (The plan refrained from using the terms "integrated" and "segregated" schools, a decision City officials defended saying that "diversity" is a broader term.) Noteworthy in the plan are two numeric goals the DOE proposes to use as "yardsticks" to measure their progress. Outside observers have celebrated these goals as a "bona-fide breakthrough" and also criticized them for "aim[ing] too low." But the plan itself lacks sufficient detail and context to make such evaluations.

To fill this data void, the Center for New York City Affairs has crunched the numbers on these yardstick goals, both of which are to be achieved over the next five years:

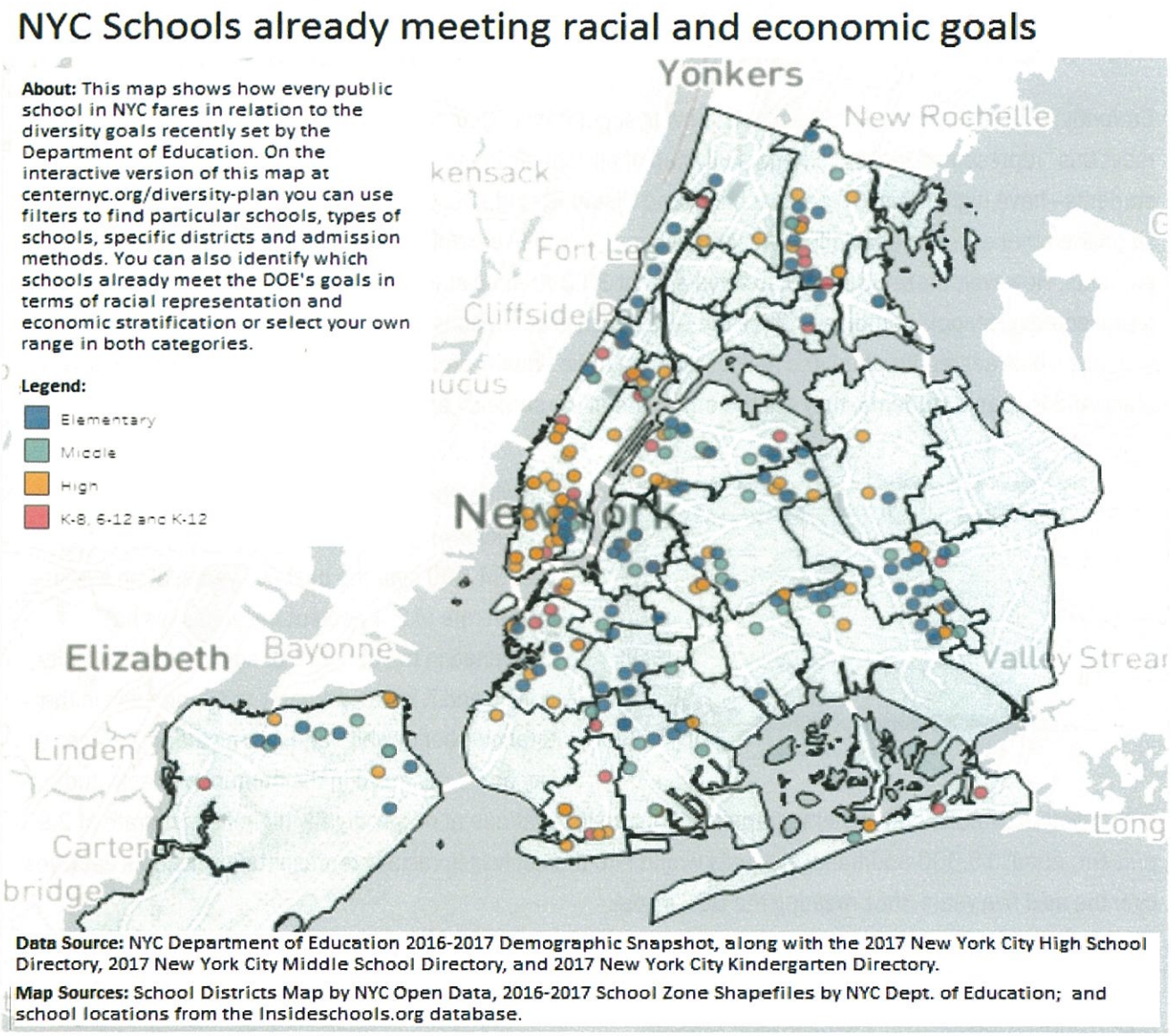
- Increasing by 50,000 the number of students at "racially representative" schools; and
- Reducing the number of "economically stratified" schools by 10%.

Our over-arching finding: Although these targets may have significant impact on the lives of the individual children affected, achieving them would represent only minimal changes to the system as a whole. No heavy lifting will be needed to meet them. Indeed, if recent demographic shifts that have occurred in our schools merely continue apace for the next five years, the DOE will be able to meet these diversity goals without implementing a single one of the dozen policies they recommend in their new plan.

Using publicly available data from the DOE, we examined student demographic patterns over the last five years both to make predictions about what might happen for the next five years and to critically assess the DOE's new goals. The way such demographic shifts manifest themselves in each school depends greatly on its neighborhood, the grade levels it serves, and the rules that determine eligibility for admissions – and we looked at these factors as well.

We've also created an interactive map showing the current status of all 1,757 public schools in New York City in terms of both goals, with filters that allow you to select schools based on grade level, admissions method and community school district. We hope this map will be a guide to the School Diversity Advisory Group that the DOE will convene to evaluate this plan over the next year. We encourage them to use it to identify and

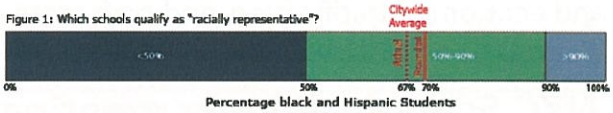
target the specific neighborhoods and types of schools that suffer the most from racial segregation and economic stratification, and craft more ambitious strategies to correct these inequities.



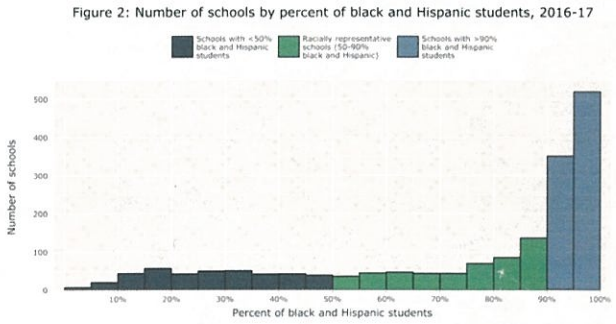
Goal 1: More students attending "racial representative" schools

The first goal aims to increase the number of students at "racially representative" schools by 50,000 over next five years. The DOE defines a racially representative school as one that has between 50 and 90 percent black and Hispanic students because "black and Hispanic children make up 70 percent of our students citywide." According to the DOE's publicly available Demographic Snapshot of 2016-17, which is our primary data source for this policy brief, black and Hispanic students make up 67 percent of the total enrollment ofstudents. Rounding this proportion up to 70 percent allows the DOE to set a more memorable goal—50 to 90 percent is, of course, easier to communicate than 47 to 87 percent —but it also makes it easier to reach the DOE's goals. Below we describe how schools at these margins can seem to produce significant numerical change, but perhaps limited real change, in the racial make-up of the system.

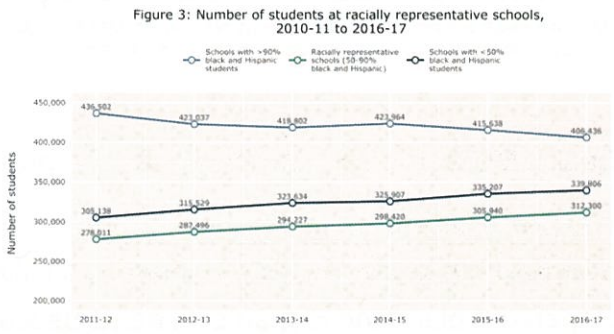
By most measures accepted in the extensive academic literature on school segregation, many of the schools within the DOE's racially representative range would still count as intensely segregated.



Currently, 502 of the city's 1,757 schools, having slightly fewer than one-third of students citywide, already meet this "representativeness" criteria. Fully half of all schools in the city—869 schools serving over 400,000 students—have higher than 90 percent black and Hispanic students. Conversely, only 22 percent of schools sit on the other end of the racially representative range, with fewer than 50 percent black and Hispanic students. However, these 386 schools serve almost 30,000 more students than all the 502 racially representative schools combined. While the DOE's plan is ambiguous as to whether they will consider these schools, which segregate white and Asian students, to be equally problematic as the schools that segregate black and Hispanic students, they are the other side of the same diversity coin.



Citywide, the number of students at schools meeting the racially representative goal has increased by over 34,000 over the past five years, at an average growth rate of 2.4 percent per year. This has happened in the absence of any citywide diversity policy, and it is due primarily to an increase in the total number of white and Asian students across the city and a decrease in the number of black students in the system overall. If these demographic shifts were to continue at only a slightly higher growth rate of 2.9 percent, about 10,000 additional students would find themselves in racially representative schools each year over the next five years, thus meeting the DOE's goal.



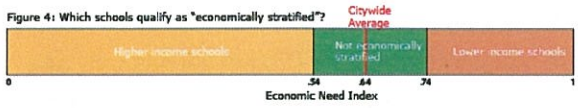
It is important to point out that this does not mean that 10,000 students would have to shift schools each year. If a school changes from 91 percent black and Hispanic to 90 percent, or 50 percent white and Asian to 49 percent, its entire student body would count towards the 50,000-student goal. As Taylor McGraw points out in the most recent episode of his education policy podcast, The Bell, "If the 105 schools currently between 90.1 percent and 92 percent black and Hispanic fell to 90 percent (moving an average of just one percentage point), the city's goal would be reached." This could be accomplished if only 1,112 white and Asian students decided to attend these 105 schools, an average of only 10 students per school. Seen in this light, it's hard not to conclude that the DOE's goal is timid and sets a benchmark that it can easily achieve.

In fact, the only barrier that may stand in the way of reaching this goal is the rapid concentration of students into the predominately white and Asian schools. The majority of the schools that had below 50 percent black and Hispanic students five years ago have even lower proportions of these students today. Over the same time period, the number of students at those schools has increased by more than 34,000. This more than cancels out all the progress that has been made on the other end of the goal's range, where 30,000 fewer students now attend highly segregated black and Hispanic schools than did five years ago.

Goal 2: Fewer "economically stratified" schools

A second goal is to decrease the number of economically stratified schools by 10 percent (150 schools) over the next five years. DOE defines a school as economically stratified if its Economic Need Index (ENI) is 10 points above or below the citywide average. The ENI is a measure that incorporates several factors, including students living in temporary housing, eligibility for public assistance benefits in student households, recent immigration status, and level of family poverty in each student's home census tract.

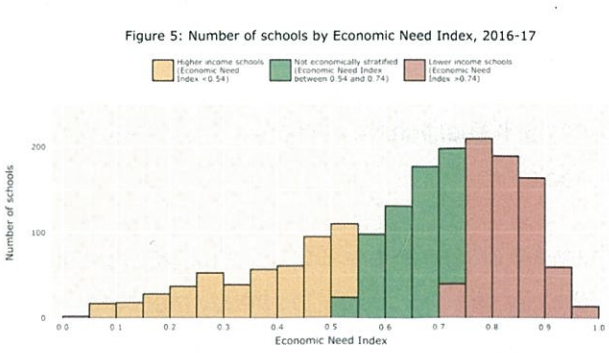
(The fact that the DOE counts 150 schools as 10 percent of schools overall, and not 175, suggests that for the purposes of measuring economic stratification they are not including charter schools in this count, as they apparently have done in identifying racially representative schools. In our analysis, however, we include charter schools, because in our view they play an important role in how students are distributed across the system as a whole.)



In 2016-17, the average ENI for all schools citywide was 0.64, so using DOE's 10-point threshold we considered schools with an ENI below 0.54 as skewed towards higher incomes and schools with an ENI above 0.74 as skewed towards lower incomes.

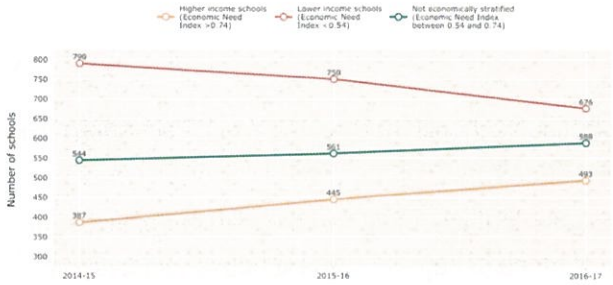
The distribution of ENI across all schools is more of a bell curve than the picture of racial distribution of students. There is, however, still a higher concentration of students at the low-income end. In 2016-17, 588 schools had already met the goal of an ENI in the 0.54-0.74 range; they represent 33 percent of all the schools and 35 percent of all students. Thirty-eight percent of all schools are skewed towards lower incomes, and 28 percent are skewed towards higher incomes.

As with the first goal, progress towards the second goal is already underway: the number of schools between 0.54 and 0.74 ENI has increased by 44 over just the past two years, at an average growth rate of four percent per year. That means that the DOE could reach its "economic stratification" goal in five years even at a slightly higher growth rate of 4.6 percent per year without having to make any



changes to the status quo. Because most of the data that goes into the ENI formula is not publicly available at the individual level, we are unable to determine how many students would need to shift within the system to meet this goal. However, based on trends over time and aggregate data, it appears that this goal will be quite easy to achieve.

Figure 6: Number of economically stratified schools, 2014-15 to 2016-17



But as with racial representativeness, it is possible that the rapid concentration of advantaged students into higher-income schools can prevent that from happening. Although low-income schools have decreased by 114 over the past two years, high-income schools have increased by 106. Moreover, the growth rate of high-income schools has been three times faster than the growth rate of schools in the ENI goal range.

Differences across districts and school types

The patterns of racial and economic segregation we have described thus far are not spread evenly across the city as a whole. For example, all 27,000 students in the South Bronx's District 7 are at schools with at least 90 percent black and Hispanic students and 95 percent skew towards lower incomes. Districts 9 in the Bronx and 18, 23, and 32 in Central Brooklyn follow close behind District 7 with the lowest shares of racially representative schools: only eight schools with just 2,500 students across those five districts qualify. But not all of these districts are as economically segregated as they are racially segregated: District 18 has only one school that would count as skewed towards low income, and has the second-highest share of schools—65 percent—that already meet the DOE's economic goal.

On the other extreme, District 20 in South Brooklyn and Districts 25 and 26 in Queens do not have a single school with such high proportions of black and Hispanic students; over 100,000 students in those districts attend schools that are majority white and Asian. District 26 is also severely economically stratified, with all 32,000 of its students attending schools that are skewed towards high incomes.

Fortunately, there are bright spots where the possibility of racial and economic integration is near. Districts 24, 27, and 30 in Queens and District 1 on Manhattan's Lower East Side have the highest proportions of schools that currently qualify as racially representative: over half of all the schools in those four districts have between 50 and 90 percent black and Hispanic students. Districts 17, 18, and 21 in Brooklyn and 11 in the Bronx have the highest share of schools that already meet the economic goal, at above 60 percent of all their schools.

There are differences across school types as well. High schools, most of which accept students from anywhere in the city, are more likely to already meet the racial and economic goals than schools serving other grade levels. Nearly half of all high schools are considered not economically stratified, but this is true for only 26 percent of elementary schools. But the relatively small proportion of high schools that are skewed towards

higher incomes—18 percent—tend to have larger student bodies, so they serve 32 percent of all high school students in the city.

The schools that span grades K-8, 6-12, or K-12 are the most segregated, with 80 percent of such schools falling outside the racially representative range. Many of those schools are charter schools, which in New York City tend to have more black and low-income students than other schools nearby. This indicates that admissions method, more than grade level, plays a large role in how students are distributed by race and economic need. For example, only 16 percent of charter schools at all grade levels fall within the racially representative range, and almost all the other charter schools have greater than 90 percent black and Hispanic students. In fact, while charter schools represent only 10 percent of students citywide, they comprise 21 percent of all the students in the city who attend schools with greater than 90 percent black and Hispanic students.

Charter schools use random lotteries to select from their pools of applicants, but many other schools in the city select applicants based on their scores on tests, auditions, or prior academic records. At the elementary school level, these are the schools with "Gifted and Talented" programs, and they tend to be highly segregated: only 22 percent of them are within the racially representative range and 62 percent of them have majority white and Asian students. By contrast, almost a third of elementary schools with dual language programs, which the DOE identifies as a way to increase racial diversity, are within the racially representative range.

Selective middle and high school admissions methods also have a strong influence on racial and economic segregation in school populations. All eight high schools that require top scores on the Specialized High Schools Admissions Test fall far below the threshold for the racial representative goal, with an average of 14 percent black and Hispanic student enrollment. They are also all are skewed towards higher incomes. Some admissions policies work better at achieving economic balance than racial balance. That includes middle schools that use academic screens, such as 4th grade standardized test scores. They tend to have majority white and Asian populations, but are more economically than racially balanced.

Conclusion and Recommendations

The DOE has taken a step in the right direction with the release of their diversity plan, but they have not gone far enough. The goals they established as yardsticks can be reached with little effort over the next five years and would not reflect meaningful, systemic change. We therefore recommend the following adjustments to these yardsticks:

- Set the range for "racially representative" around the actual citywide share of black and Hispanic students—67 percent in the 2016-17 school year—so that there's less likelihood that very small changes in racial composition of enrollment will count toward meeting the DOE's diversity goals.
- Establish more ambitious goals in reducing the number of economically stratified schools. Given that individual schools and districts have tools in hand to make this happen (they are permitted to prioritize

students for admissions based on their socioeconomic characteristics), this is practicable and would likely lead to more racially integrated schools as well.

- Set targets in each community school district rather than citywide. This will inspire local strategies specific to the demographic characteristics of each neighborhood, and will ensure that progress made in some neighborhoods will not mask deepening segregation in others.
- Publish each school's status in relation to these goals and its progress over time in the School Quality Snapshots and Directories. This information will aid parents who want to choose diverse schools for their children and will encourage school leaders to do their part in working towards these goals.
- Finally, call it what it is: We should acknowledge that these goals are necessary because our public schools are among the most segregated in the nation. Only with such honesty and clarity can we have the necessary conversations and take the required steps to do this work with the urgency it deserves.

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KATHERINE SAFTER HELPED WITH DATA ANALYSIS AND VISUALIZATION FOR THIS REPORT. SHE IS AN EDUCATION AND POLITICAL SCIENCE MAJOR AT HAVERFORD COLLEGE AND A SUMMER INTERN FOR THE CENTER FOR NEW YORK CITY AFFAIRS.

[1] THE DOE ALSO SET A THIRD CITYWIDE GOAL, WHICH CONCERNS HOW "INCLUSIVELY" ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS AND STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES ARE SERVED AT EACH SCHOOL. WE ARE NOT ANALYZING THAT GOAL HERE BECAUSE THERE IS NO PUBLICLY AVAILABLE DATA TO DETERMINE THE AVAILABILITY AND QUALITY OF SUCH SERVICES.

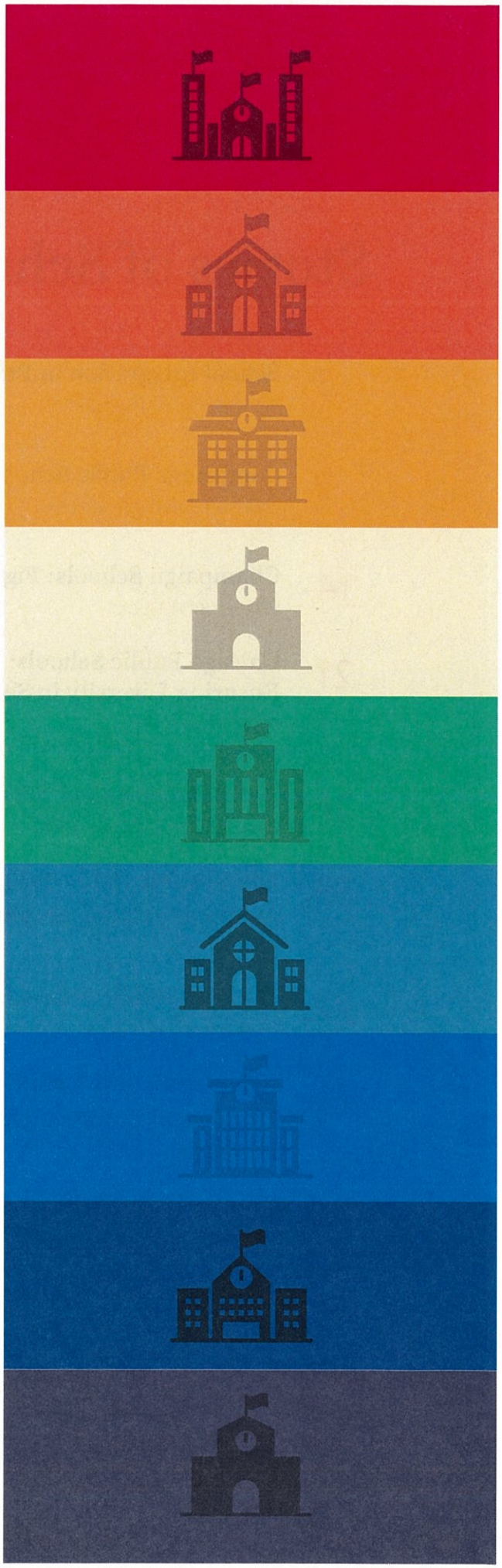
[2] FOR THE PURPOSES OF MEASURING RACIAL REPRESENTATIVENESS, WE CALCULATE CITYWIDE STUDENT ENROLLMENT TO INCLUDE CHARTER SCHOOL ENROLLMENT, BUT WE DIDN'T INCLUDE SPECIAL EDUCATION SCHOOLS, SCHOOLS FOR STUDENTS INVOLVED IN THE CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEM, OR COMMUNITY-BASED PRE-K PROGRAMS. IT APPEARS THAT THE DOE USED THE SAME CALCULATIONS, BECAUSE WHEN CHARTER SCHOOLS ARE EXCLUDED THE PROPORTION OF BLACK AND HISPANIC STUDENTS DROPS TO 64% OF STUDENTS CITYWIDE. IT IS UNLIKELY THEY WOULD HAVE ROUNDED THIS FIGURE UP TO 70% IN THEIR DESCRIPTION OF THE RACIAL REPRESENTATIVENESS GOAL.

[3] THIS ASSUMES THE NUMBER OF BLACK AND HISPANIC STUDENTS AT EACH OF THESE SCHOOLS STAYS THE SAME.

[4] UNLIKE THE RACE AND ETHNICITY CATEGORIES THAT HAVE BEEN USED CONSISTENTLY AND COLLECTED FROM ALL SCHOOLS, INCLUDING CHARTER SCHOOLS, SINCE THE 2010-11 SCHOOLS YEAR, THE FORMULA FOR ENI HAS SHIFTED SEVERAL TIMES OVER THE PAST FEW YEARS. THE DOE'S MOST RECENT DEMOGRAPHIC SNAPSHOT PROVIDED ENI CALCULATIONS THAT USED THIS NEW FORMULA ONLY FOR 2014-15 THROUGH 2016-17.

THE CENTURY FOUNDATION

Stories of School Integration



OCTOBER 14, 2016 — THE CENTURY FOUNDATION

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Stories of School Integration

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School Integration in Practice: Lessons from Nine Districts

OCTOBER 14, 2016 — RICHARD D. KAHLENBERG

At a time when American society is being torn along racial, ethnic, economic, and religious lines, school leaders in a small but growing number of districts are quietly taking steps to make things better. Largely under the radar, school boards and superintendents are making deliberate efforts to bring students of different backgrounds together in order to improve learning for all. According to The Century Foundation's latest inventory, one hundred school districts and charter schools across the country—educating over 4 million students—have decided that separate schooling for rich and poor, and for students of different races, is fundamentally at odds with the American Dream and the national ideal of *e pluribus unum*.[1]

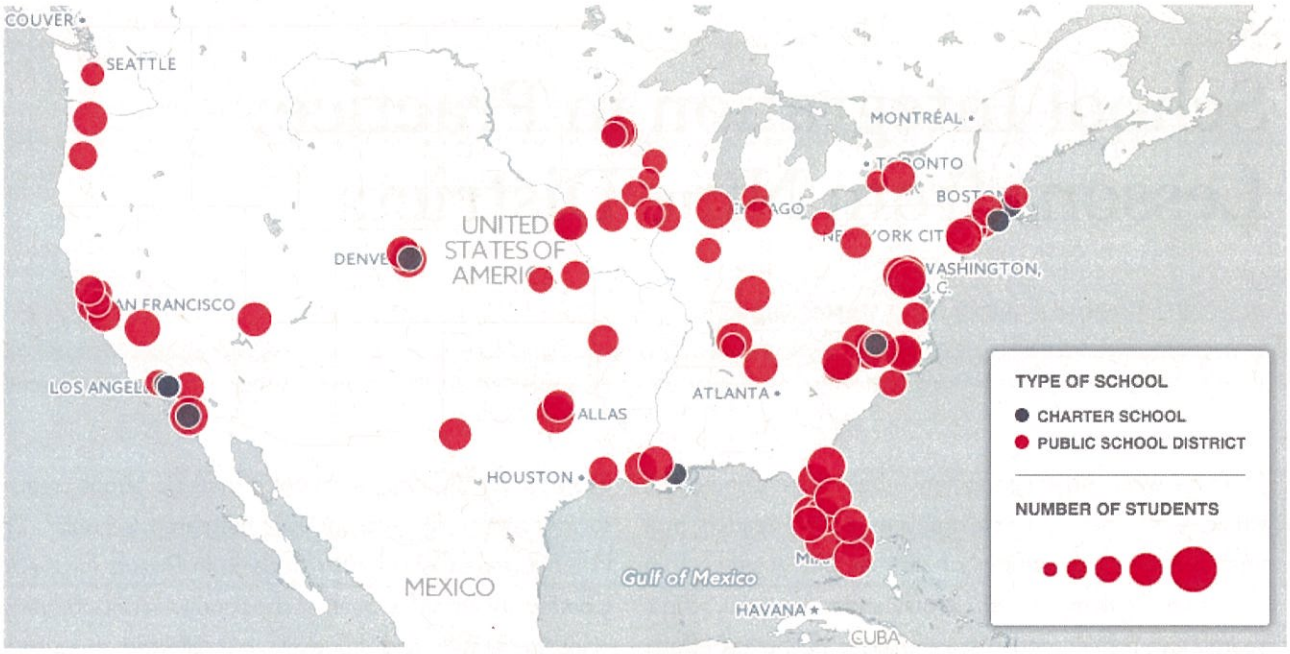
For two decades, The Century Foundation (TCF) has been researching and reporting on socioeconomic school integration programs that promote economic and racial diversity as a way of fostering social mobility and social cohesion. The case for pursuing these policies is powerful: low-income students in mixed-income schools are as much as two years ahead[2] of low-income students in high-poverty schools; and diversity benefits middle-class students as emerging research[3] has shown that being in diverse learning environments can make students smarter. We are, to coin a phrase, stronger together.

But how exactly does a school district go about creating socioeconomically and racially integrated schools? The U.S. Supreme Court's 2007 decision in *Parents Involved in Community Schools v. Seattle*[4] struck down racial integration plans in Seattle and Louisville but allowed the use of socioeconomic factors (and the use of race at the geographic rather than individual student level). In 2007, TCF released a profile of twelve districts that detailed some early efforts at socioeconomic school integration.[5] Since then, the number of districts pursuing socioeconomic diversity has more than doubled, as has the sophistication of those plans. So TCF has commissioned a new set of nine district case studies written by Century Foundation fellow Halley Potter, policy associate Kimberly Quick, and three outside authors: Carole Learned-Miller, Suchi Saxena, and Kim Bridges.[6]

The authors examine policies in Cambridge, Massachusetts; Champaign, Illinois; Chicago, Illinois; Dallas, Texas; Eden Prairie, Minnesota; Hartford, Connecticut; Jefferson County (Louisville), Kentucky; New York, New York; and Stamford, Connecticut. The list includes districts located in red and blue states; those found in northern, southern, and midwestern regions; plans that have been around for decades and those that are brand new; and sites that range from large urban districts with low-income populations in

This report can be found online at: https://tcf.org/content/report/school-integration-practice-lessons-nine-districts/

MAP 1. ONE HUNDRED SCHOOL DISTRICTS AND CHARTER SCHOOLS PURSUING SOCIOECONOMIC INTEGRATION



excess of 80 percent to smaller, wealthier suburban districts just beginning to experience growing diversity.

Despite their considerable variety, some common themes and lessons emerge from the reports on these districts.

1. When socioeconomic diversity policies are well implemented, they appear to produce strong academic outcomes for students and better prepare them for living in a diverse society.

Almost all of the districts studied that have had socioeconomic integration plans in place long enough to have an effect are seeing positive student outcomes. For example, in Cambridge, which has had a socioeconomic integration plan in place since 2001, students outperform those in demographically similar districts in Massachusetts on state English, math, and science exams. Moreover, 90.5 percent of black students, 88.7 percent of Hispanic students, and 89.5 percent of low-income students in Cambridge graduated high school in the 2014–15 school year. That compares to a 73 percent black student graduation rate and 82 percent overall graduation rate nationally in the 2013–14 school year, the most recent year for which data are available.

Likewise, in Greater Hartford's inter-district non-selective magnet schools, the black/white and Hispanic/white achievement gaps in reading were about half as large as the comparable statewide gaps. The achievement differences are smaller not because white students do worse, but because all subgroups of students perform better. Of course, high performance might be explained by the fact that only the most motivated students apply to magnets, but careful research comparing magnet school lottery winners and losers has found positive results for student achievement.

In Stamford, too, low-income students perform above

the state average and gaps in graduation rates between disadvantaged and advantaged students have fallen substantially. In Jefferson County, the proportion of students deemed College and Career Ready nearly doubled between 2011 and 2015. And 95 percent of Jefferson County high school juniors reported feeling either "very prepared" or "somewhat prepared" to "work and live in diverse settings."

The major exception to the rule of high performance is Champaign, where achievement gaps remain large, perhaps because of tracking within schools, an issue we discuss below.

2. While school integration is often politically challenging, key steps—such as the use of choice and incentives—can smooth the path to community support

Most of the districts profiled use public school choice and incentives (such as magnet schools), rather than compulsory busing, to achieve integration. Many use a system called "controlled choice," in which families choose from a variety of special options and districts honor choice with an eye to socioeconomic integration.

Many districts are able to marry choice and integration quite successfully. In Champaign, close to 90 percent of kindergartners receive their first choice school. In Jefferson County (Louisville), the first choice placement rate is also 90 percent. The reliance on choice rather than compulsory busing in Louisville may be one explanation for the dramatic uptick in community support over the years. In the 1970s, 98 percent of suburbanites opposed the busing plan, but by 2011, 89 percent said the school district's guidelines should "ensure that students learn with students from different races and economic backgrounds," as Kimberly Quick and Rebecca Damante explain in a separate Century Foundation report on Louisville.[7]

Special magnet offerings can be critical to attracting a broad cross section of students. For example, Hartford is able to draw suburban students into one of the poorest cities in the country using a system of forty-five magnet schools. The proportion of Hartford students attending integrated schools has increased from 11 percent a decade ago to a projected 46 percent in 2016.

Some districts using magnets such as Cambridge, are seeing rising public school enrollment—a reversal of the white and middle class "flight" phenomenon some have associated with integration efforts. Dallas's Solar Preparatory School has attracted a diverse group of students to a socioeconomically integrated magnet program, including many pupils who had been using private or charter schools.

In order to ensure that choice plans are equitable, family information centers have been established to ensure that all parents make informed choices. And successful districts also provide free transportation. As Dallas's Office of Transportation and Innovation Chief Mike Koprowki notes, "Choice without transportation really isn't choice for many families."

Instead of using magnet schools and public school choice, some districts, such as Eden Prairie Minnesota, redrew school boundary lines to create greater integration. This led to a political backlash and the resignation of the superintendent there. But even here, students became used to integrated schools and the newly drawn boundary lines remain in effect. An Eden Prairie principal noted, "The nice part is to be able to look back on it and say, 'See, when the dust settles, everybody is OK.'"

Money can be another important incentive for voluntary integration. In 2015, New York State used federal School Improvement Grant (SIG) funds to encourage socioeconomic integration as a school turnaround strategy. Several New York City community school districts are working to design controlled choice admissions policies, efforts which might not have continued in the absence of funding.

3. Setting clear system-wide goals for integration increases the likelihood of achieving success.

Not surprisingly, setting clear goals to integrate all schools in a district leads to much broader integration than programs focused on a small subset of schools. Cambridge, Champaign, Jefferson County, and Stamford all have system-wide goals that all schools should be within a range of the district-wide average for disadvantaged student populations and all have been quite successful in achieving integration. In Stamford, for example, eighteen or twenty schools fall within plus or minus 10 percentage points of the district average for socioeconomic diversity. "Having that hard and fast rule was really powerful," says former Stamford superintendent Joshua Starr.

Some higher-poverty districts, such as Dallas and Chicago, have, by contrast, addressed socioeconomic integration within only a small subset of schools, leaving many students in segregated environments. High-poverty districts might appear to have no choice in the matter, but, as Lesson 4 below suggests, they do have other options.

4. Policies that break down artificial walls between city and suburb can have greater impact than those limited to existing district lines.

Unlike Chicago and Dallas, two of the jurisdictions profiled—Hartford and Louisville—have broken through urban/suburban walls. Louisville did so by consolidating with suburban Jefferson County schools into a single school system; and Hartford did so through an extensive two-way urban/suburban transfer program.

Earlier Century Foundation research explored the benefits of eight inter-district programs in jurisdictions ranging from metropolitan St. Louis to Boston and Rochester to Minneapolis.[8] The advantages of having a consolidated district is also a key lesson from a forthcoming Century Foundation report from Paul Tractenberg and colleagues on Morris School District in New Jersey. Either approach offers up significant new opportunities for moving beyond separate and unequal schooling.

5. Socioeconomic diversity policies can often lead to racial diversity.

When the Supreme Court struck down Seattle and Louisville's racial integration plans in 2007, many feared that racial school diversity would no longer be unattainable. In practice, however, socioeconomic integration programs in many communities have led to vibrant levels of racial diversity. Under Cambridge's socioeconomic integration plan, for example, 84 percent of Cambridge students attended racially balanced schools in the 2011–12 school year. Likewise, in Chicago, when the district's ten selective enrollment schools shifted from race to socioeconomic status as a criterion in admission, the schools continued to be racially diverse. In 2013–14, the selective enrollment population was 22 percent white, nearly 30 percent Hispanic, 35 percent African-American and 9 percent Asian. By comparison, in New York City's selective schools, which do not use socioeconomic status as a factor, student populations in 2013–14 were 5 percent black and 7 percent Latino in a city whose school population overall was 70 percent black and Latino.[9] A Minneapolis socioeconomic integration program that involves suburban Eden Prairie uses income as a screen, but 95 percent of participants are of color. And Dallas's socioeconomically integrated pilot program has a student population that is 45 percent Hispanic, 25 percent black, 25 percent white, and 5 percent Asian.

6. Districts have grown more sophisticated in defining disadvantage.

When socioeconomic integration programs first began, most districts adopted eligibility for free and reduced price lunch (185 percent of the poverty line) as an indicator of economic disadvantage because the data are readily available. But that the measure is not ideal. It only looks at family income, not parental education, so the children of temporarily low-income graduate students are counted as disadvantaged. The measure also splits the world into two categories—

those receiving subsidized lunch and those not—which fails to capture the full spectrum of educational disadvantage and advantage running from poor to working class to middle class, and upper class. Finally, subsidized meals data has become less reliable as a measure of disadvantage as more districts take advantage of the ability to grant all students in higher poverty schools free lunch, whether or not individual students meet income guidelines.

In response to these realities, districts have created a number of new, more sophisticated measures of disadvantage. Chicago examines several factors by student Census tract: median family income; adult educational attainment; percent of single-family households; home-ownership percentage; percentage of the population that is non-English speaking; and a school performance variable. These data are combined to create a composite figure for socioeconomic status and then Census tracts are divided into four economic tiers. (Disclosure: I helped Chicago develop this system.) Dallas now uses a version of the Chicago system. Jefferson County, meanwhile, looks at three Census tract measures (income, education, and race), and divides geographic areas into three tiers.

7. Districts are more likely to be successful when they ensure integration not only in school buildings but also in school classrooms.

A final lesson from the case studies is that integrating school buildings is only a first step; to promote equity, schools should also seek to reduce economic and racial segregation at the classroom level. Two districts illustrate this point nicely.

On the one hand, Champaign has done a very good job at integrating schools, but there is still a fair amount of stratification within schools. Perhaps as a result, Champaign still struggles with large racial achievement gaps. Stamford, by contrast, has been successful not only in creating socioeconomically integrated schools but also pushing for diversity within classrooms. Superintendent Josh Starr said "the major issue facing the district was the tracking of students." After laying the groundwork to create political support, Starr gave a speech on the opening day in 2009, saying "we're going to eliminate tracking this year," and "people stood up and applauded." Stamford eliminated ability grouping in the elementary schools and substantially reduced tracking in the middle and high school grades. Between 2010 and 2014, the proportion of black students taking AP classes nearly tripled and the proportion of Hispanics doing so doubled.

Conclusion

Socioeconomic integration is important but complicated work. As the number of districts taking on such integration efforts continues to grow, it is critical that best practices be shared and worst practices avoided.

In the past, districts have mostly come to this work on their own and have not had the opportunity to learn from one another. That is beginning to change. Under U.S. Secretary of Education John King Jr., the federal government is seeking to support voluntary efforts to promote integration and is, in coalition with The Century Foundation and the National Coalition for School Diversity, convening districts to engage in peer to peer learning. These case studies below are an important aid in that effort—and to support the larger goal of reviving *Brown v. Board of Education* for a new century.

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THE CENTURY FOUNDATION

Cambridge Public Schools: Pioneers of Equitable Choice

OCTOBER 14, 2016 — CAROLE LEARNED-MILLER

The city of Cambridge, Massachusetts is located across the Charles River and just west of Boston. It is a city of more than 110,000 and is home to several select colleges including Harvard University and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT). According to 2015 Census data, 66.6 percent of residents are white, 11.7 percent of residents are black, 15.1 percent are Asian, 4.3 percent are of two or more races, and 7.6 percent are Latino or Hispanic. The median income is $75,909 and 15 percent of residents are living in poverty.[1] The district had a per pupil expenditure rate in 2014 of $27,163—more than almost any other district in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.[2] During the 2015–2016 school year, there were 6,607 students enrolled in the Cambridge Public Schools.[3] Among those students, 27.7 percent were economically disadvantaged, 21.6 percent were students with disabilities, and 8.1 percent were English language learners.[4] A total of 43 percent of children were eligible for free and reduced-price lunch during the 2014–2015 school year.[5]

For more than thirty years, Cambridge has worked to promote racial and socioeconomic integration in its schools through a system of district-wide public school choice with a focus on equity.

History of School Integration Efforts in Cambridge

Cambridge is known for its commitment to "controlled choice." Controlled choice was an approach to school integration largely developed and implemented by student assignment planner and consultant Michael Alves in the 1970s and 1980s after the passage of the Massachusetts' Racial Imbalance Act. In response to the act, districts such as Boston began to require busing in order to integrate their schools racially. In contrast to approaches based on reassigning students, controlled choice allowed parents to choose schools from across a district while simultaneously giving the district information about the families needed to ensure that schools were balanced racially and/or socioeconomically. Cambridge was the first district in the country to try Alves's new approach and is still implementing controlled choice today. According to Alves, "Since its adoption in 1981, the Cambridge Controlled Choice Plan has served as a model for many other school districts throughout the United States."[6]

The Cambridge Public Schools web site on controlled choice states, "The Controlled Choice Policy is designed to create diverse, academically rigorous schools with

This report can be found online at: https://tcf.org/content/report/cambridge-public-schools/

equal access to educational resources. Controlled Choice began in 1980 when the Cambridge School Committee voted to desegregate the schools by moving away from a neighborhood schools model." When the percentage of students who receive "paid lunch" and "free and reduced lunch" matches that of the wider district, the school meets the district's target and is "balanced."

While the Cambridge plan originally focused on racial integration, the district pivoted to a focus on socioeconomic status in 2001 in anticipation of impending court decisions, says James Maloney, chief operating officer of the Cambridge Public Schools. Cambridge did this work proactively and was never under either a court-mandated or voluntary desegregation plan.[7] Under this revised socioeconomic controlled choice plan, explained Alves, "When the percentage of students enrolled in a school who receive a "free or reduced lunch" is within 10 percentage points of the district-wide percent free and reduced lunch students, the school is deemed to have met the district's targeted definition for socioeconomic balance and desegregation."[8] This shift in policy was critical given that, as predicted, the Supreme Court decided in a 2007 case, *Parents Involved in Community Schools v. Seattle School District No. 1*, that voluntarily adopted choice-based student assignment policies focusing solely on race violated the Equal Protection Clause of the Fourteenth Amendment.

The Current Plan

The School Committee has updated the controlled choice policy over the years, continuing to seek input from Alves. During the most recent review by the Cambridge School Committee, district administrators, and Alves, the district decided to shift to a three-year average for determining the socioeconomic balance of the city, rather than adjusting the percentages every year. According to Linh O, director of registration for the Cambridge Public Schools, "By taking the three-year average (as of October 1 each year)—this year it was years 2013, 2014, 2015—we have a more accurate representation of the kindergarten SES after school begins for each of those years."

Under the guidance of O, Cambridge families enroll at the Family Resource Center, which oversees student assignment for the district. When determining a school for a child, the Family Resource Center considers the family's socioeconomic status, their list of three school choices, and issues related to the specific program—such as preparedness for a dual language program, school size, and the balance of girls and boys in the particular grade. Children who do not gain entry to any of their top three choice schools may stay on the waiting list until the next enrollment period begins.

Impact on Integration and Student Outcomes

Cambridge's controlled choice program has met many of its goals.

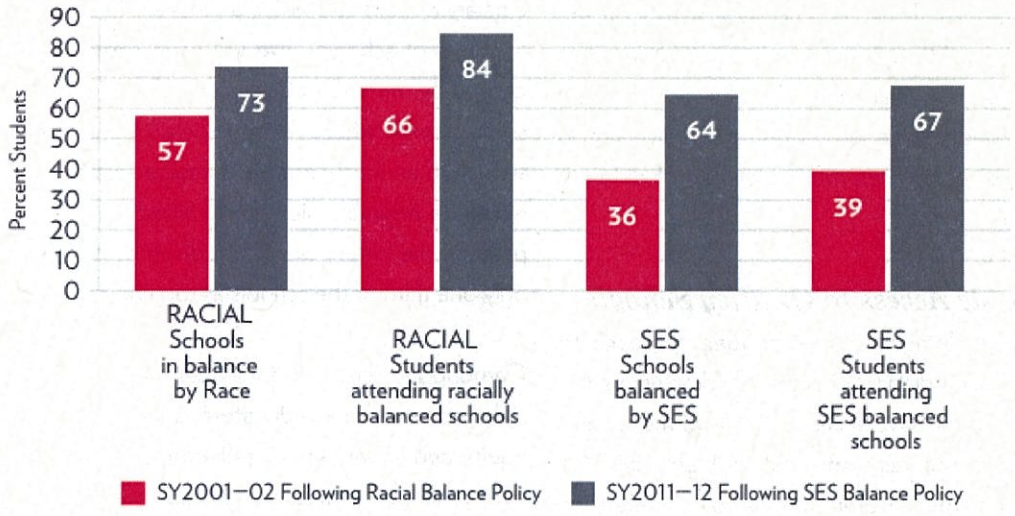
More Integrated Schools

Maloney, who has been chief operating officer of Cambridge Public Schools for twelve years, reports, "While many areas of the country are re-segregating, Cambridge children are less likely than ever before to attend segregated schools." Figure 1[9] highlights this trend showing 57 percent of the Cambridge Public Schools were balanced by race in the 2001–2002 school year, but 73 percent of schools were balanced by race in the 2011–2012 school year. As a result, 84 percent of Cambridge's students are attending racially balanced schools as compared with the 66 percent who attended racially balanced schools in 2001–2002. Similarly, the schools are far less segregated socioeconomically with 64 percent of schools being balanced in 2011–2012 as compared to only 36 percent being balanced by SES in 2001–2002. As a result, 67 percent of children were attending socioeconomically balanced schools in 2011–2012, which is up from just 39 percent of students in 2001–2002.[10]

Strong Student Achievement

While accountability measures have changed during the years that the controlled choice plan has been implemented and revised, Cambridge students do well compared to students in similar districts. In an analysis by the Massachusetts Department of Education, Cambridge

FIGURE 1. COMPARISON OF DISTRICT GRADES JK-8 RACIAL AND SES BALANCE
SY2001-02 to SY2011-12



Source: "Controlled Choice in Cambridge: A Comprehensive Review & Recommendations," Submitted to the Sub-Committee of the Whole (Cambridge School Committee) by Co-chairs Fred Fantini and Alice Turkel, May 2013.

students outperformed students in these demographically similar districts, such as Waltham, Somerville and Medford, on the MCAS exam in English, math and science.[11] In recent years, the state has focused its accountability measures on a school or district's "Student Growth Percentile" (SGP). In English Language Arts (ELA), Cambridge is doing better than the state with a SGP of 54 percent versus the state's SGP of 50 percent. In math, Cambridge and the state have the same SGP of 50 percent.[12] Overall, the state rates Cambridge as a Level 2, which is the second highest rating a district can receive.

Many point to the high school graduation rates of Cambridge students of color as a potential measure of success for controlled choice. While Maloney believes many factors contribute to the high graduation rate, such as the city's wide array of enriching after school activities, he believes controlled choice could be one important factor.[13] According to the National Center for Educational Statistics, the most recent data from 2013–2014 show that across the nation, 82 percent of all students and 73 percent of black students graduate from high school. In Cambridge, according to the Massachusetts Department of Education's most recent data, from the academic year 2014–2015, 91.5 percent of all students, 90.5 percent of black students, 88.7 percent of Hispanic/Latino students, and 89.5 percent of low-income students graduate.

Increased Enrollment

Another potential indicator of the success of school choice in Cambridge is the number of families choosing to send their children to the Cambridge public schools. While competition with private schools is an ongoing issue for the district, enrollment has been increasing for nearly a decade at approximately 2 percent each year, shared Maloney.[14]

Choices for Parents, and Diverse Experiences for Children

Maloney sees other benefits as well including the fact that all children are able to experience and benefit from the city's diversity. Finally, parents are not limited to the school in their neighborhoods. They can choose a school on the other side of the city, if they feel the program best matches their child's needs.[15] O sees many benefits as well. She believes, "Controlled choice promotes more diversity in the classroom; it gives children more exposure of different backgrounds and cultures."[16]

More Equitable Access to Quality Schools

Another important element of Cambridge's approach to controlled choice, according to O, is that children who enter the system mid-year still have access to many of the schools because the district reserves some seats in highly selected schools for low-income children who enroll mid-year. In particular, refugee and homeless children—who are more likely to enter mid-year—have more equitable access to all schools as a result.[17]

Next Steps

Maloney says one of the challenges has been maintaining the Cambridge schools' unique qualities while simultaneously becoming more accountable to state standards and testing. Prior to the accountability era of the last decade, schools were able to more freely design a creative mission and vision that might attract families from across the city. Another challenge is that, during particular time periods, certain kinds of programs may be more attractive to different parent groups. Currently, the higher socioeconomic parent group is choosing the dual language programs much more than the lower socioeconomic parent group, making it harder to balance those schools.[18]

Another challenge facing Cambridge, according to Maloney, is that ongoing transfers can be destabilizing for the less frequently chosen schools. Families can transfer once per school year. As each summer ends, spaces open up in the more highly selected schools. Parents then pull their children out of the less frequently chosen schools, making it hard for all educators in the city to plan for the fall.[19]

In terms of future improvements, O would like to see all of the schools become viable options for families. Maintaining a balance is difficult when families are largely choosing only a subset of schools. "We will have some schools that are chosen by more than 15 percent of that applicant pool and some schools where we have only 2 percent choosing that school. In an ideal controlled choice setting, all the schools would be desirable picks for families and the distribution of picks on the lottery would not be so heavily skewed toward only one third of the schools as top choices," explains O.20

Cambridge remains a leader in school integration. Administrators' and educators' continued commitment to equity and willingness to reflect and improve their policies over time has allowed the district to evolve and to create increasingly diverse learning environments for students.

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7832,7834-7835,7837-7838,7840-7841,7843-7858,7860-7861,7863-7871,7873-7881,7883-7886,7888-7911,7914-7916,7918-7928,7932,7934-7940,7942-7951,7953-7970,7972-8024,10015-10016,10033-10034,10036-10038,10040,10043,10047,10224/false/1484,1457,1228,1070,1022/any/14498.

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7 James Maloney, Cambridge Public Schools, Chief Operating Officer, phone interview on July 29, 2016.

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14 James Maloney, Cambridge Public Schools, Chief Operating Officer, phone interview on July 29, 2016.

15 James Maloney, Cambridge Public Schools, Chief Operating Officer, phone interview on July 29, 2016.

16 Linh O, Cambridge Public Schools, Director of Registration, interview via email on August 9, 2016.

17 Linh O, Cambridge Public Schools, Director of Registration, interview via email on August 9, 2016.

18 James Maloney, Cambridge Public Schools, Chief Operating Officer, phone interview on July 29, 2016.

19 James Maloney, Cambridge Public Schools, Chief Operating Officer, phone interview on July 29, 2016.

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THE CENTURY FOUNDATION

Champaign Schools: Fighting the Opportunity Gap

OCTOBER 14, 2016 — HALLEY POTTER

Champaign, Illinois, is a medium-sized city of over 80,000 people located 135 miles south of Chicago, known by many in the state for being home to the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. A majority (65 percent) of residents are white, with black residents making up the next largest share of the population (16 percent), followed by Asian residents (11 percent), and Hispanic residents (6 percent). Median family income is below the state average, at roughly $42,000 compared to $57,000 statewide.[1]

Champaign Community Unit School District #4 (Champaign Schools) serves roughly 10,000 students in Champaign and neighboring towns of Savoy and Bondville.[2] While Champaign city is majority white, the public school population is more racially diverse. As of fall 2015, 37 percent of students were white, 35 percent black, 11 percent Hispanic, 9 percent Asian, 8 percent other races and ethnicities. Over half (58 percent) of students are low-income, 8 percent are English language learners, and 14 percent of students have disabilities.[3]

Champaign has implemented a successful plan to desegregate schools, first instituted in response to litigation and now continued voluntarily. However, persistent struggles to address disparities in academic offerings, school discipline, and perceptions of school climate for students of color have resulted in large academic achievement gaps across both race and socioeconomic status. Perhaps the lesson of Champaign's progress and continued challenges is that desegregating schools is only the beginning of work on equity. In order to improve student outcomes across the district, Champaign must address the opportunity gap that currently prevents all students in the district from having access to the educational resources they need.

History of School Integration Efforts in Champaign

Champaign is a community with a long history of racial tension, geographically divided between the North End, where most black residents live, and the South End, which is largely white.[4] In 1961, the League of Women Voters found that Champaign had the worst housing segregation in the state of Illinois.[5] And when the U.S. Supreme Court's decision in *Brown v. Board* came down in 1954, ending legal segregation of schools, Champaign still had all-black and all-white schools, despite Illinois laws prohibiting school segregation. The district bussed white students in the north part of town past their neighborhood schools to an all-white school instead.[6]

This report can be found online at: https://tcf.org/content/report/champaign-schools/

During the 1960s and 1970s, Champaign began desegregating its schools by creating a magnet school in the North End to attract more white families to a school in that part of town and establishing attendance patterns that sent most black students from the North End to predominantly white schools in the southern part of town.[7]

In the 1990s, black community members began raising concerns about the district's enrollment practices and the opportunities afforded black students. In 1996, led by advocate John Lee Johnson, they filed a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education's Office of Civil Rights arguing that the district was placing an undue travel burden on black families and raising concerns about achievement gaps, underrepresentation of black students in high-level courses and programs, and overrepresentation of students in special education.[8]

In response to these complaints and impending litigation, Champaign instituted a choice-based, diversity-conscious enrollment plan in 1997, modeled after Cambridge, Massachusetts' "controlled choice" strategy.[9] The district replaced geographic zone-based enrollment in elementary schools with a system in which families ranked their school choices and were assigned to schools according to an algorithm that looked at families' choices and also ensured racial balance in each of the schools. The district created a planning committee including a racially diverse group of community members to help establish a Parent Information Center (later renamed the Family Information Center) to help families navigate the new choice system and establish plans for outreach.[10]

In 2002, the district entered into a consent decree with the black plaintiffs who had issued the complaint against the district requiring the district to take a number of actions to address racial inequality in the district. The controlled choice assignment process continued. In 2009, in response to the 2007 Supreme Court decision in *Parents Involved in Community Schools*, which limited school districts' ability to consider individual students' race in school assignments, Champaign revised its policy to use free and reduced-price lunch eligibility as a socioeconomic indicator replacing race.[11] That same year, the district and plaintiffs signed a settlement ending the consent decree.[12] As part of the settlement, the district agreed to take a number of actions to continue work addressing racial inequity, including establishing an Education Equity Excellence Committee and revising the district's special education policy.[13]

After the expiration of the consent decree, the district decided to continue their choice-based equitable enrollment system as part of a new voluntary integration plan.[14] In 2011, the district won a $5 million grant from the federal Magnet Schools Assistance Program to support new programming designed to diversify enrollment and improve student achievement in three of the district's elementary schools.[15]

The Current Plan

Enrollment in Champaign's elementary schools continues to operate through "controlled choice." Families rank their school choices and fill out an application indicating whether or not their child is eligible for free or reduced-price lunch. The student assignment system ensures that each school ends up with a relatively even balance of low-income students—such that each school falls within 15 percentage points of the district average for enrollment of students eligible for free and reduced-price lunch—while also giving a preference to siblings and students that live within a 1.5-mile radius of the school.[16] The district's Family Information Center conducts extensive outreach to families to explain the process and walk them through their school options, holding community forums and open houses throughout the year, and scheduling both daytime and evening opportunities for families to visit schools.[17] Typically, close to 90 percent of incoming kindergarten families receive their first choice school.[18]

District leaders also meet with local real estate agents once a year to explain the enrollment process and ensure that agents are equipped to represent the process accurately to prospective homebuyers.[19] Champaign provides transportation for any student who does not live walking distance from their school, which in a choice-based enrollment system can mean operating a number of

different buses and routes. One of the ways that Champaign has helped to control transportation costs is by having half of its elementary schools operate on an early schedule and half on a late schedule. These staggered start and end times allow one fleet of busses to run two routes each morning and afternoon.[20]

At the middle school level, Champaign maintains integrated schools by developing a feeder pattern of clusters of elementary schools that flow into middle schools, with the diversity established through elementary school admissions creating a foundation for diverse middle schools. The district's two high schools use geographic attendance zones that are redrawn periodically to ensure socioeconomic and racial diversity.[21]

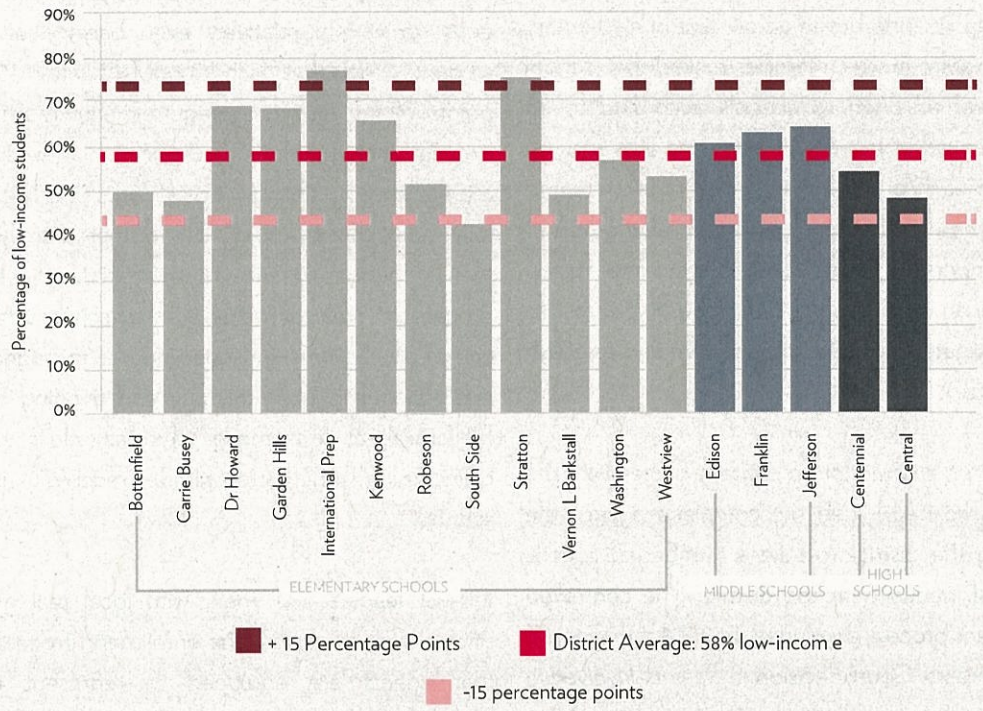
Impact on Integration and Student Outcomes

Champaign's efforts to continue work on school integration even after the end of their consent decree have resulted in relatively integrated schools across the district. However, Champaign has struggled to increase integration within schools by boosting diversity in high-level programs and coursework, and achievement gaps in the district remain high.

School Diversity

Most of Champaign's schools meet the district's goal of falling within 15 percentage points of the district average

FIGURE 1. ENROLLMENT BY SOCIOECONOMIC STATUS IN CHAMPAIGN SCHOOLS



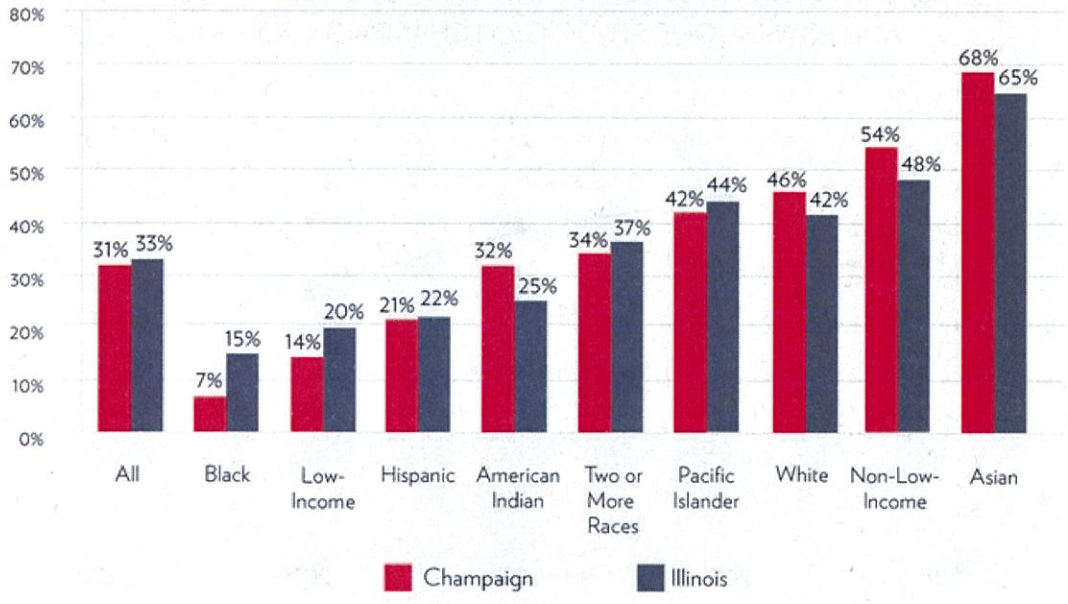
Note: Low-income students are defined as those who are eligible to receive free or reduced-price lunches, who live in substitute care, or whose families receive public aid.

Source: Illinois Report Card, 2014-2015 data, https://www.illinoisreportcard.com/.

for enrollment of low-income students (see Figure 1). According to Susan Zola, Assistant Superintendent for Achievement, Curriculum and Instruction, the biggest challenge to maintaining socioeconomic balance among elementary schools is continually working to improve schools that fewer families rank as a top choice. The district's federal magnet funding has helped to create new programming, boost student achievement, and increase the number of families choosing some of these schools, but imbalances remain. In some of the under-chosen schools, families may leave mid-year if they are offered a seat at another school, while students who move into the district after the initial registration period end up enrolling in the under-chosen schools because they have seats available. Because the families leaving when they get off a waitlist tend to be middle-class, and families moving into the district after registration tend to be low-income, this can push some of the schools outside the 15 percentage-point window above or below the district average.[22] Cambridge Public Schools in Massachusetts addresses this issue by reserving seats in some of the district's most popular schools specifically for low-income students who enter the district mid-year, but Champaign does not currently have a similar policy.[23]

Within Champaign's schools, however, there are sharp divides in the demographics of students participating in different academic level programs. At the elementary school level, only 3 percent of black students, 3 percent of Hispanic students, and 2 percent of low-income students are enrolled in gifted programs, compared to 8 percent of white students and 37 percent of Asian students.[24] Across the district's middle schools, only 39 percent of black students, 52 percent

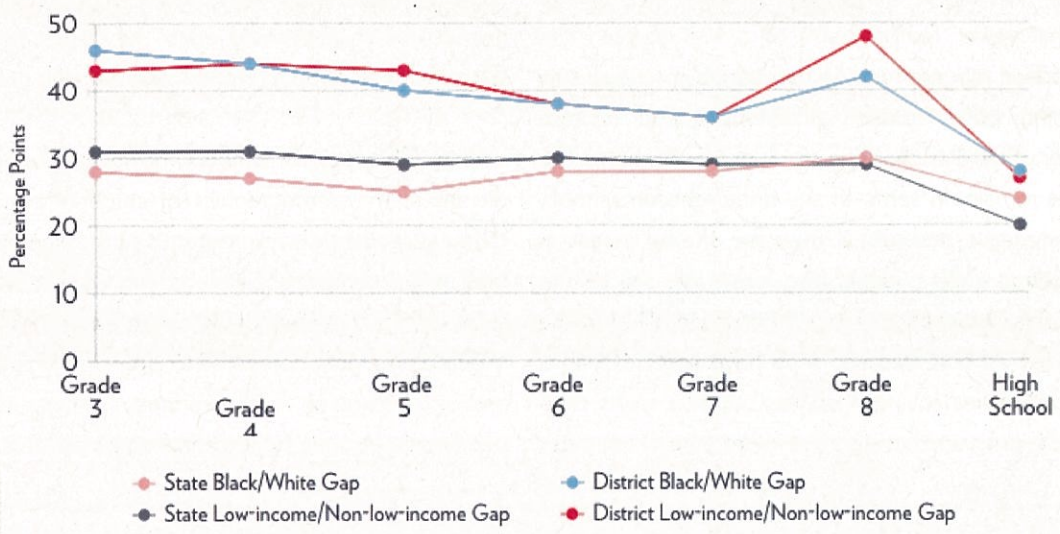
FIGURE 2. PERCENTAGE OF STUDENTS PASSING THE 2015 PARCC ASSESSMENT, CHAMPAIGN SCHOOLS VS. ILLINOIS



Note: Passing is defined as scoring in level 4 ("met expectations") or above. Results combine passing rates for reading and math tests.

Source: 2015 PARCC assessment data, Illinois Report Card 2014-2015, https://www.illinoisreportcard.com/.

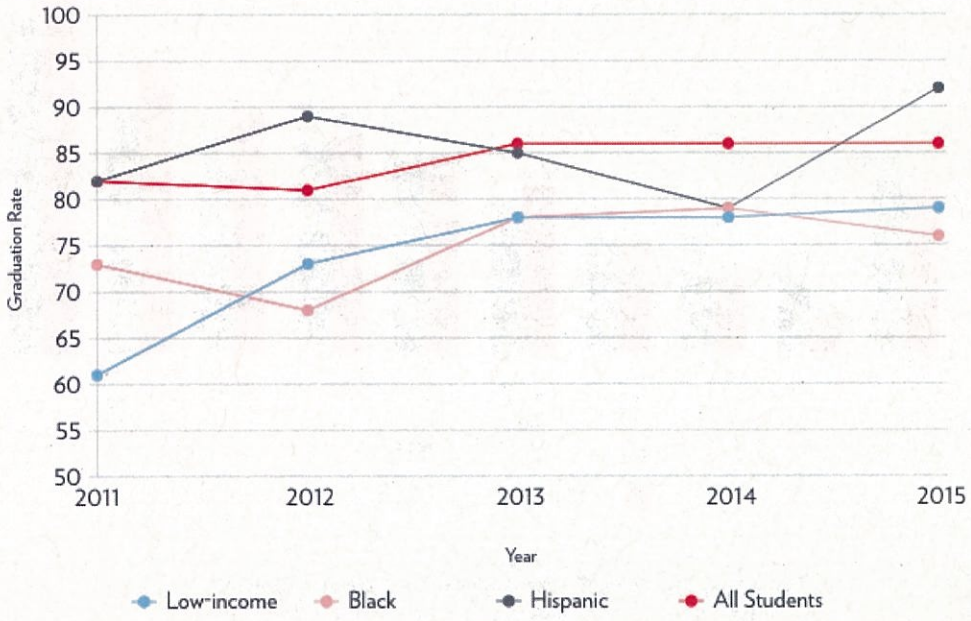
FIGURE 3. ACHIEVEMENT GAPS IN STATE TEST SCORES, CHAMPAIGN SCHOOLS VS. ILLINOIS



Note: Achievement gap is calculated as the difference in the percentage of students in the two demographic subgroups with scores in level 4 ("met expectations") or above on the PARCC assessment, combining results for reading and math tests.

Source: 2015 PARCC assessment data, Illinois Report Card 2014-2015. https://www.illinoisreportcard.com/.

FIGURE 4. HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION RATES FOR BLACK, HISPANIC, AND LOW-INCOME STUDENTS IN CHAMPAIGN SCHOOLS



Source: Education, Equity, Excellence Committee, "Data Presentation," Champaign Unit School District #4, August 25, 2016, emailed to Halley Potter by Susan Zola, August 29, 2016, p. 29.

of Hispanic students, and 43 percent of low-income students are enrolled in honors classes, compared to 74 percent of their white peers and 89 percent of their Asian peers.[25] And in high schools, while 27 percent of white students and 40 percent of Asian students take AP courses, only 5 percent of black students, 9 percent of Hispanic students, and 7 percent of low-income students do.[26]

Academic Achievement

White, Asian, and non-low-income students in Champaign all perform above the state average on standardized tests; however, low-income students and black students in Champaign perform significantly below the state average, while Hispanic and Pacific Islander students also perform slightly below state average (see Figure 2). As a result, Champaign has large achievement gaps based on race and socioeconomic status. In 2015, across all tested grades, the achievement gaps between low-income students and non-low-income students, as well as between white and black students, were greater than the state average. However, these gaps do generally narrow somewhat and become closer to the state average in later grades (see Figure 3). While these achievement gaps remain a great concern, the district has made some progress in recent years with graduation rates. Since 2011, Champaign has seen increased graduation rates for low-income, black, and Hispanic students (see Figure 4).

Next Steps

Reducing academic achievement gaps for low-income students and students of color are central concerns for Champaign, and the district has instituted some new strategies to address this persistent problem. The district recently decided to build specific goals for academic growth of black students and special education students into principal evaluations. They are also working with outside experts to develop staff training around culturally responsive work and developing a positive growth mindset. "When you look at the needs of African-American students, you have to look at the adults who are working with them, and make sure they have a mindset that these students can be successful, that they have the skills within their professional craft," Zola explained.[27]

The district has also begun work incorporating elements of trauma-informed care in their schools, working with administrators, teachers, social workers, and psychologists to target the needs of students who have suffered various forms of trauma.[28] Ryan Cowell, principal of Booker T. Washington STEM Academy, one of the elementary schools that received grant funding in recent years, described this as a central challenge and goal moving forward: "We... have a lot of students with incredible needs, including many who have experienced various forms of trauma that impact them tremendously. We are working hard to build our expertise in creating a therapeutic environment to best support all of our students."[29]

District administrators are also taking a hard look at suspension data for the district. While only 35 percent of Champaign's students are black, 76 percent of suspensions are assigned to black students.[30] Champaign has instituted new programs to provide additional supports for students with repeat suspensions, including the Lead4Life Identity Project, which guides middle and high school students through projects tied to personal growth, and Operation Hope, Jr., an alternative summer school program for middle school students that includes helping students find "an advocate" in the district—a teacher or administrator who can stand up for them.[31]

One of the areas which the district has not yet addressed is teacher and staff diversity. Although concern about the lack of black teachers was raised by the black community in Champaign already in the 1990s, the district has made little progress in the past decade in diversifying its teaching staff.[32] From 2006 to 2015, the percentage of white teachers in the district has stayed constant at 84 percent. Meanwhile, the percentage of black teachers has fallen from 11 percent to 8 percent. (The percentage of Hispanic and Asian teachers grew slightly.)[33] Increasing the diversity of the teaching force in Champaign—and working with teachers of all races to address implicit bias—could help more students of color

in the district find teachers who provide them with strong academic and social support.

Another cause for concern is that the black and white communities in Champaign also report quite different perceptions of school climate. School climate surveys conducted in 2000 and 2009 indicate that black educators, students, and parents consistently had more negative perceptions of school climate than their white peers, and that their perceptions of school climate did not change much over that period of time.[34]

While Champaign's commitment to continuing school integration has created relatively diverse schools in the district, chronic differences in the opportunities, experiences, and outcomes for students of different backgrounds have not been addressed. In addition to the work that it is already pursuing related to school discipline, growth mindset, and trauma-informed care, Champaign will likely need to focus on these issues of staff diversity and school climate in order to provide more equitable outcomes for students of color and low-income students in the district.

Halley Potter is a fellow at The Century Foundation, where she researches public policy solutions for addressing educational inequality.

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THE CENTURY FOUNDATION

Chicago Public Schools: Ensuring Diversity in Selective Enrollment and Magnet Schools

OCTOBER 14, 2016 — KIMBERLY QUICK

Affectionately known as "The Second City," Chicago remains a popular center for commerce, arts, and law. According to U.S. Census data, the diverse city is home to over 2.7 million people, about 22.7 percent of whom live at or under the federal poverty line. Approximately a quarter of the city's residents are under the age of eighteen. Racially, about 32 percent of the city's population is white, 33 percent is black, 29 percent is Hispanic, and 5.5 percent identifies as Asian.[1]

The city's public school system, however, is decidedly less diverse and less affluent than the city that hosts it. As of the current academic year, enrollment in Chicago Public Schools (CPS) is at 392,285 students. Of those, 80.74 percent are eligible for federal meal programs. Less than 10 percent of enrolled CPS students are white, while 39 percent are black and 46 percent are Hispanic. Despite the resources of the city, Chicago Public Schools is a high-poverty, racially isolated district, with around 17 percent English language learners.[2]

In order to combat racial and socioeconomic segregation within the district, and to encourage greater diversity and opportunity for the district's most competitive and popular programs, CPS designed an innovative system of admissions for its magnet and selective enrollment schools. This system, modified from an earlier consent decree with the Justice Department, uses nuanced measures of privilege and disadvantage in order to ensure that the talents and potential of marginalized students will not be overlooked in a competitive admissions process. It also helps ensure that the most popular and challenging programs provide diverse and inclusive learning environments, rather than act as environments where the already advantaged might isolate themselves.

A History of School Integration Efforts in Chicago

By 1960, neighborhood and geographic segregation in the city became undeniable. African Americans comprised around one quarter of Chicago's population, many of whom lived in the South and West sides of the city, in densely populated, low-income areas. To address the overcrowding in black schools, then-Superintendent Bill Willis used portable buildings, commonly referred to as "Willis Wagons," to serve as additional classroom space rather than enrolling black students in nearby white schools.[3] Upon his resignation six years later, new Superintendent James Redmond faced fierce opposition when he attempted to comply with laws

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that compelled school integration.[4] Between 1970 and 1980, the white population of Chicago Public Schools fell by 60 percent, as many white families of means fled into the suburbs or enrolled their children in private schools to avoid integration. During the following decade, the white population would fall another 50 percent.[5]

By the spring of 1979, the federal government accused the city of supporting segregation in its schools, and announced its intention to file suit if there was no timely remedy. In 1980, CPS and the federal government entered into a Consent Decree with the United States Department of Justice, with four basic objectives: (1) desegregate schools, (2) provide compensatory programming for any schools remaining segregated, (3) maximize the student populations that will experience integration, and (4) do not arbitrarily impose the burdens of desegregation on any racial or ethnic group. Admissions to Chicago's magnet and selective enrollment schools likewise became governed by this agreement.[6]

In 2001, when the United States and CPS revisited the plan, the court determined that CPS had not yet reached full compliance in several areas, including magnet schools and selective enrollment schools. In 2004, the resulting Modified Consent Decree acknowledged the demographic challenges of creating a fully integrated district, but compelled CPS to "use a variety of strategies to assign students to schools." The resulting race conscious plan set forth specific goals for the racial composition of every district school, classifying students as either "white" or "minority." The plan defined an integrated school as have no fewer than 15 percent but no greater than 35 percent white students. The consent decree also did not make any racial or ethnic distinctions within the minority category—black, Hispanic, Asian, and multiracial students were all grouped together to determine minority enrollment.[7] While Chicago struggled to develop an adequate plan for meeting the racial integration goals for most schools, enrollment in magnet and selective schools was one area in which the district was able to create more racially integrated schools through specific consideration of race in admissions.

In September 2009, a federal judge scrapped the desegregation agreement that had been in place for nearly thirty years, worrying advocates for school integration and diversity. However, CPS hinted at its dedication prior to the lifting of court supervision when it announced that it was considering the use of socioeconomic status (SES) as an admissions factor in magnet and selective enrollment schools.[8] The district followed through on its word. On December 16, 2009, Chicago Public Schools' Board of Education adopted a one-year policy which introduced a new diversity model for magnet and selective enrollment schools based primarily on socioeconomic status. Less than one year later, the board adopted a modified policy that governed applications for the 2011–2012 school year enrollments. Both times, the policies were subject to public comments and review by a Blue Ribbon Commission appointed by the Chief Executive Officer.[9]

The Current Plan

The new policy regarding admissions to CPS magnet and selective enrollment programs has a wide-ranging set of objectives. These objectives include: (1) maintaining, to the extent permitted by law, the diversity achieved by CPS prior to the termination of the consent decree, (2) promoting socioeconomic diversity within schools by eliminating, preventing, and reducing economic isolation as measured by a variety of means, (3) providing a unique or specialized curriculum or approach, and (4) improving achievement for all students participating in a magnet or selective enrollment school or program.[10]

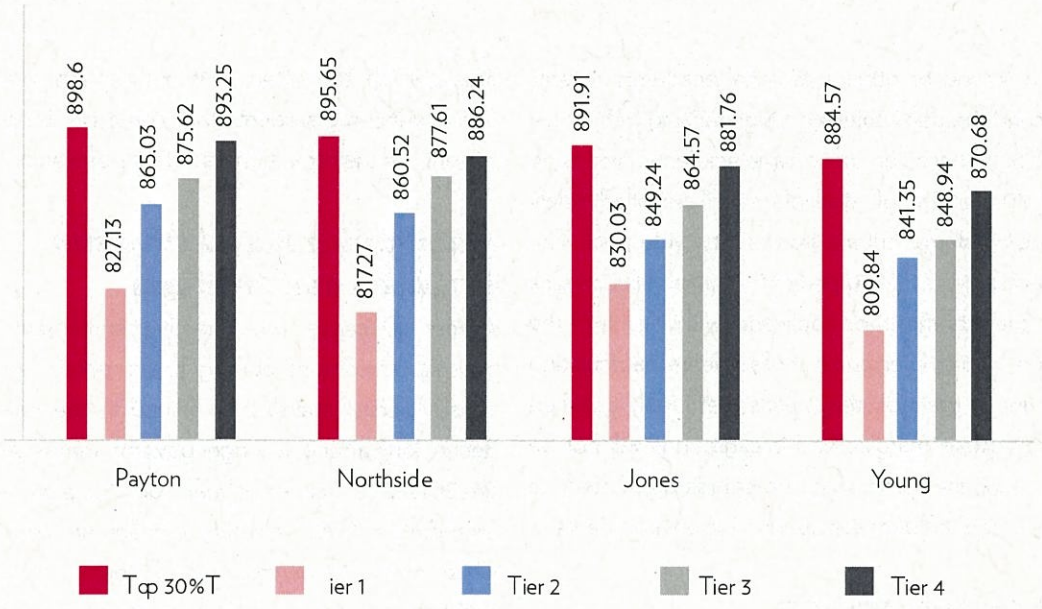
Fundamentally, the consideration of socioeconomic factors in selection process is a critical component of maintaining a reasonable level of diversity in Chicago's most competitive schools. CPS uses several SES factors that relate to the census tract in which an applicant resides at the time of application. These factors include: (1) median family income, (2) adult educational attainment, (3) the percentage of single-family households, (4) home-ownership percentage, (5) percentage of population that speaks a language other

than English, and (6) a school performance variable. After a composite SES score is determined for each tract, CPS will designate an SES tier (one through four) for each census tract in the city.[11]

The specifics of the admissions policies differ according to the type of limited enrollment school. If a student wishes to attend a CPS magnet school, they will generally be admitted through a controlled lottery-like system. While the district uses non-testing admissions procedures for its magnet schools, a threshold level of previous academic achievement is generally required for eligibility for many high school programs. At both levels, applicants who are siblings of currently enrolled students will be offered seats to the extent that space remains; if there are more siblings than slots, then a lottery will be conducted as necessary. But after placing siblings, SES factors begin the play a role. Some schools will hold a proximity lottery, which will allocate an additional 40 percent of the seats to students who live close to the school, but they are typically only permitted to do so if the surrounding neighborhoods are themselves racially and economically varied. When there is no proximity lottery, the remaining seats will be allocated to the four-tiered citywide SES lottery process. Students will be ranked within their tier and seats will be divided equally among the four tiers.[12]

A student who wishes to apply to a selective enrollment school will endure a related, but more rigorous process. Selective Enrollment schools and programs include Regional Gifted Centers, Classical Schools, Academic Centers, International Gifted Programs, and Selective Enrollment High Schools and High School IB Programs. All applicants have two opportunities to be chosen for enrollment in one of these programs—the first solely based off of composite score

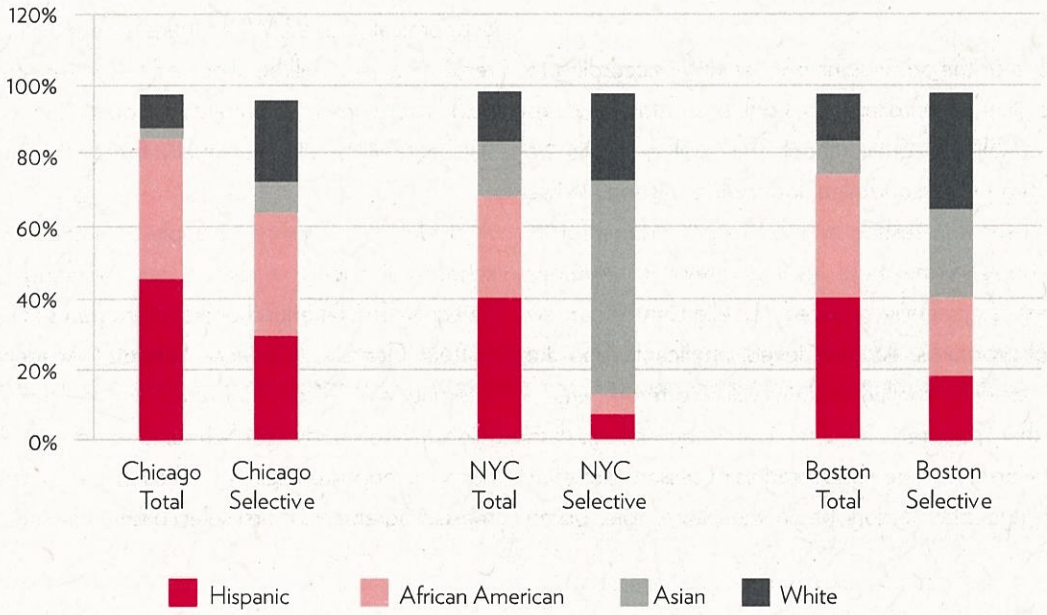
FIGURE 1. COMPOSITE ADMISSIONS SCORES INTO MOST SELECTIVE CPS HIGH SCHOOLS, BY SES TIER



Note: Composite Scores are out of 900 points total, constituting up to 300 points for entrance exam performance, 300 points for 7th grade final grades, and 300 points for 7th grade MAP performance.

Source: Chicago Public Schools, Office of Access and Enrollment, http://cps.edu/AccessAndEnrollment/Documents/SE_Cutoff_Scores.pdf.

FIGURE 2. RACIAL ENROLLMENT OF LARGE URBAN DISTRICTS VS. RACIAL ENROLLMENT AT SELECTIVE PUBLIC HIGH SCHOOLS



Note: Bars might not add to 100 percent due to rounding and small percentages of students who choose not to disclose race.

Source: National Center for Education Statistics Data, Public Schools and District Data, found at http://nces.ed.gov/datatools/.

results from testing or other traditional academic criteria, and the second through achieving a high ranking within their assigned SES tier based on those same academic measures. A total of 30 percent of available seats are filled solely using testing/academic criteria from a city-wide pool. The remaining available seats—70 percent—shall be filled in rank order from the lists that rank applicants within each of the four SES tiers, with an even number of students matriculating from each tier. In practice, this means that highly qualified students from more marginalized backgrounds will not be required to earn the same score on standardized tests as their peers in more affluent socioeconomic environments.[13]

Impact on Integration and Student Outcomes

Chicago's selective enrollment public schools are far more diverse than comparable programs in other large urban areas, which too often shut out capable black, Hispanic, and low-income students that comprise the overwhelming majority of their traditional student population.

Maintaining Racial Diversity in Schools and Programs

Across Chicago's ten selective enrollment public high schools, enrollment demographics continue to meet the racial diversity standards outlined in the original consent decree long after it no longer governs admissions protocol. In the 2013–2014 academic year, about 22 percent of students attending a CPS selective enrollment high school were white; nearly 30 percent were Hispanic, 35 percent black, and almost 9 percent Asian.[14] In the comparable cities with "exam schools" of New York and Boston, white and Asian students were overrepresented much more dramatically. For example, although over 40 percent of schoolchildren in New York City identify as Hispanic, that population represents

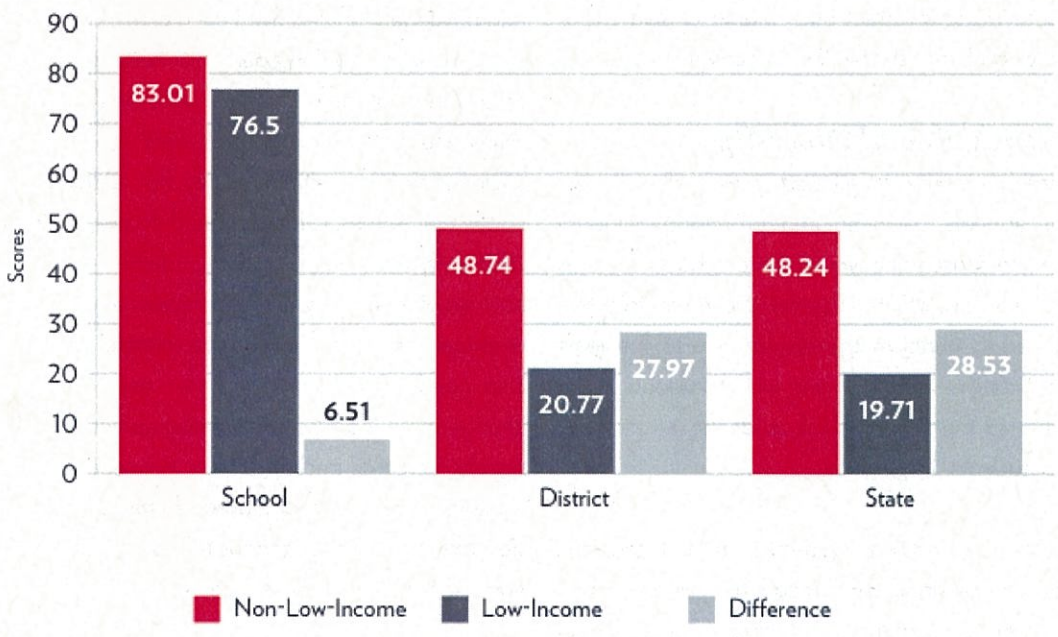
only 7.2 percent of enrollment in their public selective high schools; in Boston, selective school enrollment numbers also reveal significant declines in black and Hispanic enrollment and simultaneous overrepresentation of white and Asian students.[15]

Chicago's success in maintaining relatively racially balanced schools—despite the removal of race as an explicit selection factor in 2009—is due in large part to the particular measures of socioeconomic diversity used in the admissions plan. The census tract data that compose the SES tiers used by the district contain indicators of disadvantage that are highly racialized, including homeownership rates, use of languages other than English inside of the home, and percentages of single-parent households. These indicators offer a more complete picture of an applicant than do income-only indicators, such as free and reduced-price lunch eligibility.

Academic Success of Low-Income Students in the Selective School Environment

Under the current admissions system, low-income students who have the opportunity to attend very selective schools have continued to succeed within them. While a narrow achievement gap persists according to state administered test results, that gap is decidedly smaller than both the district-wide and state-wide economic achievement gaps. This same pattern applies to the black-white and Hispanic-white racial achievement gaps. Students admitted out of selection tiers of greater disadvantage not only perform brilliantly on state assessments—doing much better than the

FIGURE 3. INCOME ACHIEVEMENT GAP AT JONES COLLEGE PREP V. DISTRICT AND STATE



Note: Comparison Scores based on percentage of students deemed ready for the next level according to the state-wide PARCC assessment in 2015.

Source: "Illinois Report Card," Academic Progress, Jones College Prep High School, Excel spreadsheet with specific school, district, and state sub-group data found at https://illinoisreportcard.com/School.aspx?source=Trends&source2=AchievementGap&Schoolid=150162990250533.

CPS district average of their more affluent peers—but keep up with students in their schools who are not classified as low-income.[16]

These students also graduate in four years at extremely high rates, indicating that low-income students are fully capable of excelling within these challenging curriculums. Chicago's selective public schools continue to be the best in the district, and retain their popularity among families in Chicago.

Next Steps

Chicago's explicit commitment to socioeconomic and racial diversity within its most competitive schools is unique and commendable. We can observe its effectiveness through the academic successes of its students, the continued popularity of the selective enrollment schools, and the sustained racial diversity of the program as a whole. Moving forward, CPS must address two remaining issues. First, the district ought to explore ways to address the less than ideal racial diversity of certain individual selective schools—namely the most competitive high schools. Secondly, the district should further evaluate ways to attract even higher enrollment of higher-poverty youth into their selective schools.

Redistributing Racial Diversity

While the total minority enrollment across all selective CPS schools appears balanced and promising, minority enrollment in the most selective of those schools remains disproportionately low. Walter Payton, the most selective and most coveted school in the district, is also the least racially representative school. There, white students make up 42.1 percent of the school, black students 17.8 percent, and Hispanic students, 24 percent.[17]

Under the current admissions system, a student can rank several schools on a single application but will only ever receive one offer—presumably the highest ranked school for which their composite scores or tier placement qualifies them. Minimally, CPS needs to determine the numbers of high achieving, minority and low-SES applicants who rank the most selective schools most highly on their own applications, and employ significant outreach to attempt to increase those numbers.

Increasing Individual-Level Socioeconomic Diversity

The use of census tract data is a nuanced, appropriate, and effective way to reasonably estimate the relative socioeconomic status of an individual applicant, but—like nearly any measure—remains imperfect. As a result, the percentages of low-income students—even when employing the blunt measure of free and reduced-price lunch eligibility—leaves something to be desired. Despite the tier system, meals program eligibility rates at many of the schools do not come close to approaching the high district rate. For example, only 31 percent of students at Walter Payton qualified for the program in 2013–2014; Young Magnet High School did only slightly better at 40.51 percent, and Jones College Prep came in at under 48 percent.[18]

This is possibly because the admissions process, even with the control of the tier system, still attracts the most affluent and privileged families from each census tract. As not every person who lives within a particular neighborhood will fit each of the generalizable characteristics of that neighborhood, many students arriving from tiers that represent lower socioeconomic positions might not actually occupy that status themselves. Officials would do well to rigorously seek to identify talented low-income youth in earlier grade levels and provide them with information and encourage their eventual application to selective schools. The school system also needs to diligently monitor neighborhoods as they change in economics and demographics. As gentrification rapidly increases in cities across America, cities depending on census tract or neighborhood characteristics as primary determinants of SES cannot rely on even slightly old data and expect to have an accurate portrait of the status of a place.

A more substantial intervention might be to either reduce or eliminate the number of students who gain admission

to selective enrollment schools based solely on composite scores, outside of the tier system. While 30 percent of seats are currently allocated to the highest scores, significantly cutting back on that population, which tends to come from more privileged backgrounds, would make more seats available for students of all tiers, thus better balancing schools by socioeconomic status.

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THE CENTURY FOUNDATION

Dallas Independent School District: Integration as Innovation

OCTOBER 14, 2016 — CAROLE LEARNED-MILLER

Dallas is a large metropolitan area in northern Texas; according to the 2015 Census,[1] it is the ninth most populous city in the country with more than 1,300,000 residents. Dallas is also a diverse city socioeconomically. While the median household income is $43,359,[2] there is a vast range across Dallas neighborhoods. In the M Street neighborhood of north Dallas, the median income is over $93,000, while in parts of south Dallas, it is less than $15,000.[3] This socioeconomic diversity is not present in the schools, however, as 89.6 percent of public school students in Dallas are economically disadvantaged using the federal poverty guidelines based on free and reduced-price lunch eligibility, according to the DISD Office of Institutional Research.[4] In terms of race, 22.6 percent of students are black/African American, 0.3 percent are American Indian/Alaska Natice, 1.4 percent are Asian/Hawaiian/Pacific Islander, 70.4 percent are Hispanic, 4.7 percent are white, and 0.5 percent represent multiple groups.[5]

Given the rich diversity of the city, the Dallas, Texas Independent School District (Dallas ISD) is taking its own unique approach to school integration by designing an innovative school choice pilot. This new program consists of a small number of new or transformed schools designed to enroll students from different backgrounds and attract more middle-class families back to the district.

History of School Integration Efforts in Dallas

Dallas began the work of desegregation in 1971 when a parent, Sam Tasby, sued and won a district court case, *Tasby vs. Estes*, against the Dallas ISD. Tasby's class action lawsuit claimed that the city's schools were segregated and that the schools children of color attended did not receive equitable funding and resources. As a result, a federal desegregation order was placed on the schools. Under the court order, students were bussed around the city to ensure equal access to a quality education. However, when the district was deemed unitary in 2003, students again began to attend their neighborhood schools.[6] As Dallas's housing has long been segregated by race and socioeconomic level, and given that the school attendance boundaries are once again based on zip code, the majority of Dallas children now attend segregated schools.[7]

The Current Plan

In the past couple of years, Dallas has devoted new energy to addressing the problem of segregation through its work on public school choice. In 2014, Dallas ISD developed a new incubator called the Office of Transformation and

This report can be found online at: https://tcf.org/content/report/dallas-independent-school-district/

Innovation (OTI), which focuses on, among other pilot projects, expanding choice options in the district. While school integration is not explicitly part of the office's charge, Mike Koprowski, the district's chief of transformation and innovation, sees diversity as essential to achieving their goal of boosting achievement through innovative programs. While Koprowski began his career in the Air Force, he later earned a master's degree at the Harvard Graduate School of Education and decided his calling was, in his words, "working on education because it is the civil rights issue of our time."[8] Koprowski was concerned by the re-segregation of Dallas schools and made school integration a priority for the Office of Transformation and Innovation.

Koprowski started by surveying the community to determine what types of schools parents would be eager to choose. They received almost 3,700 responses. The most popular school themes were early college, international baccalaureate (IB), Montessori, and advanced placement (AP). They were also encouraged to find that a majority—with 58 percent replying "definitely" and 26 percent replying "probably"—would choose a school in their attendance zone, if they were offered one of their top four choices of school as well as transportation. Additionally, 68 percent said they would "definitely" or "probably" attend one of their choice schools even outside of their attendance zone, if transportation was provided.[9]

After collecting this survey data, Koprowski and his team began piloting a variety of new ideas, but two of them—the creation of "choice schools" as well as the development of better measures for student disadvantage—address educational equity head-on.

Creation of New "Choice Schools"

Dallas ISD has long had selective magnet schools with academic or performance admissions requirements, but the district has begun creating new "choice schools" that serve a different role. Similar to magnet schools, these choice schools offer specialized themes such as Montessori and Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Math (STEAM), but they do not have the admissions requirements found at the magnet schools. Unlike the traditional public schools in the district, choice schools are open to children living anywhere in the district, regardless of academic ability.[10]

Koprowski and his five-person team developed two kinds of choice schools. First, there are "transformation schools," which are brand-new schools that have open enrollment across the district. Second, there are "Innovation Schools," which are existing neighborhood schools being reimagined by the current teachers and leadership. In order to become a choice school, applicants go through an intensive, competitive proposal process.[11] If selected, the schools receive funding, technical support, and additional autonomies—which traditional Dallas schools do not have—such as the ability to roll money over from year to year or redefine staff positions. The goals of these choice schools are to offer high quality programming for all children in the city; to offer options to middle class families who have left the district or who are considering leaving the district; and to create more integrated schools that provide high quality education to students from all socioeconomic levels.[12]

Research[13] has long shown us that students achieve at higher levels when they learn in socioeconomically and racially diverse school environments. Choice schools aim to offer more of these integrated learning environments to Dallas's children.

Developing Better Measures of Student Disadvantage

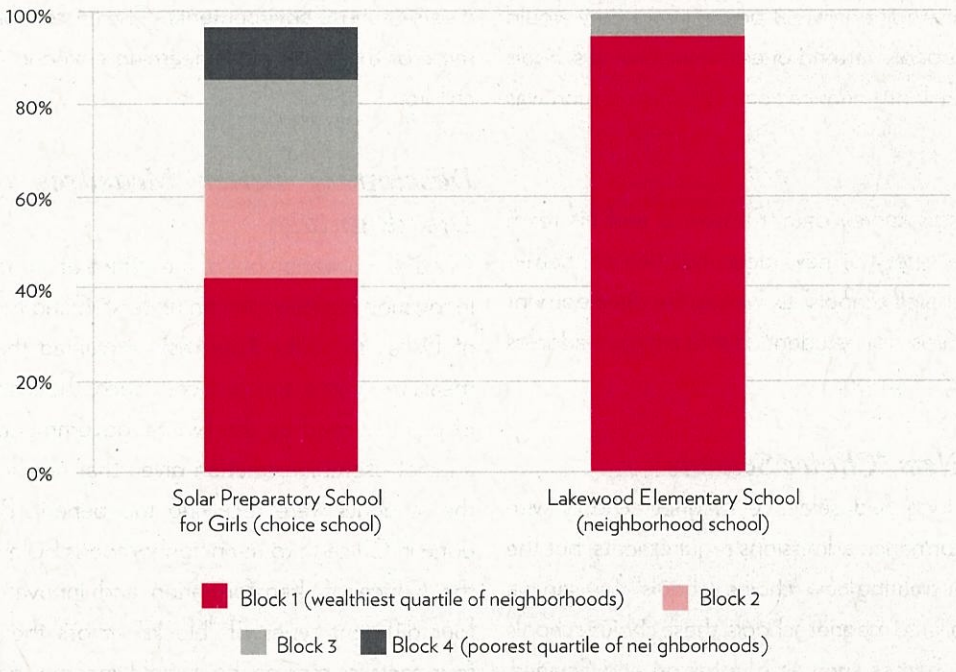
Another innovation out of the Office of Transformation and Innovation is a new take on understanding the poverty level of Dallas students. Koprowski explained that the "binary" measure of free and reduced lunch, the standard measure of poverty used by the federal government, did not offer a lot of useful information given that nearly 90 percent of the students were receiving this benefit. Based on work done in Chicago to tier neighborhoods by level of poverty,[14] the Office of Transformation and Innovation developed four different types of "blocks" across the city based on four factors: median household income, parents level of education, single parent status and home ownership. The team developed a map showing the levels of poverty in far more detail for all neighborhoods across the city with Block 1

representing the quarter of neighborhoods that are wealthiest and Block 4 representing the 25 percent of neighborhoods that are most impoverished. Now that this map is developed, Koprowski's team is using the information to conduct "equity audits" on the new Transformation Schools to ensure that equitable numbers of children from each of the "blocks" are chosen for the schools.[15] Additionally, given that one of the first transformation schools, Solar Preparatory School for Girls at James Bonham, has socioeconomic balance as one of its tenets, the team can use the equity audit to choose students off the waitlist in order to balance the school socioeconomically.

Impact on Integration and Student Outcomes

It is too early to tell what effect Dallas's socioeconomically and racially integrated schools will have on student achievement. However, based on early numbers, Solar Prep is seeing results in its enrollment. The team was able to balance the school with half the children eligible for free and reduced lunch and half of them ineligible. Additionally, students from all four blocks are represented with the school projected to have 42 percent of children representing Block 1 (the wealthiest quartile of neighborhoods), 21 percent of children representing Block 2, 22 percent of children representing Block 3 and 12 percent of children representing Block 4 (the poorest quartile of neighborhoods). In contrast, nearby neighborhood schools, which have traditional attendance boundaries, have much more segregated school populations. For example, Lakewood Elementary School has 95 percent of children representing Block 1, 0 percent from Block 2, 4 percent from Block 3 and 0 percent from Block 4.[16] (See Figure 1.)

FIGURE 1. ENROLLMENT BY SOCIOECONOMIC STATUS OF STUDENTS' HOME NEIGHBORHOODS IN TWO DALLAS ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS



Source: Data for fall 2016 enrollment provided by Mike Koprowski, Chief of Transformation and Innovation, Dallas Independent School District.

While the focus is on socioeconomic balance, further analysis by the Office of Transformation and Innovation showed that Solar Prep's projected enrollment is racially diverse as well with roughly 45 percent Hispanic children, 25 percent black children, 25 percent white children and 5 percent Asian and multi-race children. While the city as a whole is diverse, with 28.8 percent white residents, 25.0 percent black residents, 2.9 percent Asian residents, 42.4 percent Hispanic or Latino residents, and 2.6 percent two or more races,[17] this level of racial diversity in one school is rare in the Dallas ISD. While this is an early pilot, Koprowski is hopeful that opening more choice schools will increase their market share of middle class students in the Dallas area and simultaneously create enriching, integrated schools for all children.

Early evidence of this pilot's ability to increase the market share of middle class families was seen in this last application cycle. According to data from the Office of Transformation and Innovation, a total of 668 applications came from students not currently attending a Dallas ISD school. While some of those children are just entering kindergarten, many are also coming from private schools and charter schools in the area. The demand has been high so far, with Transformation Schools averaging three applications for every one seat.[18]

Lessons for Other Districts

The team at Dallas's Office of Transformation and Innovation believes they increased their market share of students through intensive communication with all communities within the city. The team spent months sending fliers, placing ads, and knocking on doors across the city to ensure that all families knew about the choice schools. "Diversity requires very intentional recruitment," Koprowski explained. They also followed the private school timeline. "If you want your schools to be a feasible option for private school parents, you have to have the enrollment process happen just as early," said Koprowski.

While the office has had many successes, there have been challenges, as well. Office of Transformation and Innovation Director Mohammed Choudhury explained, "The biggest obstacles to change and reform are within the system itself." Much of his work has been focused on collaborating with other district offices, such as the finance office, to ensure that the choice schools are given the additional autonomies they have been promised and that a district infrastructure for scaling these projects is developed.[19]

To other districts considering similar policy shifts or pilots, Koprowski shares the following advice. He suggests, "Districts should offer creative enrollment strategies that promote socioeconomic and racial diversity by decoupling residential address and school assignment." He also suggests making the application process as easy as possible for parents. As an example of this flexibility, Dallas ISD is allowing parents to text a photo of their application rather than deliver it in person.

Another important element is transportation, which Dallas ISD provides for the Transformation Schools. "Choice without transportation really isn't choice for many families," explains Koprowski.

Next Steps

Both Choudhury and Koprowski emphasize how iterative the process of school innovation and integration has to be. The team's goal is to create thirty-five choice schools by 2020 with ten being Transformation Schools and twenty-five being Innovation. If they are ultimately successful, however, the team believes that the learning that comes from this work will make all of the district's schools, not just the Choice Schools, more diverse and more enriching for all children.[20]

Carole Learned-Miller is a second year doctoral student in the Ed.LD. program at the Harvard Graduate School of Education. She started her career as a teacher and later worked as a principal and a central office administrator. She also enjoyed training and coaching aspiring principals and teachers. Carole is involved in research and writing related to the development of exceptional teachers and principals as well as the creation of equitable, integrated and enriching

schools for children. Carole received a BA in Education and Psychology from Smith College and a M.Ed. in Educational Administration from Boston College.

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THE CENTURY FOUNDATION

Eden Prairie Public Schools: Adapting to Demographic Change in the Suburbs

OCTOBER 14, 2016 — KIM BRIDGES

Eden Prairie, Minnesota exemplifies many of today's suburbs experiencing rapid demographic shifts. Like many locales around the country, the schools in this suburb of Minneapolis have reflected the move from racial homogeneity to increasing racial, socioeconomic, and cultural diversity. Within a twenty-year time period, the county's percentage of white residents dropped nineteen points—from 94 percent in 1990 to 75 percent in 2010—as the community's attributes and amenities attracted more minority and immigrant families.[1] The attraction has included a highly touted school system. According to the Minnesota Report Card, in the 2015–2016 school year, the public schools in Eden Prairie enrolled nearly 9,000 students, 14.2 percent of whom were Asian, 14.2 percent of whom were black, nearly 7 percent of whom were Hispanic, and 64 percent of whom were white.[2]

The Eden Prairie Public School District (EPPSD) has leveraged its increased diversity with school attendance zones created in 2010 to reduce concentrated poverty and increase student achievement as well as operational efficiency. It has been six years since then-superintendent Melissa Krull and the school board undertook a voluntary elementary school boundary change process that generated national media attention, contentious public meetings, and, ultimately, the resignation of her and several school leaders as well as the turnover of all but one of seven board members. Though the process was not easy, it offers the opportunity to assess both the effort and the impact of adapting and embracing the dynamics of a changing community by designing an equity- and diversity-focused student assignment policy.

History of School Integration Efforts in EPPSD

To understand the context of the decision, it's important to go back further in time to understand how the district's priorities shifted as the community and the school system changed. Eden Prairie is one of eleven school districts in the Twin Cities region to participate voluntarily in the Western Metro Education Program (WMEP), which originated from a civil rights lawsuit due to intra-district segregation and inequity.[3] According to the EPPSD's most recent "Achievement and Integration Plan," the district's role in this collaborative was "to assist Minneapolis Public Schools, a racially isolated school district, desegregate their schools."[4] Through this effort, some district students attended the WMEP regional Magnet Schools, while the district received about one hundred students from Minneapolis through a program known as "The Choice is Yours." The plan also

This report can be found online at: https://tcf.org/content/report/eden-prairie-public-schools/

notes that "Although the program's qualifying requirement is low income and a southwest Minneapolis location, 95 percent of the students are of color."[5]

Embracing and expanding upon these integration efforts, the collaborative also offered culturally-responsive professional development. Through the collaborative, the district's educators implemented a wide variety of new practices to meet the needs of its diversifying student population. However, by the end of the decade many district staff and leaders remained troubled by ongoing achievement gaps and an elementary school assignment plan that funneled an every-increasing and disproportionate number of low income and minority students into one of the four schools.[6] EPPSD leaders realized that the pre-2010 school boundaries were an impediment to continued progress, and projections showed that inaction would only increase the racial and socioeconomic disparity in the years to come. Susan Eaton, who authored a "story from the field" on Eden Prairie as part of the One Nation Indivisible series, noted that the 2010 plan was "intended to reduce glaring and growing disparities in the racial and socioeconomic makeup between one school, where Somali, African American and lower income students were concentrated and three other elementary schools, which overwhelmingly enrolled white, middle class and affluent students."[7]

The Current Plan

After the EPPSD board directed the superintendent to generate potential solutions to address the concerns, Dr. Krull convened a working group of school stakeholders and community members.[8] With assistance from the Institute on Metropolitan Opportunity (formerly the Institute on Race and Poverty) at the University of Minnesota Law School, the committee's recommendations centered on moving from a K–4 to a K–6 model and redrawing boundaries to incorporate students from more and less affluent neighborhoods into each elementary school.[9] Although the plan would require a significant number of school transfers in its starting year—with nearly 1,100 Eden Prairie students changing schools—it actually decreased the number of school transitions students would make during their K–12 experience and reduced the average commute time.[10] The school board approved the plan on a 4-3 vote in December of 2010, and it went into effect for the 2010–2011 school year.[11]

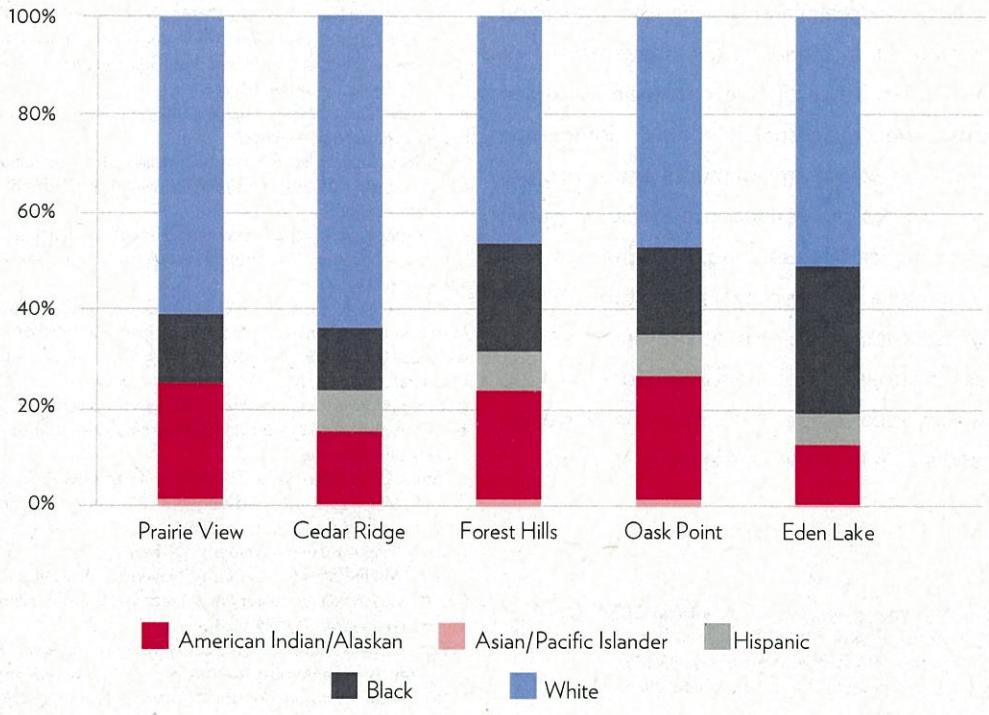
After assessing the plan and the process undertaken, the National Coalition on School Diversity commended the plan and its architects for work "...under immense pressure, implement[ing] a forward-looking plan to achieve equity, efficiency, and high-quality schooling within economically and culturally and racially diverse schools."[12]

Impact on Integration and Student Outcomes

As a result of the new attendance boundaries, Eden Prairie's elementary schools are more socioeconomically and racially integrated today than they were before the plan. In the five years following the new student assignment plan, the wide variation in socioeconomic diversity at its neighborhood elementary schools decreased significantly.[13] Similarly, the elementary schools today have more consistent racial diversity from elementary to elementary, with just over a fourteen point variation between the five schools' populations of white students and less than a sixteen point variation between the populations of black students (see Figure 1).[14]

Tackling the issue of segregation also produced a number of opportunities borne out by research on the benefits of integrated schools. From 2012–2016, district-wide proficiency rates in all grades in math, reading, and science on the Minnesota Report Card have outperformed state averages. In 2013, the Minnesota Campaign for Achievement Now(MinnCAN) School and District Report Cards recognized five Eden Prairie schools as "top-performing public schools for Latino and Asian student performance."[15] Despite these gains, MinnCAN also reported that achievement gaps in EPPSD between white and black students at the secondary level remained well above state averages.[16]

FIGURE 1. RACIAL/ETHNIC DEMOGRAPHICS OF EDEN PRAIRIE ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS



Source: Minnesota Report Card 2016 data, http://rc.education.state.mn.us/.

Lessons for Other Districts

Today this community—touted before the change process for being a national "best place to live"—appears to have transitioned from a period of resistance by some to a broader acceptance of the student assignment changes.[17] As time has passed and protests have begun to recede into memory, parent attitudes about the school system are positive. For example, in a random sample of 250 Eden Prairie parents conducted in 2015, "94 percent of respondents reported favorably that they 'felt valued' the last time they spent time in one of the Eden Prairie Schools to deal with an education issue."[18] The district also has moved forward with new leaders, a comprehensive strategic plan and broad public support for a 2014 levy.[19] The current board has kept the zones intact despite early concerns that they would not sustain them.[20] As principal Conn McCartan concluded in a 2014 story on Eden Prairie's student assignment and demographic changes, "The nice part is to be able to look back on it and say, 'See, when the dust settles, everybody is OK.'"[21]

For equity-minded educators and community leaders, the Eden Prairie story may show that the path to progress can be challenging, but also that it is worthwhile. The EPPSD story illustrates far-reaching impacts that can help today's students become tomorrow's leaders. By designing a student assignment plan to ensure racial and socioeconomic diversity, the district hasn't just prevented a rise in the concentration of poverty in one school or narrowed achievement gaps for many minority students; it has continued to strengthen its reputation for and commitment to academic excellence. In a 2013 presentation at a conference on school diversity, former

superintendent Melissa Krull expressed this conclusion: "The fight is worth it. The challenge will make us stronger and our convictions deeper."[22]

Kim Bridges is a doctoral candidate in the Education Leadership program at the Harvard Graduate School of Education. Her studies focus on the challenges in urban school systems and racial/socioeconomic integration strategies to improve school environments and outcomes for all students. Kim has professional experience in public and nonprofit communications, teaching, and administration. Most recently, she was a senior policy analyst at the Virginia Department of Education. She also served as an elected member and as Chairman of the school board for Richmond Public Schools. Kim received her M.A. from the University of Richmond and a B.A. from the University of Virginia.

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THE CENTURY FOUNDATION

Hartford Public Schools: Striving for Equity through Interdistrict Programs

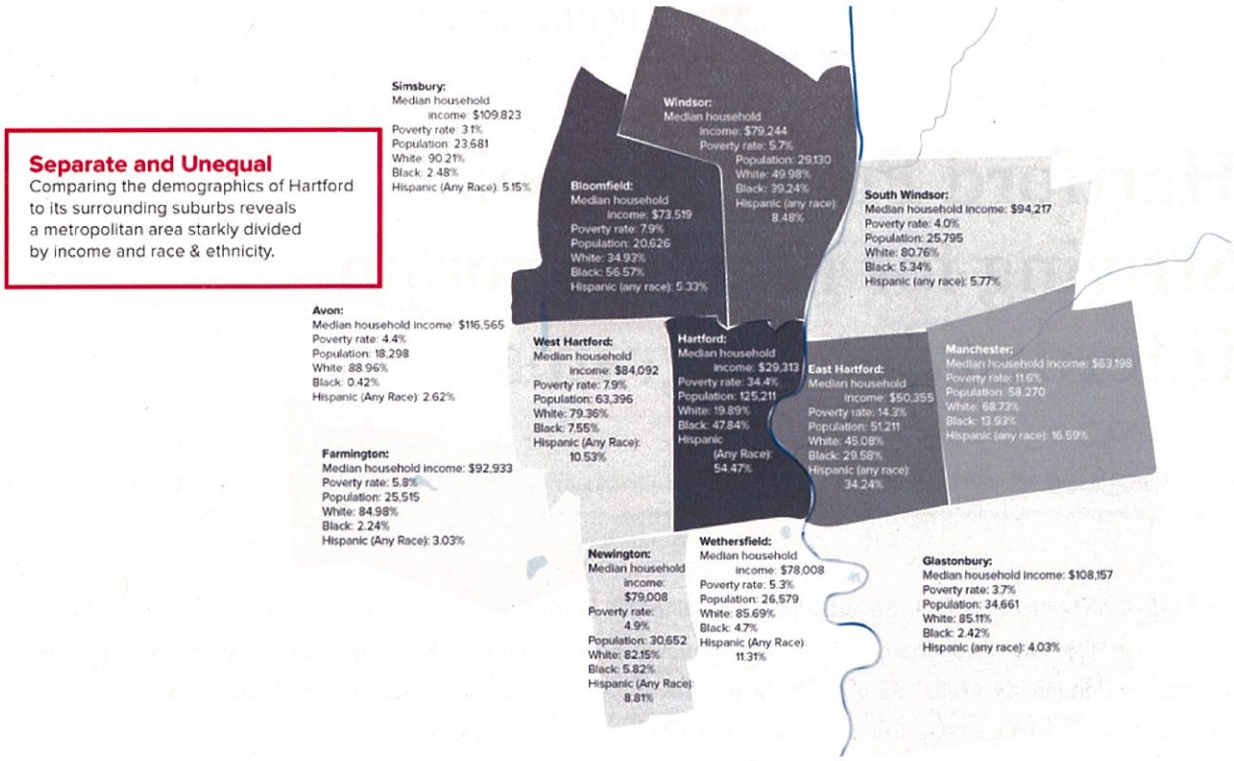
OCTOBER 14, 2016 — KIMBERLY QUICK

Hartford, Connecticut, a high-poverty, majority-minority city of over 125,000 residents, is surrounded by several affluent, predominantly white suburbs. While the poverty rate in the city is 34.4 percent, the combined poverty rate of the surrounding counties is only 12.1 percent. Hartford is the fourth poorest city with over 100,000 residents in the country; in contrast, greater Hartford has the nation's seventh highest median income. Hartford's median household income ($29,313), percentage of owner occupied homes (23.6 percent), and median home value ($163,600) are each significantly lower than in the surrounding areas; respectively, these county statistics are $65,499, 65.1 percent, and $238,600. The unemployment rate in the city is nearly double the rate in the surrounding counties, at a startling 12.2 percent. Demographically, the city is approximately 15.9 percent white, 38.3 percent black, 43.6 percent Hispanic, with a median age of 30. In contrast, the surrounding areas are much whiter and older, with a white population of nearly 65 percent and a median age of 40.[1] About 15 percent of Hartford's residents have a bachelor's degree or higher.

Hartford School District serves students from pre-kindergarten through the twelfth grade in sixty-eight schools. In the 2013–2014 academic year, it enrolled 21,820 students, with a per pupil expenditure of $16,735.[2] Like the city itself, the school district is majority black and Hispanic—31.3 percent of its students are black; 49.9 percent, Hispanic. Nearly 85 percent of children attending district schools are eligible for free or reduced-price meals, and 16.9 percent of them are English language learners.[3] These statistics include the demographic information of the suburban students who attend public school in the city, meaning that both the poverty rate and rate of racial isolation in Hartford Public Schools would be significantly greater save for its efforts in desegregation.

To help remedy the inequities between the city and surrounding counties, Hartford Public Schools operates an interdistrict magnet program that seeks to provide a wider range of educational opportunities to both Hartford and suburban families. Alongside this interdistrict magnet program that attracts suburban students into the city, Hartford's open choice policy allows city children to attend schools in more than thirty surrounding school districts. This two-way desegregation plan has made Hartford a model for effective school integration in a high-poverty, high-minority district.

This report can be found online at: https://tcf.org/content/report/hartford-public-schools/



Source: "Hartford: Integrating Schools in a Segregated Place". Teach for America.

History of Integration Efforts in Hartford

Hartford's contemporary push for school integration began with the 1996 Connecticut Supreme Court ruling in *Sheff v. O'Neill*. The lead petitioner, a Hartford fourth grader, filed a lawsuit through his parents, calling attention to the vast inequities between Hartford's underresourced, majority-minority schools, and suburban schools that had predominantly white student populations. Seeking to ensure an equitable and integrated education to both urban and suburban children, the Connecticut Supreme Court ruled 4–3 for *Sheff*, determining that separation of suburban and Hartford students violated the education and equal protection clauses of the state constitution. The state was now obligated to remedy that division by finding ways to promote school desegregation.[4] Significantly, while the U.S. Constitution's prohibits only de jure segregation, the Sheff court ruled that the Connecticut constitution also prohibits de facto segregation—segregation not directly tied to intentional government conduct.

Despite the significance of the ruling, the case did not set specific goals or timetables, and the *Sheff* plaintiffs felt were forced to return to court twice to demand compliance. Both parties reached a legal settlement in 2003, setting a four year timetable and calling initially for at least 30 percent of Hartford minority students to be able to learn in reduced-isolation settings, or schools where minorities constituted less than three-quarters of the student body. This settlement also outlined ways to potentially reduce racial and economic isolation: interdistrict magnet schools, which enroll students from Hartford and suburban districts; and the open choice program, which allows students to transfer to a school in another district. The settlement also helped establish interdistrict cooperative programs such as after-school or summer programs designed to increase achievement

while further reducing isolation. The parties negotiated a second settlement in 2008. The settlement set two new benchmarks. First, at least 80 percent of Hartford minority students wishing to attend reduced isolation schools would be accommodated. Secondly, a percentage of minority students from Hartford would be enrolled in a reduced isolation school; the target goals of the court order placed that number at 41 percent.[5]

In response to the 1996 *Sheff* decision, the state legislature devised a voluntary system of magnet schools and school choice transfer options that would be available options for both Hartford and suburban residents. Today, more than 45 percent of Hartford's Black and Latino K–12 students attend schools in reduced-isolation settings. As recently as 2002, only an estimated 10 percent of black and Latino students could make this claim.[6]

Current Plan

Students in the Greater Hartford area can choose to participate in a variety of integration programs, including but not limited to open choice, or reverse choice, in which suburban public school children can apply to attend non-magnets in Hartford. The region's most substantial option, interdistrict magnet schools—about forty-five in total—offer a specialized theme, focus, or pedagogy within the public school system.[7] These schools are operated by a variety of partners. About half of are operated by Hartford Public Schools, and most of the others are operated by the Capitol Region Education Council (CREC), a separate organization that serves thirty-five member districts in the Greater Hartford area. Magnet schools are funded through a combination of state grants, contributions from local boards of education, federal grants, and tuition paid by sending districts and towns. The Regional School Choice Office (RSCO), oversees the system and ensures that both Hartford and suburban families have access to integrated schools through a lottery system for magnet school admissions.[8] Although RSCO seeks to accommodate as many children and families as possible through the magnet program, it cannot guarantee a seat to every pre-K–12 family that wants one. The lottery system is designed to meet a lofty goal: to have at least 47.5 percent of students enrolled in reduced racial isolation schools (defined as less than 75 percent minority enrollment).[9]

While race or income are not weighted factors in Hartford's "blind," computer-based lottery, the extreme racial and economic stratification of the Greater Hartford area renders the suburban-urban divide a reasonable proxy for creating socioeconomic and racial diversity. Most Sheff magnet schools are 50-50 city-suburban enrollment by design, which helps ensure both racial and economic integration. By recruiting children from the much more affluent areas, the Hartford School Choice Office is typically able to successfully enroll a threshold of non-minority students to the district-run interdistrict magnet schools to remain in compliance with Sheff directives. Conversely, those interdistrict magnet schools located in outlying suburban areas intentionally recruit students from both Hartford and suburban districts. This process of recruitment, however, is targeted, evidence-based, and well-funded. In 2015, the Hartford School Choice Office spent $350,000 in marketing campaigns alone, not to mention significant time and personnel resources.[10] Interdistrict magnet schools or participating school districts receive state grants if they choose to provide transportation to out-of-district students, and the district where the school is located is obligated to provide transportation to its resident students. According to reporting by the *Connecticut Mirror*, the state has spent around $1.4 billion to build and renovate magnet schools over the past ten years, and spends about $150 million to operate these schools each year.[11]

Impact on Integration and Student Outcomes

Hartford Public Schools, a school district with an extremely disadvantaged student population, provides a greater range of educational opportunities to its students than any other district in their region. Its regional magnet schools offer far more racially and economically integrated student bodies than nearly every other non-magnet school in the region, save one. Several researchers and at least one of the magnet school operators report strong academic outcomes for students enrolled in interdistrict programs.

Expansion of Access to Desegregated Schools

Since most school segregation today happens across—rather than within—school districts, Hartford's use of interdistrict desegregation programs helps to maximize the proportion of students with access to diverse school buildings. Because of this, the percentages of Hartford students who attend reduced racial isolation schools has increased from only 11 percent prior to the revised Sheff agreement in 2007, to a projected 45.5 percent in 2016.[12] In 2014, 9,558 of Hartford's 21,458 minority students were able to attend schools in these more integrated settings. More than 17,000 students in the Hartford region attend magnet schools; another 2,000 participate in the open choice program. CREC (an organization that works with member districts to run many of the Hartford region's magnet programs) has itself expanded from 3,600 students in 2008, to 6,300 students in 2012. The overall enrollment in their schools is close to one-third white, one-third black, and one-third Latino.

Elevated Achievement and Better Social-Emotional Outcomes

According to researchers at UCLA's Civil Rights Project, Hartford's regional magnet schools boast very high levels of achievement and a greatly diminished white-Latino student achievement gap in several subjects and grade levels. Within each racial group, the students from poor backgrounds perform substantially above the statewide average for low-income students, and the longer an individual student

FIGURE 1. COMPARISON OF STATE AND CREC PERFORMANCE ON CONNECTICUT MASTERY TEST (CMT)

Reading Scores at or Above Proficiency

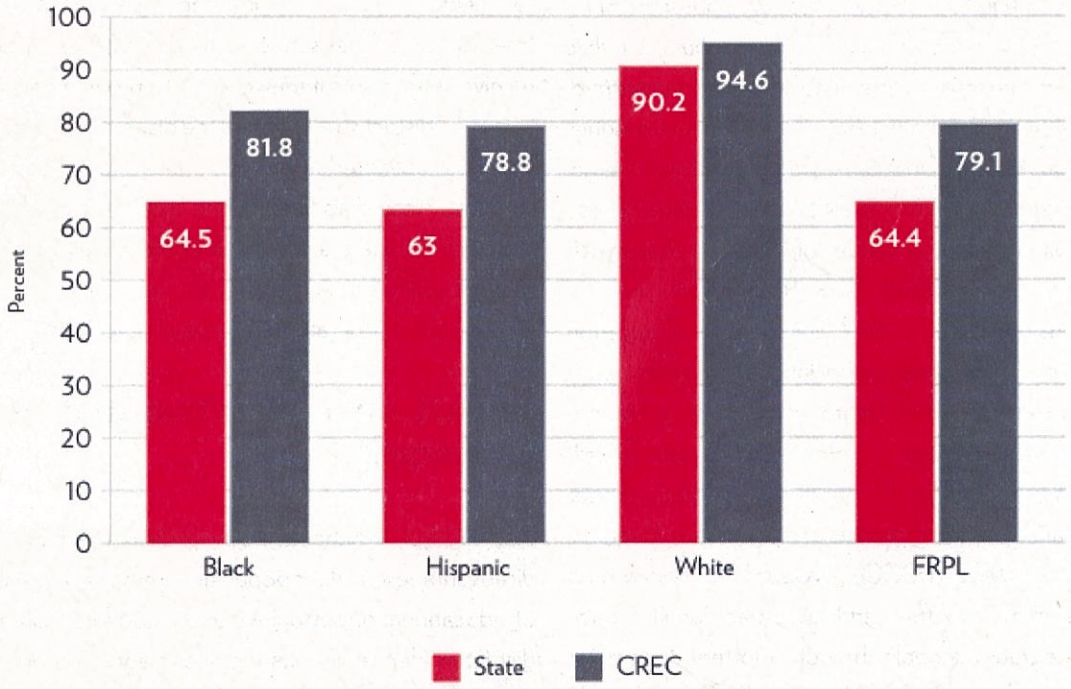


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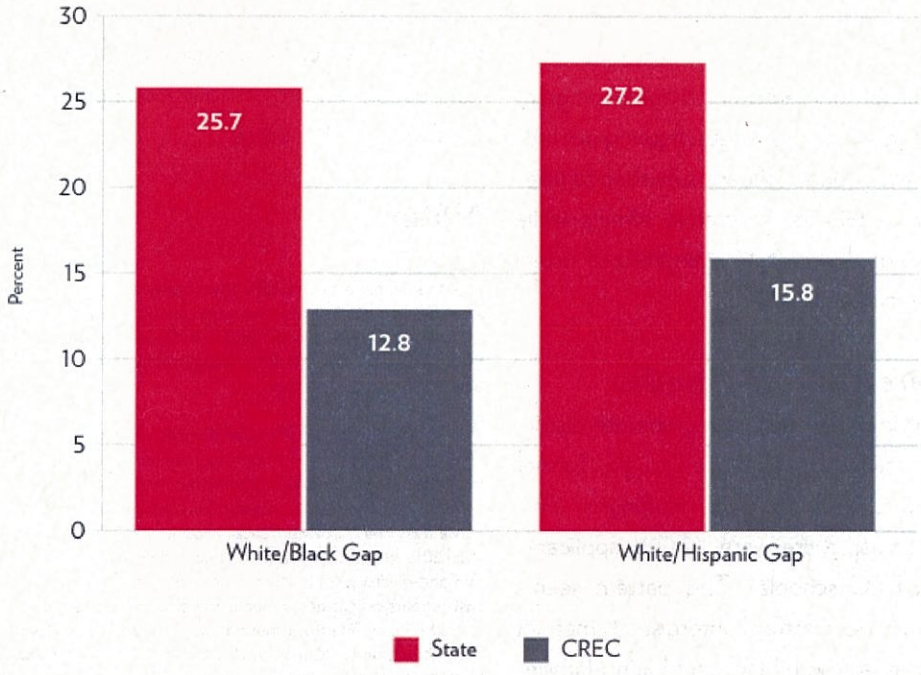
FIGURE 2. ACHIEVEMENT GAPS IN STATEWIDE V. CREC MAGNET SCHOOLS CMT READING SCORES, 2012



Source: Sarah S. Ellworth, "CREC Student Achievement Overview 2013," Capitol Region Education Council, http://www.sheffmovement.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/02/CREC-Student-Achievement-Overview-2013.pdf.

has remained in magnet schools, the more substantial his or her gains seem to be.[13] For example, while stubborn racial and socioeconomic achievement gaps persist within CREC schools, the achievement of student racial and socioeconomic subgroups far exceed state averages, and the score gaps between those students and their white or more affluent peers are notably more narrow.[14] CREC schools saw these encouraging outcomes even though their schools have a higher percentage of poor students than the state average.

This more recent data bears out the findings in a pair of peer-reviewed 2009 studies from Connecticut that sought to discover both the true integrative effect of magnet schools and their impacts on student achievement. Controlling for the possibility for selection bias, or the concept that children from families who opt-in to schools of choice are fundamentally different from children from families who do not, researchers looked at magnet school lottery winners and losers and discovered that attendance at a magnet high school had positive math and reading achievement outcomes for central city students.[15]

A second study by the same researchers, again controlling for both selection bias and past educational experiences, revealed a number of positive social-emotional developments for all students in Hartford's interdistrict magnets. Students in these desegregated environments reported greater levels of peer support for academic achievement, more encouragement and support for college attainment, and lower rates of truancy and absenteeism. Both white and minority students were more likely to feel connected to

peers of other races, to report having multiple friends of different racial and ethnic backgrounds, and to express stronger interests in and understanding of multiculturalism.[16]

Next Steps

The popularity of Hartford's interdistrict magnet program also presents one of its greatest challenges: figuring out how to simultaneously attract enough affluent suburban families into the program to sustain its integrative effects while maximizing magnet school access to marginalized urban children who are most in need of it.

Inclusion of More Hartford Families

Demand for admission into the Hartford region's interdistrict magnet schools far outpaces supply. Bruce Douglas, former executive director of CREC, told the *Huffington Post* that in this academic year, there were 20,000 applicants for 2,000 seats in CREC schools.[17] This pattern seems to expand throughout the Hartford interdistrict magnet network. Simultaneously, as more black and Latino families begin to move out of city proper into surrounding districts, Hartford officials seeking to find more affluent white families to balance Hartford schools are forced to venture further and further into the county to recruit. All of this leads to a program that—while its intentions and ultimate effects are to help bolster achievement and opportunity for marginalized kids—does so by actively seeking the approval, enthusiasm, and attendance of richer, whiter families.

This situation is not aided by what seems to be wavering political enthusiasm for magnet school funding in a state with budget challenges. While the Connecticut state legislature protected funding for Hartford's magnet schools due to intense demand, it placed a moratorium on all other future magnet school construction in 2009. Recently, however, a bill signed by the governor in July 2016 allocates tens of millions of dollars to magnet school construction projects in the Hartford region.[18] These additional funds will likely help open up seats for more low-income Hartford city students in new schools with improved, state-of-the-art facilities and creative themes or pedagogies. But in order to persist as reduced isolation schools, Hartford and regional school officials must continue rigorous marketing research and recruitment in the suburbs, while further incentivizing suburban districts to accept greater numbers of Hartford city students through the region's Open Choice program.

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Notes

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THE CENTURY FOUNDATION

Jefferson County Public Schools: From Legal Enforcement to Ongoing Commitment

OCTOBER 14, 2016 — KIM BRIDGES

Jefferson County Public Schools (JCPS) has a large geographic area and a diverse populace to draw upon for system-wide school diversity efforts. The division comprises one-seventh of all students in Kentucky public schools and is the 28th largest school district in the country. Encompassing the city of Louisville and the surrounding county, JCPS today has over 100,000 pre-K–12 students in 166 school sites, with a demographic composition that is 46 percent white, 37 percent African American, and 17 percent other, including a rapidly growing Latino or Hispanic population.[1] Roughly 66 percent of students are eligible for free or reduced-price lunch.

These attributes are both a result of, and a contributor to, an extensive history of racial and socioeconomic integration in JCPS that began with legal enforcement but continues as a result of the commitment of district leaders and community members.

History of School Integration Efforts in JCPS

The very existence of the joint city-county school district is rooted in enforced desegregation decisions, yet today JCPS maintains a voluntary and ongoing commitment to school diversity. After a desegregation order by the 6th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals, the once-separate city and county school systems merged and adopted a single desegregation plan in 1974.[2] This mandatory plan continued through 1978 when the courts ended active oversight.

Although the decrease in court supervision of desegregation orders precipitated a period of resegregation in other districts across the nation, JCPS persisted in its integration efforts. Even after mandatory action ended, it maintained support for ensuring racial and economic diversity and employed a zone system with guidelines for a targeted range of African American enrollment in each of its schools.[3]

In 1991, the system adopted "Project Renaissance," a managed choice plan that emphasized parental choice and racial composition guidelines at each school level. According to a new book focused on the long-term integration efforts of JCPS and other major school systems, "Project Renaissance represented the beginning of extensive controlled choice in the student assignment plan. Controlled choice asked families to rank a set of school choices, with the district making the final assignment decisions in service of creating racially diverse schools."[4]

This report can be found online at: https://tcf.org/content/report/jefferson-county-public-schools/

Throughout the late 1990s and early 2000s, the system repeatedly refined its approach to balancing choice with diversity guidelines. The district's plan evolved in response to a series of lawsuits filed by both black parents and white parents concerned about the racial limits on enrollment. The student assignment plan withstood these challenges with some modifications until a JCPS parent petition merged with a Seattle case to become the U.S. Supreme Court case *Parents Involved in Community Schools v. Seattle School District No. 1* (PICS).[5]

The 2007 PICS decision prompted system leaders to adjust methods once again. According to Dr. Dena Dossett, the JCPS Chief of Data Management, Planning and Program Evaluation, "After PICS, the school board committed to looking at diversity through multiple factors including race, income, and educational attainment."[6] The revised student assignment plan of 2008 established regional clusters with a minority composition of more than 48 percent and set ranges of school representation from each cluster. This plan once again faced court challenges from 2010–2012 until upheld by the Kentucky Supreme Court.[7] In 2011,the district undertook a revision initiated by the previous superintendent and school board and contracted with Gary Orfield and Erica Frankenberg to help review the plan with a goal of increasing efficiency and effectiveness and reducing "excessive" transportation times while maintaining a diverse system.[8]

The Current Plan

JCPS's present-day student assignment plan strives to balance the dual goals of providing family choice among school options with diversity in school enrollment. To do so at the elementary level, the district has categorized every census block within its geographic boundaries based upon that area's average household income, percentage of white residents, and educational attainment (see Figure 1). Based upon the number of students attending a school from each of those three categories, each school receives a diversity index rating, with a goal to keep each school's enrollment within an index range from 1.4 to 2.5.

Families of elementary students may choose from schools within a regional cluster or magnet schools that enroll students district-wide. The district then assigns students to schools based upon the family preference ratings and the target school diversity index range. Alana Semuels described the approach in a profile in *The Atlantic* on March 27, 2015, "Parents fill out an application listing their preferences for certain schools in the cluster, and the district assigns students to certain schools in order to achieve diversity goals... Parents can appeal the school assignments, but have no guarantee of getting their top choice. They can also apply for magnet schools and special programs such as Spanish-language immersion."[9]

Table 1. Jefferson County Public Schools Diversity Index

	Category 1	Category 2	Category 3
Income	Less than $42,000	$42,000-$62,000	More than $62,000
Percent White	Less than 73%	73-88%	More than 88%
Education Attainment (6 point scale)	Up to an associate's degree (Less than 3.5)	College courses beyond an associate's degree (3.5-3.7)	College courses up to a bachelor's degree and beyond (More than 3.7)

Note: Each student is classified as a category 1, 2, or 3, based on the category of the block group in which the student resides. A School's diversity index is calculated as a weighted average of the number of students who attend from each diversity category. The district's goal is for each school's diversity index to fall within the range of 1.4 to 2.5.

Source: Dena Dossett, Chief of Data Management, Planning and Program Evaluation, Jefferson County Public Schools.

At the secondary level, students are assigned to a school of residence within regional clusters, which have been drawn to maximize the diversity of those neighborhoods.

Transportation has long been an important component of school integration efforts in the district—one that can prove logistically challenging and expensive; however, the most recent Student Assignment Plan changes have increased transportation efficiency and reduced the average ride time, as well as the numbers of buses and routes (see Figure 2). The current program involves the transportation of 69,000 students on 962 buses.[10]

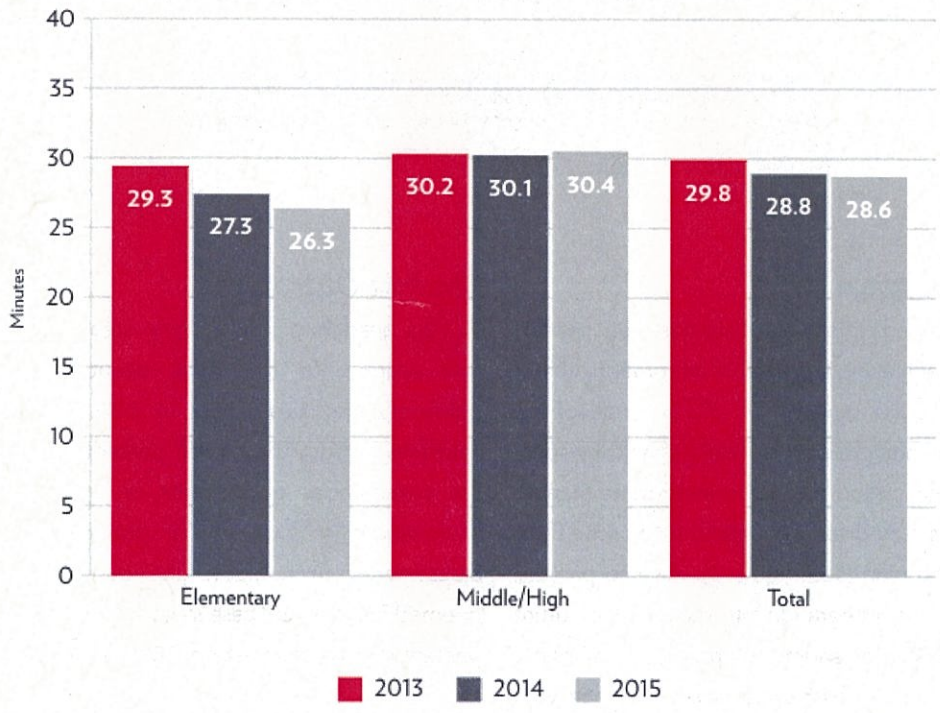
Impact on Integration and Student Outcomes

The sustained efforts to support school integration in JCPS have resulted not only in more integrated schools but in high levels of parent satisfaction, and better outcomes for students.

More Integrated Schools

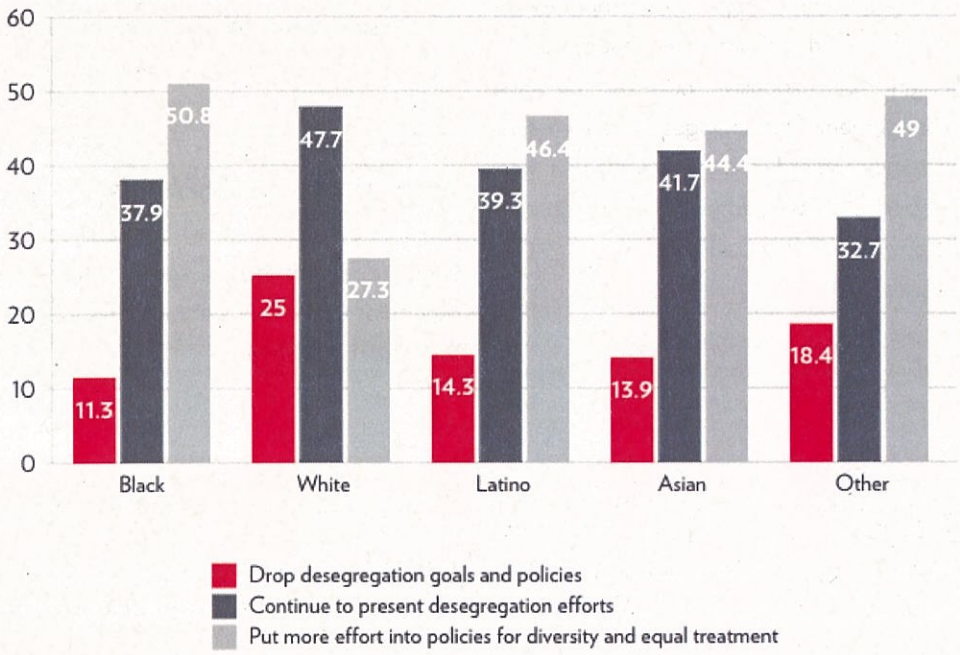
According to Dossett, all but fourteen of its 134 schools (which does not include special/alternative programs with other placement requirements) has a Diversity Index within the district guidelines.

FIGURE 1. AVERAGE RIDE TIME FOR JCPS



Source: Dena Dossett, Chief of Data Management, Planning and Program Evaluation, Jefferson County Public Schools.

FIGURE 1. PARENT SUPPORT FOR SCHOOL INTEGRATION IN JEFFERSON COUNTY



Source: Gary Orfield and Erica Frankenberg, Experiencing Integration in Louisville: How Parents and Students See the Gains and Challenges, The Civil Rights Project, University of California-Los Angeles, January 2011.

Community Support

JCPS has also sustained high levels of support from parents and students while achieving this level of integration. Under the current system, 90 percent of JCPS kindergarten families receive their first choice of schools when they apply during the application period. In a 2011 survey, more than 80 percent of students supported continuing with some form of school integration plan (see Figure 3). Among parents, support for continuing integration efforts into the future far outweighed support for ending the policies. In addition, most expressed satisfaction with the existing approach, with 69 percent indicating they were satisfied with their child's school assignment, 87 percent indicating they were satisfied with the quality of their child's education, and more than 90 percent of parents agreeing that diverse schools provide educational benefits for their children.[11]

Student Outcomes

JCPS's academic results show steady progress over the four years since the most recent student assignment policy changes. From 2012 to 2015, the district has seen increases in both the overall percentages of students and the percentages of students in "gap" groups receiving designations of proficient or distinguished on statewide assessments. In addition, the percentages of students deemed "college and career ready" nearly doubled—from 32 percent to 63 percent—from 2011 to 2015.[12]

To determine additional outcomes for students beyond traditional academic measures, one report looked to the students themselves for answers.[13] In 2011, researchers surveyed over 10 percent of the JCPS population of high school juniors, well over 1,000 students who had

experienced the evolution of the system's approach to integration over the course of their K–12 education. Many of these students expressed that their JCPS experience had prepared them for numerous challenges they would face in life after high school, including 64 percent of white students and 68 percent of black students who expressed being "very comfortable" "discussing controversial issues related to race," and 95 percent who expressed feeling either "very prepared" or "somewhat prepared" "to work and live in diverse settings." Summarizing these and other findings from the student surveys, researcher Gary Orfield noted, "Perhaps the most encouraging evidence is the way the students see how the schools are preparing them effectively for the kind of (multicultural) society in which they are going to live and work."[14]

Integration as School Turnaround

The wide-ranging benefits can also be seen at the school level in the opportunities that integration has created to boost enrollment and improve school culture and student performance at struggling schools. Lincoln Performing Arts School in JCPS offers one example of what can be achieved at the school level with district support for diversity, equity, and inclusion. A thriving school with 560 students in grades K–5 in the most recent school year, it's difficult to imagine that it once had more seats than applicants and test scores among the lowest in Kentucky. Located in a commercial part of downtown Louisville without a large neighborhood feeder population, Lincoln now draws students from every zip code and is projected for the 2016–2017 school year to have a population with 68 percent of students receiving Free or Reduced Lunch, 20 percent English Language Learners, and a dozen different home languages represented.[15]

The path to this successful growth and diversity wasn't simple. Susan French-Epps, Lincoln's principal, has been with JCPS for twenty-seven years and principal of Lincoln Performing Arts School since 2011. It took Susan's seventeen previous years of turnaround experience and a combination of additional ingredients to bring the school back from the brink of closure. The district directed resources to the school to create a performing arts magnet with a focus on drama, dance, and music. The principal focused her hiring efforts on staff members who shared the vision and mission for an integrated arts program. Together, they infused the performing arts into its pedagogy, using the arts not as a supplement to academics but as a vehicle for learning and gaining knowledge.

To leverage the choice system, French-Epps and her assistant principal worked hard to market the revitalized program to parents and community members. They sent out a letter of introduction seeking members for a school advisory council and "hit the pavement and walked the street, handing out the letter and asking for their help," the principal recalls. "We spent a year on it. We sent letters to existing families, began to market on social media, hosted booths and community events, visited daycares, and met with families. It was exhausting."[16] But the team's efforts paid off with enrollment as well as partnerships with families, businesses, and arts organizations that have flourished over the past five years.

Getting parents in the door was only part of the success equation. The school strives to have leaders and staff members who are role models reflective of the students' backgrounds. "It's critical for students of color to see successful people who look like them," the principal says.[17] Amidst challenges in increasing staff diversity through the traditional applicant pipeline, the current staff is committed to ongoing training to meet the needs of all students. A volunteer program for fathers and an "adopt a granny" program also gets diverse stakeholders into the school. Ongoing system-level supports continue, and the principal confirms that it is essential "to have support at the district level and autonomy to make decisions that will work for your school—I have had wonderful district leadership in my corner."[18]

All of these factors have produced positive results for student achievement, and more. Over the last four years, the school showed an increase in the percentage of students scoring "proficient" or "distinguished" on state assessments in Reading and Math from 21 percent in 2012 to 46 percent in 2015, and it met its Annual Measurable Objectives of No Child Left Behind every year. French-Epps says, "When we began to see the fruits of our labor and saw dramatic

increases in results, we began to gain respect and notoriety... now we have a waiting list of over 300."

The diverse student body gives the school a diversity index of 1.89, a number that falls within the district's target range of 1.4 to 2.5. This diversity index thus provides parameters that should prevent enrollment from concentrating students from homogenous social networks or residential areas by pulling in students from neighborhoods of varying income, racial composition, and family educational attainment levels.

Next Steps

While legal challenges have receded, other challenges require continual planning and consideration.

Managing Demographic and Policy Changes

Family mobility remains an issue which commands the attention of school personnel. "A couple of hundred (students) move in and out of school every day," notes Dossett.[19] The system also must keep up with steady growth and changing demographics. It is now a "majority minority" district with the total number of students from racial minority categories exceeding the total number of white students. In addition, the system works to ensure equity and quality for rising numbers of low-income students and English Language Learners.

The district also stays attuned to state and local changes, such as a push by the governor for first-time enabling legislation for charter schools. "Introducing a new variable like that into the district certainly would have an impact on a large urban district like ours," says Dossett.[20]

Balancing Interests and Priorities

Another focus area is the district's strategic planning process, Vision 2020, which was adopted in December 2015. It centers on six guiding principles, some of which may impact one another. Dossett gives an example: "If we increase from 90 to 95 percent of families getting their first choice of schools, that could mean diversity suffers." According to Dossett, "it's about maintaining a balance between guiding principles."[21]

This strategic plan, which Dosset deems "more of a revolutionary than evolutionary plan," developed from a series of community meetings and conversations around how the education system can best develop students for their futures. "It centered on 'Who do we want our children to be?' more than just 'What do we want them to do?'" she explains.[22] Through this process, the system will consider multiple perspectives as it looks at enrollment by school as well as population shifts across the entire geographic area. Dossett notes, "This board was very thoughtful about making sure that access to choice remains a priority."[23] Several related strategies, such as improving communication and empowering families, also could enhance integrated schools. Dossett explains one innovative example: "We now have a bus, equipped with laptops and Internet access, that travels to neighborhoods to serve families who may need extra help registering for schools." And the new tool is paying off: "Over the last few years, we have served hundreds of families on the bus."[24]

Other potential steps for JCPS include adding more magnet schools to its managed choice system, as suggested by consultant Gary Orfield of the Civil Rights Project at UCLA. As a steering committee works through the magnet school recommendations, the group will undertake harder conversations on issues which could impact equity such as whether to establish entrance criteria for the magnets. Dossett isn't certain where these conversations will lead, but she remains optimistic: "There's a wide range of beliefs about how to preserve flagship schools and provide equitable access. Not everyone is on the same page about these issues but there is a nice respect for all members having a voice."[25]

Maintaining Support

District leaders recognize buy-in from school and community stakeholders as a key to the sustainability of the JCPS student assignment plan. Thus, as Dossett says, "we continue to work on educating the public and empowering families around the choice system."[26] For families, she notes, an important message is that "Kids are different, and what works for one might not work for another."[27] For

community members, collecting and sharing data increases understanding. "Seventy percent of our residents don't have school-age kids, so that's a big number of people not engaged as parents. Their knowledge is often from when they were in school, and things have changed."[28] For example, when those not involved with the system assert that families only want neighborhood schools, the district relays that close to 48 percent of incoming kindergarten families choose a school outside of their neighborhood.

The JCPS team also keeps up with developments in other locales. They follow the progress of other large systems and keep in touch with leaders working on issues of choice, diversity, and access to quality. JCPS seems to recognize that change just might be the status quo: "A lot of things happening at the same time could have an impact at how we look at diversity in our district, but the hopeful piece is that we'll be able to balance perspectives and needs."[29]

In the years since the district merger, national media and scholarly attention continues to shine a light on the long path of school integration in JCPS, illustrating what occurs when school and community leaders remain dedicated to providing its students with the benefits of integrated schools. They do so because: "We see community-wide pride in our integration and diversity plan...we recognize the value in that."[30] This system's perseverance leads many to view it as a North star that can guide others through a constellation of issues by balancing choice with equity to ensure diversity. By continuing its trajectory of commitment, the system can remain a bright example of preparing all students in the integrated, equitable, and stimulating learning environments they need and deserve.

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THE CENTURY FOUNDATION

New York City Public Schools: Small Steps in the Biggest District

OCTOBER 14, 2016 — SUCHI SAXENA

New York City is the largest public school district in the United States, enrolling a socioeconomically and racially diverse student population of more than 1.1 million students in over 1,800 schools[1] across five boroughs and thirty-two geographic school districts. As of 2015, citywide student demographics[2] were 27.1 percent Black, 15.5 percent Asian, 40.5 percent Hispanic, 14.8 percent white, and 2.1 percent identified as "other." Nearly 77 percent of students were classified as living in poverty,[3] while 12.5 percent were identified as English language learners, and 18.7 percent as students with disabilities. Although New York City as a whole contains a diverse student population, the composition of the NYC schools student body vary significantly across the city's five boroughs. Within the Bronx, Hispanics make up the biggest proportion of students (61.7 percent), as do students living in poverty (87.9 percent). Among the five boroughs, Manhattan has the second-highest percentage of Hispanic students (45.4 percent) and the second-lowest percentage of students living in poverty (68.8 percent). Queens has the highest representation of Asian students (27.9 percent), Brooklyn has the highest proportion of black students (38.1 percent), and nearly half of Staten Island students are white (47.9 percent).[4]

Given the size and complexities of New York City and its public schools, resolving systemic segregation may defy any single strategy. After years of virtually no movement toward school integration, New York City officials have taken preliminary steps to make diversity a consideration in more of the district's policies.

History of School Integration Efforts in New York City

Despite a long history of desegregation advocacy in the post-*Brown v. Board* era, economic and racial segregation have deepened across NYC schools in recent decades.[5] A 2012 analysis highlighted extreme racial isolation in NYC schools, with more than half of schools found to have hyper-segregated black and Hispanic student enrollments of 90 percent or more, and with racial isolation of black students increasing even as residential segregation in the city was declining.[6] In 2014, a report from the Civil Rights Project at UCLA identified New York City as one of the most segregated school systems in the nation.[7] This research highlighted a considerable decline between 1989 and 2010 in white student enrollment rates, a significant increase

This report can be found online at: https://tcf.org/content/report/new-york-city-public-schools/

in majority-minority schools from less than 50 percent of schools in 1989 to almost two-thirds of schools in 2010, a sharp 70 percent increase in racially hyper-segregated schools, and the compounding of racial and economic segregation.[8] A 2016 New School report revealed that New York City elementary schools have remained segregated even as neighborhoods have diversified.[9]

In addition, the city's elite specialized high schools, the most notable of which are Stuyvesant High School and the Bronx High School of Science, have disproportionately low and declining black and Hispanic admission rates. Admission to the eight specialized schools is determined by performance on the Specialized High School Admissions Test, a lengthy multiple-choice exam.[10] In 2015, only 4.1 percent of specialized high school admitted students were black and 6.1 percent were Hispanic.[11] In 2012, the NAACP Legal Defense and Education Fund filed a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education claiming racial bias in the specialized high school admissions process.[12] Rejecting previous efforts to replace the multiple choice exam with a multiple-measures admissions model,[13] state legislators and city officials offered improved test preparation to students from underrepresented middle schools and other modest initiatives to improve access to the specialized high schools in 2015.[14]

In recent years, a number of community advocates have raised awareness of the problem of school segregation and have pushed the New York City Department of Education to enact better policies to encourage school diversity. In October 2015, with support from NYC Councilmen Brad Lander and Ritchie Torres, grassroots activists and advocacy organizations—including IntegrateNYC4me (a Bronx-based student and teacher group), Middle School Parents for Equity, and NY Appleseed—joined with a handful of Community Education Council members and local politicians to present NYC Schools Chancellor Carmen Fariña a set of seven recommendations to desegregate NYC schools. These recommendations included formalizing a commitment to diversity, changing school admissions policies and collaborating on new enrollment systems.[15]

Despite this mounting pressure from community organizations and local leaders, Department of Education leadership has largely resisted any commitment to the politically contentious work of systematically revamping neighborhood school zones or the admissions policies that have contributed to citywide school segregation. NYC Schools Chancellor Carmen Fariña was criticized in October 2015[16] for declaring, "You don't need to have diversity within one building," as well as promoting a pen-pal system between students attending segregated schools as a racial integration remedy.[17] Several months later, Fariña named school diversity as one of her top priorities and said she hoped to see solutions to NYC school segregation develop "organically" and not from central mandates.[18]

The Current Plan

While systemic progress has been slow, New York City officials, lawmakers, and community leaders have begun to take some smaller steps to support school integration.

- **Pilot Admissions Program.** New York City Mayor Bill de Blasio and Chancellor Fariña have promoted a modest set of innovations developed by school and community leaders to support desegregation efforts, including allowing schools to pilot enrollment practices and lottery systems that reserve a specific percentage of seats for incoming students who qualify for free and reduced lunch, are classified as English Language Learners, or are in the child welfare system.[19] This policy experiment, first extended in November 2015 to seven elementary schools whose leadership had advocated for this change, was expanded in Spring 2016 to any NYC school that wished to apply.

- **Rezoning.** The Department of Education also attempted to rezone a handful of elementary schools in Manhattan and Brooklyn as a solution to overcrowding and in promotion of better diversity across schools. While rezoning discussions continue in Manhattan's District 3, the rezoning proposal for two schools in Brooklyn's District 13 were approved in early 2016 with mixed results: P.S. 307, which currently enrolls

a student body that is roughly 90 percent black and Latino and 75 percent low-income, stands to become more diverse; but nearby P.S. 8, where two-thirds of students were white or Asian and just 14 percent were low-income, will likely become more affluent and less racially diverse.[20]

- **Controlled Choice Student Assignment Plans.** In addition, in 2015, New York State awarded eight NYC high-poverty schools federal Socioeconomic Integration Pilot Program grants of $1.25 million to increase diversity and improve admissions practices.[21] Relatedly, local leadership in Districts 1 and 3 in Manhattan, and District 13 in Brooklyn, have been working to design and propose new controlled-choice student-assignment plans to desegregate schools within each district.[22]

- **Diversity Reporting.** Also in 2015, city lawmakers passed the School Diversity Accountability Act, requiring the department to regularly report out demographic data and progress towards diversity at the school and district levels.[23] The first report issued in December 2015 highlighted modest progress made under multiple strategies, from promoting dual-language programming to removing academic screening at middle schools to setting up homeless student support centers.[24]

Impact on Integration and Student Outcomes

It is too soon to gauge what impact the new pilot admissions program, and still emerging rezoning and controlled choice student assignment plans, will have on school diversity. However, early evidence indicates that some progress has been made in diversifying the incoming classes at the initial pilot schools.[25] The seven pilot schools met or exceeded almost all of their admissions offer targets.[26] One of those schools, The Academy of Arts and Letters in Fort Greene, Brooklyn, expected a nearly four-fold increase in the percentage of incoming kindergarten students who qualify for free and reduced lunch. The Castle Bridge School in northern Manhattan fell three points short of its ten percent target for students of incarcerated parents, though school leadership expressed confidence this shortfall would be quickly overcome.[27]

"I'm very pleased with the direction we're heading in," said Amanda Wiss, a Brooklyn District 13 resident and Arts & Letters parent. "Building our commitment to diversity, understanding not everyone is like you is really critical to becoming a respectful, caring community. It's how kids begin to learn about each other, care about each other, it just becomes routine."

Next Steps

In a July 2016 interview with Politico New York, Fariña expressed a willingness to address racial inequality in NYC Schools as "the elephant in the room" and pledged that diversity would be a major focus of her leadership over the coming year.[28] In September 2016, Fariña said these efforts would include broader attention to school rezoning and aggressive public engagement. "I get resistance to a lot of things," the Chancellor stated. "The idea is to have a moral compass and then go out there, and sell it, sell it and sell it."[29]

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THE CENTURY FOUNDATION

Stamford Public Schools: From Desegregated Schools to Integrated Classrooms

OCTOBER 14, 2016 — HALLEY POTTER

Located in southwestern Connecticut, about forty miles from New York City, Stamford is a relatively diverse community located in an affluent state and region. Median household income for the city's 129,000 residents is roughly $77,000—slightly above the state average but only about half that of neighboring Greenwich. Ten percent of the population is living at or below the poverty line. And in a state that is 71 percent white, only 53 percent of Stamford residents are white.[1]

Enrollment in Stamford Public Schools reflects this diversity. In the 2015–16 school year, the district enrolled roughly 16,000 students. Of those, 40 percent were Hispanic, 32 percent white, 18 percent black, 9 percent Asian, and 2 percent two or more races. Just over half (52 percent) of students were eligible for free or reduced-price lunch, 13 percent of students were English language learners, and 12 percent of students had special needs.[2]

In contrast with many northeastern cities, Stamford has shown remarkable success maintaining racially and socioeconomically desegregated schools thanks to strong district policies and state laws that date back to the 1960s and 1970s. Over the past decade, the district has also committed to integrating classrooms through de-tracking and successfully reduced achievement gaps while increasing overall test scores.

History of School Integration Efforts in Stamford

Stamford's progress promoting diversity and equity in public schools over the past fifty years is the result of at least three different efforts: a state law that reinforced the goal of racial integration, district policies to desegregate schools in the 1960s and 1970s, and the district's push for de-tracking in the late 2000s.

Connecticut's Racial Imbalance Law

In 1969, Connecticut enacted a law requiring all public schools to be racially balanced, falling within a defined range of district average enrollment of minority students.[3] And after a delay of eleven years, the state issued regulations for implementing the law in 1980.[4] Several other states passed similar laws over the years—including California, Connecticut, Illinois, Massachusetts, Minnesota, New Jersey, New York, and Pennsylvania—but Connecticut's law is one of the strongest and is still in place.[5]

This report can be found online at: https://tcf.org/content/report/stamford-public-schools/

In its current form, the law requires each district in the state to report the racial composition of the teaching staff and the percentage of minority (non-white, non-Hispanic) students and students eligible for free or reduced-price lunch in each of its schools. Any school in which minority enrollment is more than 25 percentage points above or below the district average for those grade levels is deemed "racially imbalanced," and schools that fall outside a 15 percentage point range from the district average are cited for "impending racial imbalance." Districts must submit plans for addressing the imbalance, which are approved and monitored by the state.[6]

While Stamford's desegregation efforts predate this law and are more robust, the state context further supports and justifies the district's policies.

Desegregating Stamford Schools

Stamford began voluntarily racially desegregating schools in the early 1960s. In 1962, Stamford's Board of Education developed a plan to desegregate the district's two high schools. Then in 1967–1968, the board created a new attendance plan to desegregated middle schools. Finally, in 1972, the board voted unanimously for a new policy to integrate all schools in the district, including elementary schools, by setting a goal of having the percentage of minority students at each school fall within plus or minus 10 percentage points of the district average. The district was to achieve this goal by regularly reviewing and adjusting school attendance zones and creating magnet schools that could draw students from multiple neighborhoods.[7]

A 1977 report by the Connecticut Advisory Committee to the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights found that the Stamford Board of Education had successfully developed and implemented plans to create racial balance in schools. The report credited the board, school staff, and community members for committing to the goals of integration.[8] While the NAACP's efforts monitoring school segregation in Stamford helped to spur initial school desegregation efforts, district leaders actively carried this work forward. Perhaps as a result of this strong district leadership, school integration in Stamford was a relatively smooth political process, with no sizable pattern of white flight from the district.[9]

Stamford's communities of color, however, were not well represented in these early discussions that shaped desegregation policies. District leaders and school staff in Stamford were largely white, and the district's efforts to engage the local community in this process focused mostly on white residents.[10] Already in 1977, the Advisory Committee's report noted that the underrepresentation of minority leadership, staff, and teachers was "one of the most serious problems in the school system" and pointed out ways that students of color were receiving lower-quality instruction than white peers in the same schools.[11] However, it would take until thirty years later for the school district to prioritize engaging communities of color and addressing within-school inequities.

De-tracking Classes

Stamford has a long history of tracking students based on performance into different levels for core academic classes. In the early 1960s, middle schoolers in the district were sorted into fifteen different groups based on ability. When the board passed a plan to desegregate middle schools in the late 1960s, Stamford reduced the number of tracks to four but made no other efforts to address racial or economic stratification within these groups.[12]

Already in the 1970s, experts advised Stamford of the harmful effects of this system. The 1977 Advisory Committee report highlighted academic tracking as an impediment to equity in the district. "Ability grouping as it now operates tends to resegregate the school system and reinforce feelings of inadequacy in minority students in the middle and high schools," the Committee concluded. "To the extent that it is educationally feasible, the school board should take steps to eliminate ability grouping at all educational levels."[13] Nevertheless, by the time that Joshua Starr became superintendent of Stamford Public Schools in 2005—nearly three decades later—tracking in the district had only grown more entrenched. When Starr arrived in Stamford, middle schools in the district had four or five academic tracks.

Students were assigned to tracks at the beginning of their sixth grade year based on a numerical score derived from a number of different standardized tests. They stayed in that group for all subjects, for the entire year, and usually throughout all of middle school. Students who had been in lower tracks in middle school typically ended up in lower-level courses in high school. Some elementary schools had also begun separating students out by reading group levels starting in third grade.[14]

Starr made de-tracking the central policy goal of his tenure. "I knew that the major issue facing the district was the tracking of students," he reflected. "I knew from day one that that was the work, and I started laying the groundwork for it."[15] Starr began highlighting student achievement data that clearly showed black and Hispanic students in the district were not receiving the same quality education as their white and Asian peers. He framed de-tracking as part of a bigger effort to improve teaching and learning. "It was about whether all kids were getting the instruction they needed to be prepared for the 21st century."[16] During the first few years of Starr's leadership, the district began a major teacher training initiative to improve instruction in core subjects and equip teachers with the tools to differentiate their lessons, reaching students with different skill levels.[17]

Whereas communities of color were often missing from the school desegregation discussions of the 1960s and 1970s, Starr made a concerted effort to reach out to the black and Latino community. Many parents and community members who had never come to school board meetings before showed up to listen to and participate in the discussions about de-tracking. At one school board meeting, several Stamford teachers who had also been students in Stamford talked about how they had been tracked, how terrible it was for them as students, and how much they hated it as teachers.[18]

By 2009, the district had created the instructional capacity, and Starr had built the political support, needed to tackle the issue. Starr recalls that during his fourth year with the district, when he announced in his opening day speech, "We are going to eliminate tracking this year," that "people stood up and applauded, which had never happened before."[19] Stamford began reducing the number of academic tracks and creating pathways to move more students into high-level courses.[20] In 2010, the GE Foundation gave Stamford a grant of $10.5 million dollars, adding to an earlier award of $15.3 million, with continuing de-tracking efforts as one of the specific projects to be funded.[21]

The Current Plan

As a result of these efforts spanning five decades, Stamford currently has a robust policy to desegregate schools and a number of efforts in place to integrate classrooms by reducing academic tracking.

Integrating Schools

In 2007, in response to the U.S. Supreme Court decision in Parents Involved in Community Schools, which limited school districts' ability to consider students' individual race in school assignments, Stamford revised its integration policy to be based on educational need rather than race.[22] Under the current policy, Stamford sets a goal for all schools in the district to fall within plus or minus 10 percentage points of the district average enrollment of disadvantaged students (defined as students receiving free and reduced-price lunch, English language learners, and students living in income-restricted housing).[23] The district achieves this goal by frequently reexamining attendance boundaries for neighborhood schools and weighting magnet school lotteries by both educational disadvantage (balancing the percentage of disadvantaged students at each school) and geographic zone (allowing preference for students from certain zones where neighborhood schools are overenrolled or imbalanced).[24]

Integrating Classrooms

Under Starr's leadership, Stamford eliminated ability grouping in elementary school classes; replaced the middle school system of five rigid tracks with a system of two flexible levels, allowing students to enroll in different levels for different subjects and move into the higher level mid-year;

and created open access to honors and AP classes in high school.[25] The district is continuing to work on moving more middle and high school students into higher level classes.[26]

Impact on Integration and Student Outcomes

Stamford has met its integration goal for a majority of its schools and has also succeeded in increasing representation of minority students in high-level classes, boosting overall academic achievement, and reducing achievement gaps.

Diversity in Schools and Classrooms

In the 2015–2016 school year, eighteen of Stamford's twenty schools fell within the 10 percentage point goal for enrollment of disadvantaged students (with 54 percent of students qualifying as disadvantaged district-wide).[27] The two schools that missed the goal were each 14 percentage points below the district average, and one of those schools made progress compared to the previous year in getting closer to the district average.[28] All Stamford schools also met the state desegregation standard for enrolling minority students in 2015–2016. Statewide that year, five schools were cited for racial imbalance and twenty-six schools were cited for impending racial imbalance.[29]

Stamford has also seen an increase in racial diversity in high-level courses as a result of de-tracking efforts. From 2010 to 2014, the percentage of Stamford's black and Hispanic students taking AP courses doubled, from 11 percent of black students and 22 percent of Hispanic students taking AP course in 2010 to 29 percent of black students and 43 percent of Hispanic students in 2014 (see Figure 1). (While encouraging, these rates still lag far behind white and Asian students.)

Academic Achievement

Stamford has also shown strong academic achievement while meeting its integration goals. As of fall 2015, Stamford had the highest overall academic performance out of the five largest school districts in Connecticut, and low-income students in the district performed above the state average.[30] Most notably, since Stamford began work on de-tracking and curricular reform, achievement gaps between student subgroups have decreased at the same time that achievement across all groups has increased. Between 2006 and 2013, the percentage of white and Asian students passing state math, reading, and writing exams in grades 3–8 grew by a few percentage points, while the percentage of black and Hispanic students passing state tests rose dramatically. Accordingly, the achievement gap for grades 3–8 between the highest achieving racial subgroup (Asian students) and lowest-achieving racial subgroup (black students) fell by one-third in reading and math, with a modest decrease in writing as well (see Figure 2). Similarly, both low-income students and middle-class students were more likely to pass the state eighth grade math, reading, and writing tests in 2013 than in 2006, while the gap in achievement between the two groups also fell across all three subjects (see Figure 3).

Stamford also saw an increase in graduation rates for all student subgroups by race/ethnicity and by free and reduced-price lunch eligibility from 2010 to 2013. Over that period of time, the gap in graduation rates between the racial/ethnic group with the highest rate (Asian students in 2010, and white students in 2013) and the group with the lowest rate (Hispanic students) fell from 22 percentage points to 14 percentage points. Likewise, the gap in the graduation rates of students eligible for free lunch versus non-eligible students fell from 12 percentage points to 9 percentage points.[31]

While these gaps in student performance are still sizable, Stamford is making progress in closing them.

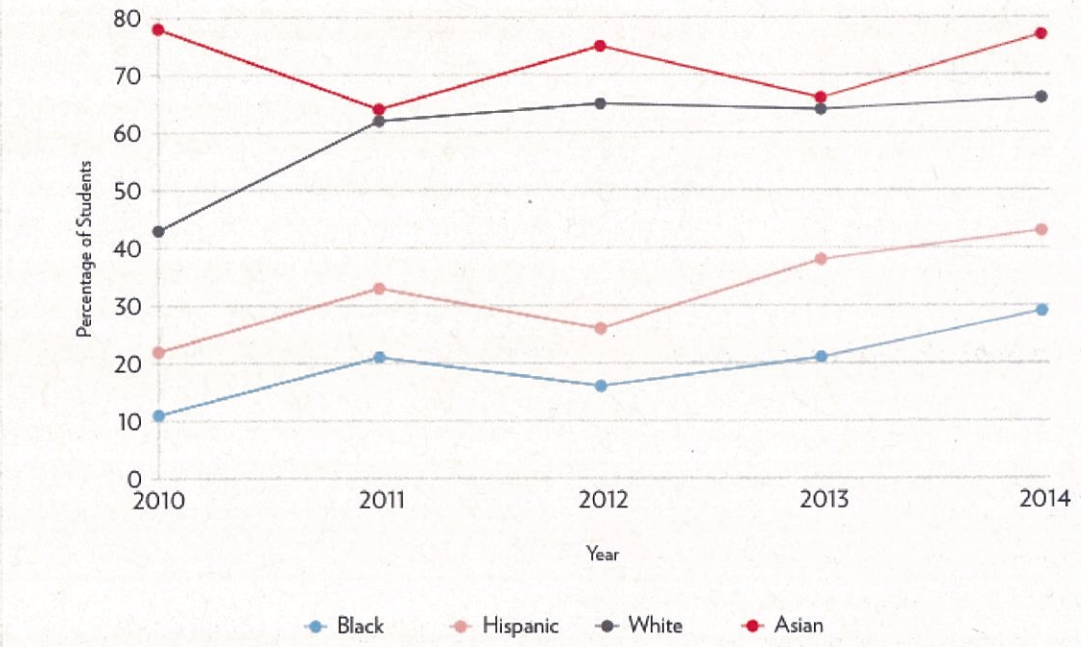
Lessons for Other Districts

Stamford's efforts to desegregate schools and integrate classrooms point to several lessons for other school districts and state policymakers.

Having a Measurable Goal for Integration Is Powerful.

Stamford's policy of having all schools fall within 10

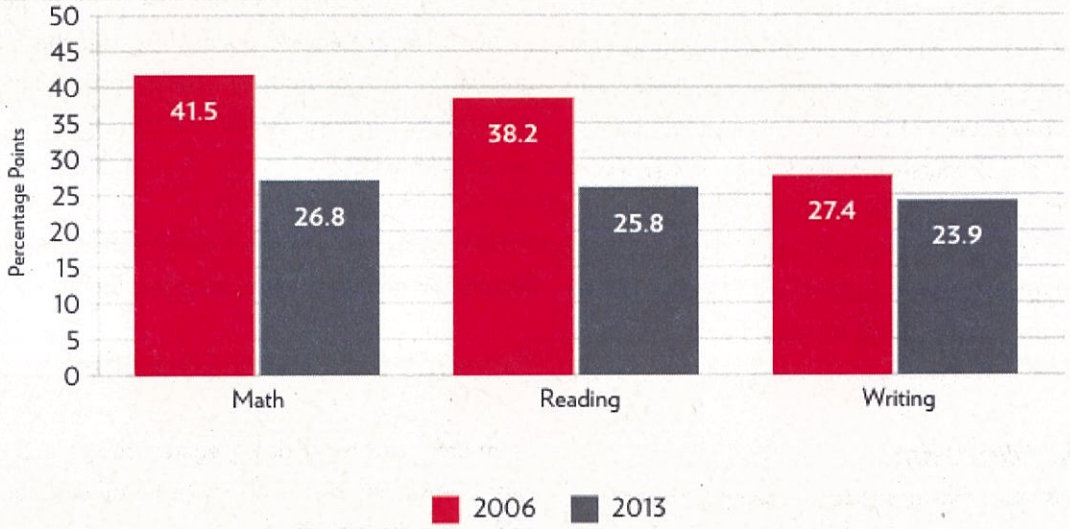
FIGURE 1. PERCENTAGE OF STAMFORD PUBLIC SCHOOL STUDENTS TAKING AP COURSES



Source: Michael Fernandes, "Upward Bound and POD Presentation," Stamford Public Schools, September 9, 2015, http://www.stamfordpublicschools.org/sites/stamfordps/files/uploads/upward_bound_and_pod_presentation_9-11-15.pdf, p. 9.

FIGURE 2. SIZE OF RACIAL ACHIEVEMENT GAP IN STAMFORD PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Grades 3-8

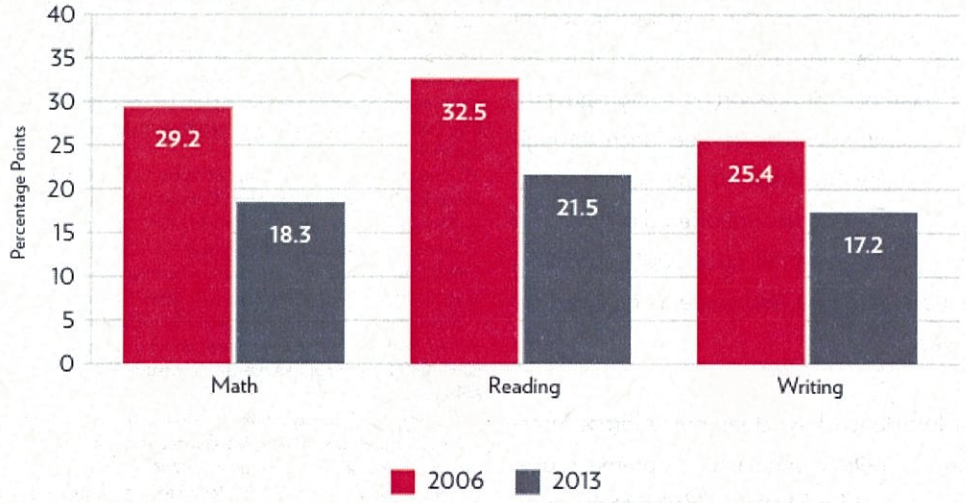


Note: The racial achievement gap is calculated as the percentage point difference in the proportion of students scoring proficient or above on state standardized tests in the highest-scoring racial group (Asian students) versus the lowest-scoring racial group (black students).

Source: Winifred Hamilton, "Presentation to Senior Men's Association of Stamford," Stamford Public Schools, June 20, 2014, http://www.stamfordpublicschools.org/sites/stamfordps/files/uploads/062014_senior_mens_assoc_of_stamford.pdf, p. 8-13.

FIGURE 3. SIZE OF ECONOMIC ACHIEVEMENT GAP IN STAMFORD PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Grade 8



Note: The economic achievement gap is calculated as the percentage point difference in the proportion of students scoring proficient or above on state standardized tests among non-eligible (middle-class) students versus students eligible for free or reduced-price lunch (low-income students).

Source: Connecticut CMT and CAPT Online Reports: Public Summary Performance Reports, Connecticut Master Test, 4th Generation, http://ctreports.com/.

percentage points of the district average for enrollment of disadvantaged students (and earlier, minority students) helped ensure that district leaders and the school board would push forward the enrollment policies needed to create more integrated schools. "Having that hard and fast rule was really powerful," Starr reflected. The 10 percent rule not only kept the district accountable for enrollment policies but also served as a broader statement of the district's commitment to equity that Starr leveraged to promote within-school integration. "It enabled us to push on tracking in ways that I might not have been able to if I didn't have that 10 percent rule."[32]

De-tracking Classes Is an Issue of Equity and Quality.

Stamford's experience demonstrates that desegregating schools is not enough; equity and excellence require integrating classrooms and ensuring that students of all backgrounds have access to rigorous coursework. The district approached the work of de-tracking classes as a question of integration but also as an issue of improving instruction across the board, and Stamford's success in improving performance for all subgroups while reducing achievement gaps reflects that commitment.

State Context Matters.

The success of Stamford's school integration efforts is part of a bigger trend across the state. A 2015 report from the Civil Rights Project found that Connecticut as a whole has made significant progress integrating schools over the past three decades, in contrast with neighboring New York and Massachusetts.[33]

Connecticut's Racial Imbalance Law—and enforcement of that law—is one of the tools that has enabled the state to make progress on integrating schools in recent decades. In racially diverse districts like Stamford, the state law provides a lever for making districts work to keep schools

from becoming racially isolated. However, the segregation between Connecticut districts is an even greater problem than the segregation within them, as is the case nationwide.[34] While Stamford has enough diversity within district boundaries to create socioeconomically and racially diverse schools, the demographics of some the neighboring school districts in the metro area surrounding Stamford illustrate this disparity. For example, Bridgeport is a high-poverty district where all students now receive free lunch through the Community Eligibility Provision of the school meals program, whereas New Canaan has not offered the free and reduced-price meals program at all since 2005, after only sixteen of the district's roughly 4,000 students qualified for the program that year.[35]

While the Racial Imbalance Law does not address inter-district segregation, a 1996 Connecticut Supreme Court ruling does. The court found in *Sheff v. O'Neill* that the racial isolation of black and Hispanic students in Hartford Public Schools, in contrast with the mostly white suburban school districts that surrounded the city, was unconstitutional.[36] A subsequent settlement provided an inter-district integration plan for the Hartford region based on voluntary school choice, and some inter-district transfer programs and magnet schools exist in other areas across the state as well.[37] Expanding these inter-district integration efforts across the state is essential for addressing the extreme segregation that remains between many Connecticut school districts. The next step for promoting integration in Stamford is to augment within-district efforts with more inter-district efforts.

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Notes

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25 Joshua Starr, phone interview by author, September 9, 2016.
26 Winifred Hamilton, "Superintendent's Goals Progress," June 19, 2015, http://www.stamfordpublicschools.org/sites/stamfordps/files/uploads/superintendents_goals_progress_6-19-15.pdf p. 4.
27 It is worth noting, however, that the three charter schools located in Stamford, which are not operated by the district, all have majority-low-income enrollment, ranging from 68 percent of students receiving free and reduced price lunch at Stamford Charter School for Excellence to 85 percent of students eligible for free lunch at Stamford Academy, and majority-black or Hispanic enrollment, ranging from 87 percent black and Hispanic at Stamford Charter School for Excellence to 95 percent black and Hispanic at Trailblazers Academy. (See "EdSight: Insight into Education," Connecticut State Department of Education, http://edsight.ct.gov/

SASPortal/main.do.) This reflects a broader trend for charter schools in the state. (See Robert Cotto and Kenneth Feder, *Choice Watch: Diversity and Access in Connecticut's School Choice Programs,* Connecticut Voices for Children, April 2014, http://www.ctvoices.org/sites/default/files/edu14choicewatchfull.pdf.) It is difficult to compare performance in these three charter schools to that of Stamford's district schools. Two of these schools have low standardized test scores and graduation rates but specifically serve students who struggled in traditional school environments—Trailblazers Academy in grades 6–8, and Stamford Academy in grades 9–12. The third school, Stamford Charter School for Excellence, is a new school that as of fall 2016 only serves students in grades pre-K through 2, so no standardized test scores are available yet.

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New York City Council Education Committee's oversight hearing on "Diversity in New York City Schools:"
Parent Testimony
Tazin Azad
12-07-1017

My name is Tazin Azad, and I am a parent of two District 22 students, at PS 217 and MS 890. I am also a Parent Association member and Title 1 Committee member at those schools. Thank you all for recognizing the reality of segregation in our city's school systems and the inadequate recognition of diversity. I am here to introduce Parents Association/Parents Organizations/Parent Teachers Associations as a viable tool to rectify this issue. I believe the success of desegregation of ours schools and integration of diversity is closely correlated to how well acquainted and integrated parents organizations will be to this process. Parents Association/Parents Organizations/Parent Teachers Associations can achieve this by being instrumental is two way: serving to promote communication with the parent body and serving to promote communication to the community at large.

PS 217 met all the trademarks of a diverse school. The student body consisted to more than two dozen language and dialect speakers, from an array of different ethnicities and socioeconomic statuses. Unfortunately, the school's educational experience and its parents association did not emulate that diversity. The academics and parent involvement had been disproportionately represented by the white population, while non-white community consistently sustained average or below grade ELA, Math scores and minimal integration. Growing distrust over unsatisfactory response from the school resulted in parents convening in what we called the Community Engagement Committee. The sole purpose of this committee was to address the silent segregation of our student body and the under represented diversity in 217. Within a few years of targeted effort by parents to communicate effectively to ALL parents in our school, has now resulted in what we are proud to call a truly diverse school, where immigrant families and families of color are involved leadership roles and are actively instilling their perspective into the educational experience of PS 217.

To encourage diversity in our schools, proper representation of all constituents must be attained. PAs can make sure that every family is welcomed into an respectful atmosphere where they can share perspectives and cultures. This means to accommodate families by providing services in preferred languages (other than english), time and location. Parents associations can discover these aspects by understanding the nuances of cultures through one to one conversation, by having language liaisons (from the parent body), surveys etc. In our school, identifying leaders within language clusters who spoke both english and another particular language, who were able to deliver information in that language, be it spoken or written, created invaluable and long lasting connections to families who were previously uninterested. Hearing native languages, at major events coupled with more intimate language breakfasts, suddenly increased parent participation by many folds. Furthermore, Actively recruiting parents of diverse backgrounds to fill positions of decision making bodies (Executive Boards, SLT, CECs etc) will increase the likelihood of discussion of matters that is relevant to all

groups of parents, not just a vocal few. As the school administration receive input from a well representative PA/PO/PTA, they will be more encouraged to respond accordingly to meet the needs all students equally.

A resilient propellant of school segregation is school isolation. This happens when the lack of communication between neighboring schools give rise to individualized communities. Segregation adversely affects communities of color and those that are comprised of immigrant families. While economically stratified or well connected school communities have access to latest resources reap the benefits by moving quickly to implement them into their children's educational experience; marginalized communities suffers stagnation, because of the lack of access to the very same resources. PA/PO/PTAs can easily amend this problem by increasing regular communication to adjacent schools. We have shared our success of language liaisons and language breakfasts to nearby schools, as well as blueprints for 'Know Your Rights' events. I am regularly shaing best methods of communication learned from PS 217 to the newly convened MS 890 administration. Having the reference of success from 217 has allowed us to create benchmarks at the new school. At MS 890, we are adamant in attaining proper representation to meet and exceed those benchmarks and those set by DOE. Sharing of best practices can eliminate the need to 'reinvent the wheel' by struggling schools, which will consequently allow efforts to be directed towards implementing relevant changes within school. Cross communication between parent bodies will empower the everyone to tackle discrepancies and therefore promote student equity.

These two suggestion seems fairly rudimentary which is why it is so appalling that they are not in regular practice. So I request DOE to provide incentives to PA/PTA/PTO's to promote communication. The DOE or partnering organizations can offer 'Diversity' and 'Student Equity' workshops available to ALL parents bodies every year, preferably in various languages. Stipends can be allocated specifically for PAs that do active outreach for certain period of time to neighboring PAs. Undoubtedly, parent communities will value the support of Department of Education in such respects, as it will shows that the volunteer efforts of parents are being recognized and accepted as necessary to educational prosperity.

Parents association serves as a mediator between school administrators and the parent body. PS 217 has benefited directly from parents engaging each other to build communication, trust and diversity. Their assistance can be further used to create connections between other schools, districts, boroughs and so on. As the DOE introduces Equity and Excellence for All: Diversity in New York City's Public Schools, working with parents to promote its initiatives will definitely solidify the prospect of success of creating an equitable educational experience.

TESTIMONY OF
Hebh Jamal, IntegrateNYC

NEW YORK CITY COUNCIL
COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION
December 7, 2017

My name is Hebh Jamal, and I am Director of Public Relations and Chair of the Race and Enrollment Committee for IntegrateNYC. I am also the Youth Policy Fellow for New York Appleseed. IntegrateNYC stands for the 5 R's of real integration: resources, race and enrollment, representation, restorative justice, and relationships. Historically, the integration movement since *Brown vs Board of education* has been defined as the movement of bodies to reach quotas of diversity. Since then, America has dissolved itself from de jure segregation, but it is no surprise that de facto segregation persists to bring us to the reality of today: that NYC has one of the most segregated school systems in the country.

As a NYC high school alumni, I can attest to my experience that school segregation alienates and excludes students from receiving a sound basic education. It does not grant the 1.1 million students the diverse learning environment that can be possible, and further perpetuates the criminalization of Black and Latino students. From metal detectors to the disproportionate suspension rate of students of color vs their white classmates, to the commodification of our education that allows for NYC to have the most competitive high school application process, I urge you to take action in order to reach educational excellence for ALL students.

Although acknowledging that true integration is the achievement of all of the 5 aforementioned R's, I am here to speak on behalf of the Race and Enrollment committee. IntegrateNYC would like to propose that the DOE adopt an alternative admission algorithm for selective high schools that takes into account demographics of diversity. Such an algorithm would increase the opportunity for students with specific demographics such as income level or geographical location or whether or not they're an english language learner. The idea is to be able to create autonomy within the algorithm so that you can shift the demographics depending on what the school is lacking in representation.

In our efforts to develop this algorithm ,we were faced with many difficulties: one of them is the lack of transparency, documentation, and understanding of the applicant pool.

Who is applying to which school and why? In order to have a beneficial conversation about integration and diversity, you have to first understand who's applying where. We hope to see this data included in the next iteration of the School Diversity Accountability Report.

We call on the Mayor and this Council to commit to the 5 R's of real integration as they do diversity work, and to develop further data that opens the conversation beyond current quotas, and attempt to amend the current application process that just further perpetuates segregation in NYC schools.

COMMUNITY EDUCATION COUNCIL DISTRICT 3

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District 3 Community Superintendent

New York City Council, Committee on Education
Hearing on "Diversity in New York City Schools."
Testimony by Kristen Berger, Community Education Council 3
Thursday December 7, 2017

Community Education Council for District 3 (CEC3), represents the Upper West Side and parts of Harlem. Community School District 3, like much of the city, lacks diverse schools. District 3's diverse student body is not reflected in our schools. Our council takes this problem seriously. We commend the Department of Education for stating commitment to diversity and producing a diversity policy. That statement of commitment must be substantiated by strengthening the current Diversity Policy, *Equity and Excellence for All: Diversity in New York City Public Schools*. Our schools need high-level leadership on integration, a commitment to resources, authentic community engagement and greater transparency.

CEC 3 has made equity and diversity real priorities for our district. As a council we made diversity a goal during our historic 2016 rezoning; which rezoned eleven elementary schools on the Upper West Side. We maintained that work with the Harlem School Summit and a Middle School Diversity Symposium in the spring of 2016 and continue the focus through our Equity & Excellence committee while bringing a cross cutting lens on equity and diversity to all of our work.

The City Council is presumed to already be sufficiently aware of the segregation in New York City schools, as *School Diversity Accountability Report* makes apparent. The recently published NYC Independent Budget Office Report finds that "despite the racial diversity of the student body, almost 80 percent of New York City public elementary schools had students from one race in the majority."[i] In District 3 this segregation is seen in many categories. If we look at 'economically disadvantaged' we have a middle school with 100% of its population economically disadvantaged and another with only 6%[ii]. It would be hard to pretend that there is real equity between schools with such profoundly different needs.

There is significant demonstrable research that racial and economic diversity benefits students improving academic performance and providing societal benefits in school[iii]. A 2016 Century Foundation report finds "a growing body of research produced a social science consensus that school integration—by race and by socioeconomic status—is good for children"[iv]

CEC 3 finds a number of specific areas in which the Diversity Policy falls short:

- We need high level **leadership and accountability** from the City to create real integration in our schools. An issue as challenging as school integration requires that visionary holistic leadership is reflected at every level. We have not received any guidance on what authority the School Diversity Advisory Group Advisory Group will have or how they will engage with the community. We are skeptical that an "advisory committee" will necessarily be heeded.

- School integration and true equity require **authentic community engagement.** We fear groups or representatives who maybe cherry picked to represent the "community". Specific engagement must be made with the communities most impacted by education inequity, cross-sector collaboration, shared goals and measurements, and dedicated institutional resources and support. The community must have a leadership role in the discussion from the earliest stages. The CEC offers a valuable avenue to parent engagement when it is sufficiently supported and informed.

- Through the aforementioned community engagement the city needs to introduce **initiatives to address: enrollment, resource allocation, culturally responsive pedagogy and diversifying the workforce.** This is the crux of where real change can happen.

    - Including diversity in rezoning changes (Chancellor's Reg A-185) isn't sufficient in its ability to make the kind of change that is needed to integrate our enormous school system. The process for rezoning is driven at the community level, by the elected parent leaders of CEC's, PTA/PA's, and community groups. Because of this ground level of engagement, discourse often starts more than a year before a vote is taken. Chancellor's Reg A-190 changes, on the other hand, are driven by the DOE, via several administrative departments and lack respectful and thorough engagement at the community level. While improvements in diversity may occur if two schools merge or grades are changed within a school, etc, these changes often lead to greater mistrust and other frustrations in our school districts. **CEC3 believes that the A-190 regulation must closer align to A-185 in order to implement our citywide efforts in diversity.**

    - **The DOE needs to make a serious commitment to leveling the playing field between charter schools and district schools.** This includes addressing access to marketing lists and resource allocation. This division exacerbates the segregation and inequality in our schools.

- In schools segregated by income the resources that parent bodies bring to their schools amplifies the gap between schools and increases inequity, **the tacit acceptance by the city that PTAs will provide substantial supplemental budgets and/or volunteer hours in order to help a school succeed breeds inequity.**

- **The City Council must amend the *School Diversity Accountability Report*** to be more accessible and timely for citizen analysis. It needs to include data on who applied to each screened school or program by racial and socioeconomic status; a more robust measure of socioeconomic status than Free/Reduced Lunch and include data on Charter Schools.

The DOE's Diversity Policy *Equity and Excellence for All: Diversity in New York City Public Schools* is a first step in increasing diversity in NYC's schools. We look forward to working as partners with the DOE to strengthen and develop this policy in order to fulfill the commitment to school diversity and equity. This effort will be enhanced by high-level leadership on integration, a commitment to resources, authentic community engagement and greater transparency.

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[i] New York City Independent Budget Office (2017) Schools Brief: From Grades 3 to 8: Tracing Changes in Achievement Gaps by Race & Gender in New York City Public Schools

[ii] NYSED, 2016 Final- school level data by grade http://www.p12.nysed.gov/irs/statistics/enroll-n-staff/home.html

[iii] Research Brief: School Integration and K-12 Outcomes: An Updated Quick Synthesis of the Social Science Evidence (2016) The National Coalition of School Diversity

[iv] Wells, Fox, and Cordova-Cobo (2016) How Racially Diverse Schools and Classrooms Can Benefit All Students, The Century Foundation

TESTIMONY TO THE EDUCATION COMMITTEE OF THE NEW YORK CITY COUNCIL

DATE: Thursday, December 7, 2017

BY: Ayanna Behin, President of the Community Education Council for District 13 in Brooklyn

* * *

Hello, my name is Ayanna Behin. Three years ago, I testified before this body as a PTA president and attached a report from the Century Foundation for you to read. In it, Halley Potter wrote:

"Most K-12 education reforms are about trying to make "separate but equal" schools for rich and poor work well. The results of these efforts have been discouraging."

At the time, we were advocating for a tool that would allow school principals to use controlled choice to set aside seats for students based on race, economics, and/or ability to address segregation and increase diversity of all kinds in our schools.

Today, I am the President of the Community Education Council for District 13 in Brooklyn. Our District is large and incredibly diverse – racially, economically, and socially. Our schools include children from Bed Stuy, Park Slope, Fort Greene, Clinton Hill, Brooklyn Heights and DUMBO. Like many of the other school districts in New York City, this puts us on the front lines of the mission to consciously desegregate our schools by every metric. For us, this is not just a conversation, it is a daily reality for students and families, for a community that is striving to overcome the mistakes of our past and chart a better course for our future.

As the home of 2 controlled choice schools, we have seen how controlled choice works and we encourage you to keep it as one of many tools to unravel the deliberate institutionalization of racism, classism and sorting of students into winners and losers.

In the 3 years since your last hearing on diversity, we have learned a lot about how deeply entrenched segregation is and how a parent's fears that the "right" K class will lead to the right college for their student while the "wrong" class will lead to a lifetime of poverty and pain continue to perpetuate a system that while flawed is not irredeemable. Our schools are filled with dedicated and talented teachers and administrators, caring and committed families and most importantly children that are eager to learn.

We can desegregate our schools. By continuing to shine a light on the fact that our schools were segregated on purpose and can only become desegregated on purpose. We need to make sure that our definition of diversity remains broad to include diversity in many forms – racial, economic, gender and ability. But, we must make sure that our clear intention to integrate our schools is not diluted by these other goals.

Diversity is not enough, we need anti-racist pedagogy in the classrooms, which starts with teacher training and classroom observation, as well as providing teachers with the tools to teach,

including books. We need to rethink the way that our schools are financed so that our schools are equitably resourced. In our district, parent choice has made the difference in desegregating some of our schools. An admissions process with integration as a factor could speed this along. This must go hand in hand with Schoolwide Enrichment, adding curriculum and pedagogy that makes schools more attractive and helps them do a better job of meeting the needs of a diverse student body is a critical factor that should not be overlooked.

We do not need to reinvent the wheel, the how and why of desegregation has been measured, debated, and detailed. With the authority, tools, and effective oversight, each district should be able to begin implementing an array of desegregation programs today. None of them will be perfect, but they can move us closer to the vision of an equitable and integrated school system that serves the needs of every student well regardless of income level, race or ability. We can build on each success and modify programs as needed to give each child an opportunity to shine.

Thank you for your time.

Good afternoon. My name is Antonia Ferraro. I am a member of CEC15 and PTA Co-President at MS 88 where my eldest attends. I am speaking today on behalf of myself, not CEC15, though I am proud to say our CEC prioritizes equity and diversity—issues that have surfaced at nearly every meeting. The school integration discussion unfolds daily and much of that discussion, unfortunately, revolves around fear.

When my son applied to middle schools three years ago, it was clear this was a Hunger Games-like process in which screening for merit or talent functioned as a proxy for socioeconomic status or race, resulting in schools that do not reflect the demographics of the district as a whole. When you see schools with opposite demographics sitting blocks from one another, if not on the very same block, you realize housing only explains a portion of why our middle schools are segregated.

The fact is in District 15, we have a process that assigns roughly 69% of all white students to just three middle schools and 64% of Hispanics to three different schools. This is due to the inherent design or flaw, of school choice. When parents are instructed to find the best "fit" for their child, they are literally being asked to self-segregate and in doing so, limit their own choices. Choice has ironically led to fewer choices. I recently tried to explain this "choice paradox" to a group of 5th-grade parents at a middle school forum. I was asked a question typical of the fears in my community.

"You're child attends an up-and-coming school. What made you think your child would thrive there?"

In response, I implored the audience to stop viewing schools in real estate terms. I prefer to think of my son's school as the district's best-kept secret thanks to this "up-and-coming" mindset.

As a parent representative, I am tasked with changing mindsets and placating fears. I recently met a boy named Noah at a 6th-grade orientation. He asked a question that stuck with me, *"Are the kids here nice?"* That was all he was looking for in a middle school.

If more parents measured schools by Noah's criterion, I wouldn't be hearing so many resolvable fears surfacing in response to District 15's decision to work with urban planner WXY to better integrate our middle schools. I hear fears that necessary curriculum supports won't be put in place in unscreened environments for G&Ts, ESLs

and IEPs. I hear fears of voices being tokenized and loss of Title One funds. However, District 15's income demographics suggest every school in the district could be Title One. Screening middle schoolers is simply tracking on a grand scale.

But, there is one fear that people seem to be missing. **Did it ever occur to you that if we don't integrate, support for public education will continue to erode and the resource essential to democracy may cease to exist for large swaths of society? Segregation only bolsters the school "choice" movement that threatens to divert funds to vouchers and charters. In the age of DeVos, if we don't use it, we just might lose it!**

I am hopeful WXY can deliver a streamlined middle school process, with fewer forums and school tours, and completely free of auditions, interviews, and tests. By embracing integration, District 15 will be increasing everyone's choices and eliminating a stressful, time-consuming process we all hate!

Statement of Miriam Nunberg
District 15 Parents for Middle School Equity & the Alliance for School Integration and Desegregation
December 7, 2017

My name is Miriam Nunberg. I am a co-founder of District 15 Parents for Middle School Equity and a member of the Alliance for School Integration and Desegregation.

I testify today in opposition to the DOE's current exclusionary assignment practices, and in support of the 5 R's of Integration as defined by the students of IntegrateNYC. Their comprehensive approach goes far beyond the tepid plan set forth by the DOE.

We support middle school student admissions reform in particular; a step with potentially great impact in D15 and elsewhere. Despite D15's racial and socio-economic diversity, our middle schools remain segregated. These public schools screen thousands of 5th graders for academics, along with inherently biased criteria such as attendance and behavior. One must ask why this is an acceptable use of limited resources, and why we allow our public schools to handpick their students, selecting for characteristics so highly correlated with race and socio-economic status.

The result of middle school choice in D15 is that, despite district-wide admissions, the three most competitive schools accept 70% of all white students, over 77% of those scoring Level 4 on the state exams and just 5% of the English Language Learners. In contrast, the three schools attended by 64% of the District's Latino students enroll over 60% of those scoring a Level 1, and 77% of all the English Language Learners. This is classic *de facto* segregation.

A recent study demonstrated that where a student attends middle school significantly impacts where he/she attends high school. Greater middle school equity thus has the potential to transform the high school landscape as well. Yet, the Mayor's current Diversity Plan disappointingly preserves middle school screening and choice, missing an opportunity for integration on the secondary level. The DOE thus continues to prioritize competition and exclusion over equity and inclusion.

To create actual equity, the DOE must adopt the 5 R's, which recognize that real integration requires a new inclusionary vision of student assignment based on cross-sector collaboration, and authentic engagement with the communities most impacted by educational inequity. Integration also means culturally responsive pedagogy, restorative justice, meaningful heterogeneous groupings, diverse hiring, and resource equity.

Additionally, it is crucial that the School Diversity Accountability Act be amended to include applicants to screened schools and programs by racial and socio-economic status, as well as a more robust measure of socioeconomic status than Free/Reduced Lunch and does NOT include all students at Universal Free Lunch schools.

Finally, if the City is serious about integration and equity, it must require high level leadership & accountability from the DOE.

CHARISSE SMITH
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RE: City Council Testimony

Good afternoon Councilmembers and thank you for holding this hearing.

My name is Charisse Smith. I am the proud parent of a 9th grader at Medgar Evers College Preparatory School in Crown Heights, Brooklyn.

I am a strong believer in the need for diverse public schools and see that as something we should all be working towards in the interest of creating quality education for children who are currently stuck in failing schools. I am also a parent and my first concern is ensuring that my son gets the best education possible.

Fortunately at Medgar Evers he is. By nearly ever measure it is one of highest performing schools in the city. Academic performance is double the city average: 84% of students are proficient in reading and 78% are proficient in math. 84% of students take an AP course and almost every student, 98%, graduate.

Based on those stats you might think the Medgar Evers student body looks like Stuyvesant or NEST, but in fact 99% of our students are minority, and 71% come from low-income families. Is it any wonder why in my neighborhood earning a spot at Medgar Evers is seen as a golden ticket – it means college and a world of opportunity.

"Diversity in NYC Public School Plan" the DOE speaks to creating diversity in schools where Black and Brown children would otherwise not have access to the quality education that is being provided within schools and across districts. Except, Medgar Evers Prep is a citywide school. Scholars from 61 different zip codes attend, from backgrounds where Mandarin, Spanish, Creole, Bengali and many other languages are the native languages spoken at home. 9% of Medgar Evers Prep's population has a special need and not one qualified applicant from any neighborhood in the city is prevented from applying to this school.

So I cannot for the life of me understand why Mayor de Blasio is threatening the success of our school by wanting to water down its admissions process. I could understand if the Mayor was making changes to try to improve the quality of education for students like my son, but this effort would clearly hurt them.

The mayor should be trying to replicate Medgar Evers Prep's success in every district in the city, but instead, he's interfering with what's working. It's time for him to get out of our way and get to work fixing schools that need the help.

With so many enormous challenges facing the New York City public school system, it's shocking that the mayor is actively trying to harm such a successful school.

For 16 years, Medgar Evers has had a rigorous admissions process. My son is one of the more than 250 students in his grade who met those requirements and parents want to make sure those standards remain in place.

The Mayor's Department of Education wants to take control of the admissions process through so-called centralized ranking, claiming it will make the process "fair and accessible to everyone." Parents at Medgar Evers fear it will do just the opposite, and this change will undo the longstanding success at this school.

We don't believe other similarly situated schools are being asked to relinquish control of their admissions. In fact, according to its "Diversity in NYC Public School Plan" the DOE plans to eliminate centralized ranking in Districts 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 13, 14 and 15 while putting that same centralized process in place at Medgar Evers supposedly to create equity.

Don't get me wrong. I don't oppose integration and diversity. I support excellent education for all students, but altering the admissions process at a Medgar Evers is not the way to do it. I'm worried that the changes the DOE is proposing could have a negative impact on the school's academic program. The city disputes this — but a huge part of what makes Medgar Evers so appealing to families like mine is how rigorous the academics are. The admissions policy is what makes that possible.

My son started at Medgar Evers three years ago. He had always been at the top of his class, but the schools in our neighborhood of Prospect Heights weren't challenging enough for him. I want the best for my son, and that's what he is getting. Middle school students are expected to take high school courses, and high school students can earn college credit. My son is only in the ninth grade, but he's already passed EIGHT Regents exams. If he stays on track, he can earn an associate's degree before he even graduates high school.

Why would the mayor want to mess with a school like this?

Rather than meddling, de Blasio should take a cue from President Obama, who cited our school back in 2009: "We should also explore innovative approaches being pursued here in New York City; innovations like Bard High School Early College and Medgar Evers College Preparatory School that are challenging students to complete high school and earn a free associate's degree or college credit in just four years."

Mayor de Blasio shouldn't have to break the model of Medgar Evers to fix the problems affecting the majority of New York City schools.

Thank you councilmembers for listening to my testimony.

Good afternoon. FOR THE RECORD FOR THE RECORD FOR THE RECORD

My name is Shaindy Weichman and I am the mother of an 11-year-old boy currently enrolled in a Hasidic yeshiva in Brooklyn, New York. On four days of the six-day school week, my son receives about 90 minutes of very basic instruction in English and math. After his bar mitzvah, at age 13, he will stop receiving even this, and will focus solely on Talmud.

In my son's yeshiva, there is no history, social studies or current events as part of the curriculum. He has never learned about the history of slavery or immigration in our country. He has never been taught about a foreign country, much less how to locate one on a map. His school does not expose him to music, art, or physical education. He is not provided with information on other cultures, religions or ethnicities, even though we share our city with so many people of so many different backgrounds.

He recently turned to me the other week and he told me, "everything that I know is because of you." It's true. Everything that he knows outside of his Jewish religious studies is because of the choices I have made to expose him to a world beyond the confines of our community.

It causes me deep pain to think about all the opportunities so many other children his age are afforded as part of their education. The inequality is astonishing. The opportunity to play a sport, to learn an instrument, to go to a museum or to a play, and to have friends of other ethnicities who can teach him about their traditions. My son has had some of these opportunities, but never through his school, and again, only because of my choices as his mother.

Under the law, my son is guaranteed the right to learn history, geography, and social studies in a way that prepares him to be a full citizen. This right is his under the law even though he is Hasidic, even though he is in a yeshiva, even though he is in a private school. And really, how do we expect Hasidic children to be members of our city without such an education?

I want more for my son. I want him to be able to go to college if he wants, and to experience the world in full, the way that other children can and do. My son deserves these same opportunities, but he is being robbed of them, unlawfully, day after day. My son deserves better, all our children deserve better. The health and future of our city depends on them.

Thank you.

Good afternoon,

My name is Ari Hershkowitz, I'm 20 years old. I've attended Hasidic Yeshivas since I was 2.5 years old until I was 18, and I got a very poor secular education. This has been a huge obstacle for me as I'm working towards getting a bachelor's degree in computer science without a high school diploma. But, the topic here is about diversity, so let's talk about that. Not only was there no diversity in the school I went to. It was 100% white, 100% male and Orthodox. The only people I was exposed to who weren't orthodox, white males were the janitors. That and the studies we learned taught me that people who aren't Jewish are here to serve the chosen people and they have no other purpose in being here.

Not only was there no diversity in my school among students and staff, but I also never learned about anyone else in my studies. Elementary school was almost solely Judaic studies, the English and math were insignificant and scoffed at by both the students and the uncertified staff. There were never any consequences for not attending the classes or taking the tests.

When I was 12, secular education was completely stopped, and we spent the entire day on Judaic studies which are not diverse to say the least. In fact, we were constantly taught that we are the chosen people and minorities are not on our level. I'll give one example here: we learned as part of the story of Noah's ark, that Noah cursed his son Ham, and the curse was that his descendants for generations to come will be black and they'll forever be slaves. Even though Hasidic Judaism doesn't have slaves nowadays, it is only because the law prohibits it, and not because of the immorality of slavery.. We're constantly told as kids that when the messiah will come, the minorities and non-Jews will be our slaves again.

With such an education, or rather lack thereof, how can we expect these kids to grow up and be tolerant and empathetic towards non-Orthodox Jews; let alone towards non-Jews? When kids are constantly told that women are not equal to men, for example, their mothers are not allowed to have a driver's license, and women are not to lead and be in charge of anything, how can we expect these kids to not grow up being sexist? When kids are being told repeatedly about the sin of homosexuality and the

consequences of it (including the punishment of being stoned to death), how can we expect these kids to not grow up homophobic and discriminatory towards the LGBT community?

These things must be repaired. If only the city were to do its job and enforce the law, these kids would at the very least learn another perspective. They'd learn of the abhorrent history of slavery, they'd learn of the women's movement, the civil rights movement, and so on.

It's unacceptable that in this progressive city, kids are learning such hate and are not learning basic tolerance and understanding toward others. It took me a few years to register that what I knew as a kid is disastrously wrong, I struggled to see others as human beings, deserving of a chance in life. We're getting close to 2018 here, sexism, racism and homophobia should not continue to thrive in NYC as they do in Satmar- the Hasidic Yeshiva I went to.

I urge you all to take immediate action. And to work on making sure that this doesn't go on anymore. I hope that the great importance of this will finally be realized, politics will be put aside, and the next round of students graduating Satmar do not dislike, disregard and even hate people for simply being black, gay or different from them in any way.

Thank you.

City Council Hearing on Segregation in the NYC public school system

12/7/17

1 PM at City Hall in Council Chambers

Public Testimony

Hello everyone.

My name is Teresa Yi and I run a college readiness program in the Flatbush neighborhood of Brooklyn. The majority of students in my program come from 2 high schools in the area. One school has a student population that is 92% Black. The other school has 25% Black, Asian, Hispanic and White students.

The school that is more racially diverse has higher achieving minded students. Without even knowing which school a student comes from, anyone in this room could guess accurately which school the student attends based off of one conversation, which is sad.

The students from the diverse school have more energy, have ideas about their future and are more open. The students that do not have a de-segregated environment refer to their school as the "stupid" school and talk very negatively about their school.

I learned very recently that 81.7% of black students in NYC attend segregated schools and it's bizarre to think about because we see ourselves as "the most diverse" city in the world. The problem with our level of segregation is that studies have proven that integration for young black people specifically into de-segregated environments closes the achievement gap, lowers the rate of future incarcerated black adults by 22%, allows for black adults children to be more successful and on every metric studied, there are no hindrances to a white student's success.

This issue is a race issue. The perceived threat that once black students come to a school, that they will somehow "ruin" the school's status is factually wrong. Adults perpetuated this myth, this story – we are all responsible.

Making schools intentionally diverse will help our city in the long run. When young people have the chance to be more successful as adults, we mitigate homelessness, illness and all the other issues that come with being unable to be self-sufficient. Everything affects everything.

Education is truly the way someone who was born into a tough existence can rise above and be better. In order for this person to really have a shot requires us to purposely de-segregate

schools as the new normal otherwise we are lying to her and ourselves about doing our best in providing a quality educational experience.

Some statistics

- Over all, black students in NYC have a 68.1% on time graduation rate BUT black students in the city's top specialized public schools have a 96.1% graduation rate. (NY Times article 9/8/17 "Education by the Numbers")

- **WHY INTEGRATION MATTERS**

  Decades of academic research suggest that socio-economic integration is one of the most effective and inexpensive ways to improve academic achievement for poor children. That's because high-poverty schools tend to have fewer resources. They have trouble attracting and retaining qualified teachers. Moreover, teachers in high-poverty schools are more likely to have low expectations of their pupils, and to subject them to rote teaching that focuses on basic skills, says Douglas Ready, a researcher at Teachers College, Columbia University. Peer effects matter, too. The 1966 Coleman report said the educational resources provided by a child's fellow students are more important than the resources provided by the school. Parents also make a difference: higher-income parents have the political clout to demand better resources for their children. (www.centernyc.org/segregatedschools/ "Segregated Schools in Integrated Neighborhoods: The city's schools are even more divided than our housing" 12/7/17)

- What segregated public schools in District 3 mean is that there is a huge concentration of wealth and resources in some schools and often a lack of resources in other schools. These resources go to pay for extra staff, facilities, equipment, and enrichment programs —all of which have been documented to impact a student's educational growth and achievement. This does not happen accidentally. (https://citylimits.org/2016/10/24/building-justice-segregation-in-nyc-schools-is-no-accident/ "Building Justice: Segregation in NYC schools is no accident" 12/7/17)

Exhibit A

Hashim & Lisa Muhammad-Graham
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Chancellor Carmen Farina

New York City Department of Education

Re: Medgar Evers College Preparatory School

"When they grow up, they make the best lawyers, doctors and engineers because when they find something they love they channel all of their mind and energy into it in a way "normal" people can't…"

Good day Chancellor,

That quote written above, told, to us in consultation for our son, gave us hope but also a wake-up call. Our son was in the 2nd grade and his behavior in his grammar school had gotten to the point that the teachers suggested he'd be better served in a special education classroom. It took a lot to get past the stigma of the label but we needed help for our son. The consultation and quote was with our Pediatric Neurologist, Dr. Henry Hasson, who confirmed the teachers assessment with the diagnosis of ADHD. From there we knew it could go one of two ways: He could be the best participant in society as an engineer, doctor or other or the best weight on it as a drug dealer (business man), un-licensed pharmacist or other. My wife and I were both 1st generation college graduates but we knew without decisive hands on action our children would not necessarily just grow up into greatness as they still had many other 'career' choices around them. So we teamed up with his neurologist to taper his ADHD (for the teachers sake) and kept a look out for more challenging work and pressed his schools to pour it on, so he had rigor in his education. It was peculiar when prophets in church spoke over him that "Math and Science will be easy for you". For us it was confirmation. ADHD was to us Anointed Drive and Highly Deft! Junior High school? We started looking and preparing for in 3rd grade.

For Jr high school we knew that we needed a rigorous education and a team to work with us in tailoring the educational experience of our son. An opportunity to taper the taxing side effects of the ADHD medication was also a need. Unfortunately, we did not find it in our district. A friend invited us to come to an open house for MECPS in the Fall of our sons 3rd grade year. **Theirs was not a middle school program but a unique Early College with a direct Early High School component.** The commute from Canarsie would be an issue. But this needed to be his experience because none were available like it in our District. In the interview portion of his application, they explained the rigor and apologetically explained that what they did at Medgar was going to be tough and not meant for all and to seriously consider the program against other options. Charter schools were also the craze at the time and we applied but were never accepted for any. He got accepted to MECPS. In June of his 5th grade year, Parent-Choice finally did mean something for us. We had the opportunity to "choose" and weigh the benefits of Medgar against his, I think, 2nd "choice" school in our own district. We choose MECPS. We would have liked charter to be there as a 3rd option but it wasn't. As we teach our children – A choice is a decision YOU make in light of all the opportunities in front of you.

Where is our son now? This year he is a senior at MECPS with a 90+ avg. He's also an AP scholar and a member of the Smart Scholars program at the school. In addition to academics, he has been dedicated track and field athlete since 6th grade. Track and field is a big deal for us and him because with that opportunity for movement we were able to ween him off ADHD meds by the Fall of 7th grade.

Having received a letter regarding this Wednesdays PTA -SLT meeting with the chancellors representative, Fred Walsh of the Affinity Group of School, I write this letter in concern of the past and recent direction given to MECPS to adjust its admission policy to be centrally managed by DOE. I also write this letter to object to the characterization of MECPS as not capable of discerning a Highly Motivated Student in the shadow of their own walls others label a disability and question the DOE's support to meet the needs of those here now.

The current MECPS Admission policy:

- **Provides Real Parent-Choice** – Our sons story is not unique. Discontent with our own district and the false opportunities with Charter schools, having a distinct ability to choose ourselves allowed us and our son to **take ownership of his educational experience.** Every student in the school for the last 14 years had that choice. The success rate proves it works. As I understand it, the current 9th grade class did not and are having a different experience than others did. Particularly those who were tuned away through the DOE admissions process. It's not one of ownership of their educational experience. **For the benefit of future 3rd through 5th grade parents in New York City, the admission policy should be kept as is and in fact reverted to what it was for 9th graders as well. Real parent and student choice is a necessity in graduating scholars to be productive men and woman in this state.**

- **Is for a unique Early College program with an Early High School component (6-12) that needs if not support, affirmation and advocacy to continue the rigor of education sought by High achieving students** – In the Fall of his 7th grade year, my son, purposefully fell behind in his regents algebra class so he could settle with just getting the best grades. But, his buddies didn't do the same and in the Spring of that year, while he was still in Regents Algebra, his friends passed the January Regents and moved on to Geometry. This meant come Fall of 8th grade, they would be taking Regents Physics while he would be left out to take Earth Science and Regents Geometry. He was so upset. He was going to miss his friends but in truth he was competitively jealous. So he begged Dr. Wiltshire to take the Geometry Regents in August between his 7th and 8th grade years. He got permission to take the test. He started the summer program for Geometry with that in mind. By the way, this was the same MECPS summer program, an integral part of this unique Early HS model, that was threatened to be eliminated a few years ago by DOE. Our son took that summer and engaged His Geometry teacher, Kahn Academy and gave up a lot of summer play days to pass the regents so he could join his friends in Physics. He passed, with an 85. He, a then 12yr old, passed regents level Geometry with 6 weeks of summer study with an 85, Just so he could take Regents Physics in the 8th grade with his friends. They all passed that too. I'm not sure if that's understood but, there are not a lot of schools that have the rigor to support that kind of ability and passion. "Special" education? **The uniqueness of the Early High School model was what many sons and daughters need in this city. What is peculiar is that instead of affirming that or making the effort to duplicate it in other districts, the DOE seems only interested in capturing and assimilating the program with the rest of either District 17, the DOE's own middle school curriculum or other.**

Special Needs require resources, advocacy and personal attention to determine the right fit:

- **Resources** - My wife and I got familiar very quickly with the term in my sons 2nd grade year and his spectrum of disability. And we understand the DOE's vision to make all schools across the city equitable and inclusive to meet the needs of all. However, with MECPS, this effort seems questionable. Questionable because the resources and infrastructure to support the students there now has been blatantly disregarded for years. No gym and no auditorium means more than just a musky smelling hallway and staircase. It means children who need the space to move do not have it and are crippled. If I may say the only thing that keeps the children in their right minds there now is the "No Excuse" vision and attitude promoted by the administration and leadership of the school. That can go but so far. **Right now the admissions policy puts the Admin at MECPS at the forefront to discern the right type of student and student family that can handle the demands at this school. To put that in the DOE's hands would be in my opinion, a disservice to the incoming students of this unique education.**
- **Advocacy - The mission statement of the Affinity Field Support Center says it's there to advocate for schools so it can "enact its unique vision". In the seven years I've been here, I have not seen that, But the opposite.** Please confirm the amount of special needs children currently enrolled at MECPS to confirm the need for alignment with District 17, as stated in the letter sent to us. However, for those that are here, like my son and other 2 kids their at Medgar also diagnosed with ADHD, and the "normal" kids out ide of the spectrum of disabilities, **please confirm that a gym is not a need, an auditorium is not a need or other things brought up in the 14 years of the schools existence that have been lauded as needed, is not a need.**
- **Disability does not define motivation - Like Helen Keller and many others, a scholar and Highly motivated student is not defined by their disability.** To date MECPS has been able to successfully screen and accept Highly Motivated Students regardless of that. To impose a policy that imposes on the school to have a 'population' that aligns with a particular district is a disservice to those who are, again, like my son and many others, Highly motivated students that need the rigor of a strong education. The centrally managed DOE application process I fear will rob the school of the ability to screen and secure those Highly motivated students they discern and see will be a proper fit at this school. The administration at MECPS are intimate and familiar with the resources available at the school and know how to discern who is best fit for the program. As I understand it ,they are very much open to the DOE monitoring their application and acceptance practice.

Please stop the distractions!

- **Any change that imposes redirection to the admissions or policies of MECPS should be thoughtfully weighed in a publicly vetted Educational Impact statement and not imposed though an email to the Principle at the beginning of the school year.** A letter at the beginning of the school year, just as 6th grade applications and the open house are being planned for the 2018-2019 school years is both highly inappropriate and a distraction to already good programming.
- My son takes his ACT this Saturday, this letter is made confidential because he does not need the distractions or his 'Anointing' politicized!

Thank you for reading this letter and I hope you **see to it that MECPS receives the affirmation, advocacy and support this unique program needs to ensure it meets the needs of ALL scholar students in the New York City area. Highlighted points of this letter can be made public. As parents we reserve the right to distribute by specific request.**

Thank You

Hashim & Lisa Muhammad- Graham

CC: Mayors Office, District 18, District 17, District 75, Community Board 9, Office of Dr. Henry Hasson

CCC - C3 University

Exhibit B

Lisa Millsaps-Muhammad-Graham & Hashim Muhammad-Graham
926 East 107th Street
Brooklyn, NY 11236
Voice-718-772-2449
Email-Hashim_mm@hotmail.com
December 7, 2017

Dear Council,

Thank you for granting me the opportunity to testify before you and discuss the need to maintain Medgar Evers College Preparatory Schools (MECPS) admissions application process, academic rigor as well as provide more financial support and physical space at this excellent school. As an educator, scholar and parent, my husband Hashim Muhammad-Graham and I (Lisa Millsaps-Muhammad-Graham) have three children in grades 6th,10th, and 12th that currently attend MECPS. We, the MECPS school community, are appalled that after several emails and phone calls from many parents at MECPS and the local community have not received any type of response from Mayor DeBlasio nor Chancellor Farina to our invitation to have a town hall at MECPS. There is an urgent need to discuss the persistent direct attacks on MECPS to change the school's pedagogy, structure and positionality within the Department of Education (DOE) starting 2019. What happened to parent voice and parent choice? This cannot be disregarded any longer.

First, the current city-wide admissions application process should remain intact.

Reason #1: According to the *Diploma Disparities: High School Graduation Rates in New York City report* (September 22, 2016) by the New York City Comptroller confirms that among the low socioeconomic communities particular Bronx and Brooklyn students are not "college ready." The report recommendation was to support and further fund existing college ready programs throughout the city. Medgar Evers College Preparatory School is one of those Early College programs that need to be modeled and replicated in all districts and further financially supported. It is a total disservice to any community to not offer varied quality education programs that allow students to have an opportunity to an enriched program that promotes college readiness from entry (at 6th grade) to graduation (at 12th grade).

Second, the academic rigor should be maintained.

Reason #2 is personal for both my husband and I that have two children with disabilities that currently attend MECPS and are doing phenomenally well, because of the support, despite the DOE attacks that claim our school does not create spaces in the school structure for students with disabilities. Charisse Smith's article, *Mr. Mayor, leave Medgar Evers College Preparatory School alone*- reports why our city-wide school should be left alone but that we have at minimum 9 percent of the student population with varied disabilities that are enrolled at MECPS and we have a variety of multi-language speakers also enrolled at our school. In short, we are not only diverse culturally, but we serve all kinds of scholars from different backgrounds and socioeconomic situations. Learning is alive at MECPS and we strive for excellence both in the classroom and beyond the four walls of MECPS. Although we know this is not true for every

other school within DOE we need to respect the value of this early high school and early college model and maintain the curriculum and most importantly the city-wide admissions application process at 6th grade and 9th grade.

The **second personal story** is quoted directly from page 2 of my husband's letter emailed to Chancellor Farina the week of October 16, 2017.

"Is for a unique Early College program with an Early High School component (6-12) that needs if not support, affirmation and advocacy to continue the rigor of education sought by High achieving students – In the Fall of his 7th grade year, my son, purposefully fell behind in his regents algebra class so he could settle for just getting the best grades. But, his buddies didn't do the same, and in the Spring of that year, while he was still in Regents Algebra, his friends passed the January Regents and moved on to Geometry. This meant come Fall to 8th grade; they would be taking Regents Physics while he would be left out to take Earth Science and Regents Geometry. He was so upset. He was going to miss his friends, but in truth, he was competitively jealous. So he begged Dr. Wiltshire to take the Geometry Regents in August between his 7th and 8th-grade years. He got permission to take the test. He started the summer program for Geometry with that in mind. By the way, this was the same MECPS summer program, an integral part of this unique Early HS model that was threatened to be eliminated a few years ago by DOE. Our son took that summer and engaged His Geometry teacher, Kahn Academy and gave up a lot of summer play days to pass the regents so he could join his friends in Physics. He passed, with an 85. He, a then 12yr old, passed regents level Geometry with six weeks of summer study with an 85 so that he could take Regents Physics in the 8th grade with his friends. They all passed that too. I'm not sure if that's understood but, there are not a lot of schools that have the rigor to support that kind of ability and passion. "Special" education? The uniqueness of the Early High School model was what many sons and daughters need in this city. What is peculiar is that instead of affirming that or making an effort to duplicate it in other districts, the DOE seems only interested in capturing and assimilating the program with the rest of either District 17, the DOE's middle school curriculum or other.

We urge the DOE, the Council, the Mayor's Office, the Chancellor's Office and all stakeholders to listen to the voice in this letter. We also request that you read this letter carefully; along with the other requests from parents at MECPS. Finally, that all stakeholders and all education leaders in New York City and state reread *Diploma Disparities: High School Graduation Rates in New York City report* (September 22, 2016) by the New York City Comptroller.

We thank you for the opportunity again to testify, and hopefully, a conversation will begin on a path for **real democracy** in education and to rethink what DOE wants to impose for MECPS by attending several town hall meetings at the campus. Mayor DeBlasio and Chancellor Farina, please show up to the MECPS campus our students, parents and administrators deserve that respect and attention.

Respectfully submitted,

Lisa Millsaps-Muhammad-Graham, M.S., MPH

PTA 2nd Vice President 2017-2018 academic year

TESTIMONY

NYC COUNCIL COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION
CHAIRMAN, DANIEL DROMM

Oversight – Diversity in New York City Schools

Presented on
Thursday, December 7th, 2017

SINCE 1962
COUNCIL OF SCHOOL SUPERVISORS & ADMINISTRATORS
Local 1:AFSA, AFL-CIO

The Council of School Supervisors and Administrators
Mark Cannizzaro, President
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NYC Council Education Hearing

Oversight – Diversity in New York City Schools

I thank the Education Committee for the opportunity to submit this written testimony on behalf of the nearly 16,000 Council of School Supervisors and Administrators (CSA) members. We welcome the opportunity to present our perspective on "Diversity in New York City Schools."

Diversity and integration in public schools throughout the country, and particularly in our New York City Schools, has been a passionate topic of conversation for years. At CSA we believe, as research has proven time and again, that students of every race, religion, gender, and socioeconomic status benefit from diverse and inclusive classrooms. Students taught in diverse classrooms become more tolerant, responsive, and respectful of each other.

Research also shows that most parents agree that diversity is an important element of a positive learning environment. Seven in ten parents said they would prefer their child attend a school where the student body is racially diverse, with 49% with strong opinions on the issue. Similarly, 61% of parents said they would prefer a school where the student body is economically diverse, with 36% strongly believing so. Overall, the poll results reveal that a majority of parents value racial/ethnic and economic diversity.

Locally, we applaud the New York City Department of Education's commitment and policy regarding "Equity & Excellence for All," which states that the DOE is *"committed to supporting learning environments that reflect the diversity of New York City. We believe all students benefit from diverse and inclusive schools and classrooms where all students, families, and school staff are supported and welcomed."*

CSA supports this philosophy, along with the administration's commitment to addressing inequity with groundbreaking initiatives like "Pre-K for All" and "College Access for All."

The DOE has taken the first steps towards increased accountability by establishing three goals and inviting the community to review them. These goals include: increasing the number of students in racially representative schools by 50,000 over the next five years, decreasing the number of economically stratified schools to 10 percent, and increasing the number of inclusive schools serving English Language Learners and students with disabilities.

However, to date the DOE's policies and initiatives have been piecemeal. This fragmentary approach led to the 2015 University of California report that declared that *"New York City Schools are among the most segregated public schools in the country, and that segregation has grown more extreme since 2000."*

It is clear under the City Council "School Diversity Accountability Act" that the DOE needs to continue furnishing annual reports to document those policies and initiatives that are diversifying our public schools.

At CSA, we believe that schools, as institutions of learning, should have at their core a culture of diversity and inclusiveness that fosters a respect for students and staff. Our Executive Leadership Institute (ELI) promotes that culture through Professional Development training. "Instructional Leadership through the Lens of Diversity" is one of many workshops ELI offers which address strategies for dealing with cultural diversity in the classroom and in school populations.

There are many ways in which the DOE can address systemic segregation in our public schools. One internal approach would include delegating responsibility and oversight to a highly-qualified member of the Chancellor's senior leadership team. That person would provide direct oversight of internal policies and practices affecting diversity and enrollment. After assessing the existing situation, the Chancellor's designee would develop a corrective action plan and be responsible for overseeing the implementation of the plan.

CSA believes that diversity goes hand-in-hand with quality in our public schools. Any successful DOE diversity plan must include checks and balances. Our members, your school leaders, must be trained, equipped, and included in the dialogue if we are to diversify our schools for the betterment of our children and our city.

Sincerely,

Mark Cannizzaro

Bridging Cultures Group Inc.

www.BridgingCulturesInc.com

On this day, we welcome and applaud the NYC Council members for holding this Diversity in Schools hearing.

Many students are forced to go to zone schools instead of the schools of their choice. Shockingly, as much as New York is the melting pot of the world, it is also the most segregated. The zoning of students by location and not by choice limits the freedom they have over admission, causing segregation and preventing integration which is extremely important for all schools. As parents, having our children placed in zone schools limits their capabilities to excel. It only exposes them to one community and educates students based on that community and culture of that one community, thus preventing them from a 360 degree view of other students, communities, activities, and ways of learning.

The ("Equity and Excellence for All: Diversity in New York City Public Schools") plan is a great start to integrate the students of New York City and provide them with the New York experience that is inclusive, improves the overall quality of schools and education, connects to a wider range of schools, that enable parents to make more informed decisions on their child's education and school enrollment choices. However, the issue here is that we need this to be implemented city wide moving away from the "cookie cutter" and one size fits all solutions in schools when it comes to school choice, integration, diversity, and curriculum.

Currently we have these two issues in need of a remedy. There is a big need and demand in our community for schools that can be diverse in two ways; through its student enrollment, and through its education. Furthermore, racial and ethnic backgrounds, socioeconomic status, home language, country of origin, immigration status, ability, special needs, religion, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, housing status are all branches of the tree of diversity and it is important that we can embrace everyone in our school without segregation.

We commend the NYC Department of Education for taking the first steps in this initiative, but urge the DOE to consider the following:

1. Expand the School Diversity Advisory Group to reflect the diversity of our city. One in every 8 children in our school system is Muslim and there is not one single Muslim listed.

2. Students and families alike can benefit from new ways of teaching inclusion and diversity, this new way is introducing Culturally Responsive Education as a teaching method.

3. Implement of this plan on all school levels throughout New York City to make our schools are more diverse and equitable.

4. Assess the diversity and demographics of school staff, our schools should reflect the populations they serve.

5. Release City Council funds designated to provide anti-bias trainings for over 600 teachers. These trainings are critical and urgent to help shift mindsets and undo implicit bias of school staff and teachers.

Thank you,
Dr. Debbie Almontaser
CEO of Bridging Cultures Group Inc.

(Hello Council members and) thank you for allowing me the space to address the issue of Diveristy and the importance of Culturally Responsive Education. My name is DeJohn Jones and I am a parent leader with the Parent Action Committee and CEJ and I am here today to talk about How serious the need is for Cultural Response Education to be implemented in our schools.

- Diversity is deeply important but there are multiple ways to achieve the goal of diversity
- We challenge the way in which the Mayor and DOE define diversity. It has to be deeper than moving students around

I experience bias every day because of the way that I look and present my sexuality, as a person who identifies more with my masculine side than my feminine side at times, others treat me with a lack of respect.

As a person of color, as an African American with Native American, Portuguese and Cuban heritage, I am also often treated as inferior.

People make assumptions about me, my family and my background without ever knowing who am really am. I experienced bias behavior in the classroom as a student and as a parent and a Parent Association President I have been treated differently because of my appearance and my sexual identity.

Now that I am all grown up, today I am here for these precious students in our Public School system. I see the difference in students behaviors when they are spoken to with regard and respect. As a PA President in District 12, I saw how a student who was bullied for his perceived sexuality turned to violence as a solution and another student died as a result. If this school and others across New York City adopted Culturally Responsive and Restorative Justice Practices, our school environments could improve for both staff and students alike. I believe:

- Teachers and schools desperately need cultural competency training and coaching, and multicultural curriculum in order to provide effective support for students of color, LGBTQIA/Gender Non-Conforming students, immigrant students and Muslim students.
- To teach the diverse population of NYC schools effectively, teachers and school staff must have awareness of their own racial and cultural identity and how it impacts their teaching, have a consciousness about the cultural backgrounds of their students, and be able to connect academic learning to those identities
- Culturally Responsive Education addresses the intersectionality of oppressions faced by our communities by providing a space to understand, discuss and learn to respect the multiple identities that we bring to our schools and provide equity in the learning and educational process.
- By understanding and celebrating our humanity and fighting the prejudice and fear created by systems (I.e. patriarchy, capitalism) that label our identities, we can dismantle practices that continue to put our communities in disadvantage.

I want to thank the Parent Action Committee for allowing me this platform to speak on the behalf of our students.

What is 60 years late?
What is real integration?

FOR THE RECORD

1. Who is the woman on this shirt?

Elizabeth Eckford was one of the African American students from **The Little Rock 9.** They were the first black students to integrate a white high school in Arkansas. Eckford wore sunglasses to mask her tears. The sunglasses were a symbol of strength and fearlessness. She walked through an angry mob of white people so she could fight for integration on her first day of school. **This year is the 60th anniversary of her walk to integrate our nation's schools. Today, New York schools are the most segregated in the country.**

2. What was 60 years ago?

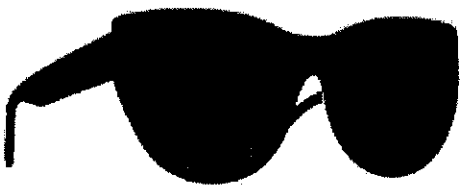
The Brown V. Board of Education case made school segregation illegal and efforts to integrate were encouraged. Little Rock Nine was the first effort in Little Rock Arkansas 60 years ago. Our nation's public school system has since then failed to deliver an integrated and a basic and sound education for students, institutionalizing "separate but equal". For over 60 years the school system hasn't been doing its job and because of that there is a racial achievement gap. There shouldn't be a racial gap.

3. Where did "REAL" Integration come from?

The idea of REAL integration comes from students changing a conversation about equality, to equity. We don't want to give people resources and opportunities to adjust to barriers like separation and socioeconomic disadvantages. We want to remove the barrier completely, equity is how we remove barriers. REAL integration is equitable resources, fair enrollment,restorative justice, diverse teacher representation, and relationships across identities. We want to reform education for the future generation of leaders.

4. Why sunglasses?

The sunglasses Elizabeth Eckford wore were a symbol of her strength and fearlessness to integrate schools. She walked through an angry mob of white segregationists so she could fight for integration on her first day of school. Today, we are strong and fearless, fighting for real integration in 2017.



New York City Council Education Committee Hearing on School Diversity, December 7, 2017
Testimony of David C. Bloomfield, Professor of Education Leadership, Law & Policy
Brooklyn College & The CUNY Graduate Center

Thank you for this opportunity to describe the shameful record of the de Blasio administration regarding diversity in student enrollment and curriculum. In my written comments, I provide references to my oral testimony.

Others at this hearing will focus on the first of these injustices, extreme racial and income segregation that pervades our public schools. In a City Limits column, I called the Mayor's School Diversity initiative, belatedly announced last June, "thin and amateurish, lacking in urgency and imagination." (https://citylimits.org/2017/06/16/cityviews-whats-wrong-with-the-mayors-school-diversity-plan/). Nothing has changed that view. The Mayor's rhetoric in other areas such as housing, workers' rights, and policing recognizes that social change begins with specific progressive social policies. In education, however, he echoes segregationist arguments that social attitudes must change first, before school policies follow. His shallow steps to appease diversity advocates lack political courage and ignore research that segregation is a debilitating educational strategy and that all students stand to benefit by destroying barriers to integration.
See http://www.chalkbeat.com/posts/ny/2016/07/18/how-to-desegregate-new-york-citys-schools-now/

The second injustice is the denial of a diverse curriculum to ultra-Orthodox yeshiva students contrary to State law. As I described in another column at https://citylimits.org/2016/07/27/cityviews-ultra-orthodox-yeshivas-need-to-meet-their-educational-obligations/, the Department of Education, under the Mayor's control, has an affirmative duty to assure that educational standards in these yeshivas are substantially equivalent to required learning standards in public schools, including English language arts, science, mathematics, technology, social studies, and the arts. See Education Law § 3204.1, .2; http://www.p12.nysed.gov/ nonpub/ guidelinesequivofinstruction.html; http://www.p12.nysed.gov/ciai/standards.html. The Mayor has failed miserably in meeting this duty, surrendering to political pressures that cripple the education of thousands of children. Personally, I believe this constitutes both Official Misconduct and Obstruction of Governmental Administration under Penal Law Article 195, a matter for this Body and the Department of Investigation to refer to the District Attorney, since the documented, even admitted, failure to provide adequate secular studies in these institutions and the Mayor's apparent sabotage of this requisite assurance constitutes, in my opinion, a serious legal, ethical, and educational violation.
See http://www.gothamgazette.com/opinion/7347-yeshiva-gate-could-imperil-de-blasio-s-second-term

I realize I have just accused the Mayor of a crime, an extension of his overall disregard for diversity strategies that can bring real change. The Mayor self-advertises as The Education Mayor. But without real progress on Desegregation and the education of thousands of ultra-Orthodox yeshiva students, that legacy will forever elude him.

Thank you. I would be happy to answer any questions.

David C. Bloomfield
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Testimony of Kimberly R. Quick
New York City Council Committee on Education
Oversight Hearing on Diversity in New York City Schools
December 7, 2017

Thank you for your invitation to testify before the New York City Council Committee on Education's Oversight Hearing on Diversity in New York City Schools. I'm heartened that conversations around race, equity, and desegregation are a significant part of NYC's commitment to expanding powerful and effective educational opportunities to all students.

My name is Kimberly Quick, and I am a policy associate at The Century Foundation, a non-profit think tank with offices in New York City and Washington, DC. There I research and write about educational equity, paying particular attention to the academic and civic benefits racial and socioeconomic integration and the continuing work of creating just and inclusive environments for children in diverse spaces.

I'll begin by echoing my colleague Richard Kahlenberg. Dozens of studies, spanning fifty years, document the benefits of socioeconomically and racially diverse schools. Nationally, students in integrated schools have higher average test scores, are more likely to enroll in college, have lower rates of bias and are more comfortable with diversity, feel more satisfaction in schools, and have elevated problem solving and critical thinking ability.[1] For example, a 2013 study of high school students found that students at schools with high average socioeconomic status were 68 percent more likely to enroll as a four-year college than demographically similar peers in schools with low average socioeconomic status.[2] A 2008 study found that students in mixed-income high schools showed 30 percent more growth in test scores from ninth to twelfth grade than peers with similar socioeconomic backgrounds in schools with concentrated poverty.[3] And a 2010 meta-analysis of fifty-nine studies on school integration and math achievement found that "the current corpus of social science literature provides consistent and unambiguous evidence that attending a racially diverse school with low concentrations of poor children is positively related to mathematics outcomes for most students irrespective of their age, race, or family's SES."[4]

While its critical to recognize – and design policies around – the fact that school diversity is beneficial for all children, we also must acknowledge that desegregation alone does not

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[1] Amy Stuart Wells, Lauren Fox, and Diana Cordova-Cobo, "How Racially Diverse Schools and Classrooms Can Benefit All Students," (Century Foundation, February 9, 2016) https://tcf.org/content/report/how-racially-diverse-schools-and-classrooms-can-benefit-all-students/

[2] Gregory J. Palardy, "High School Socioeconomic Segregation and Student Attainment," *American Educational Research Journal* 50, no. 4 (2013): 714-754

[3] Gregory J. Palardy, "Differential School Effects among Low, Middle, and High Social Class Composition Schools: A Multiple Group, Multilevel Latent Growth Curve Analysis," *School Effectiveness and School Improvement* 19, no. 1 (2008)

[4] Roslyn Arlin Mickelson and Martha Bottia, "Integrated Education and Mathematics Outcomes: A Synthesis of Social Science Research," *North Carolina Law Review* 88, no. 3 (2010), http://scholarship.law.unc.edu/nclr/vol88/iss3/7

guarantee equity. Within school, even those that are considered diverse, antiquated systems and practices too often preserve segregation. I intend to discuss two of those practices today: tracking and disciplinary disparities.

Tracking is the practice of designating students for separate educational paths based, presumably, on their educational performance as teens or younger. Certainly not all schools and districts that frequently use academic tracking to sort students are bad actors, but the historical roots of the practice suffer from classist and racist undertones. Schools used tracking to ensure that wealthy students from certain families were prepared for higher education and "gentleman's" professions, while others from working class backgrounds were directed to coursework that sought to prepare them for a skill or trade. As courts began more rigorous enforcement of race-based school desegregation, tracking evolved into a means to prevent white flight from the public-school system and maintain racial separation on the classroom level.[5] Today, tracking is the norm, and evidence indicated that it is a major driver of the pervasive achievement gap, with one study indicating that it accounts for 37 percent of the gap between rich and poor students.[6]

Investigations into tracking also reveal that it is not always tightly correlated to prior academic performance. In 2014, parents filed complaints against a New Jersey district, South Orange Maplewood, after their young black daughter was denied entry into an advanced level math course, despite having qualified grades and test scores. After looking into the case, investigators found that, not only was the child prepared for the higher-level coursework, but that her case fit into a pattern of decision making that left white students filling 73 percent of upper level math courses while constituting only 44 percent of the school's middle school population.[7] Nationally, low income and Black and Hispanic children are less likely to be recommended for and enrolled in gifted and talented programs. In New York City, the implications of tracking are even more widespread, as this practice occurs both within schools and between them, with entire schools designated for identified high achievers.

Some schools and districts have found innovative ways to push back against this trend. Stamford Public School System in Connecticut is a diverse but majority-minority and free and reduced-price lunch eligible school district. In 2005, under the leadership of superintendent Josh Starr, the district began a series of interventions to begin to dismantle the tracking system. Stamford began teacher training programs to provide instructors with tools for lesson differentiation, eliminated ability grouping in elementary school classes, replaced five rigid tracks in middle school with two flexible ones and allowed for student movement, and created open access to honors and AP courses in high school. From 2010 to 2014, the percentage of black and Hispanic students taking

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[5] Karolyn Tyson, *Integration Interrupted: Tracking, Black Students and Acting White after Brown* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011).

[6] William H. Schmidt, Nathan A. Burroughs, Pablo Zoido, and Richard T. Houang, "The Role of Schooling in Perpetuating Educational Inequality: An International Perspective," Educational Researcher, September 29, 2015, http://journals.sagepub.com/doi/abs/10.3102/0013189X15603982

[7] Sonali Kohli, "Modern Day Segregation in Public Schools," (The Atlantic, November 18, 2014) https://www.theatlantic.com/education/archive/2014/11/modern-day-segregation-in-public-schools/382846/

AP courses doubled and achievement gaps between student subgroups decreased while achievement rose across all groups.[8]

Chicago Public Schools sought to reduce barriers to entry in selective enrollment schools through an innovative admissions process that employs nuanced measures of privilege and disadvantage to ensure that the talents of marginalized students are recognized in a competitive admissions process. This helps to ensure that the most popular and challenging selective schools provide diverse and inclusive learning environments, rather than act as spaces where the already advantages isolate themselves. Using socioeconomic factors within a census tract such as median family income, adult educational attainment, percentage of single family household, and percentage of population speaking a language other than English, CPS designates an SES tier for each census tract in the city. The district then admits student based on the test scores of those in their same tier. A total of 30 percent of available seats are filled solely using academic criteria from a city-wide pool, but the remaining seats are filled in rank order from the lists that rank applicants within each of the four SES tiers, with an even number of students matriculating from each tier. Chicago's most selective schools better reflect the diversity of the city than do selective schools in similar districts, and the income and racial achievement gaps in these schools is exceptionally small.[9]

Tracking contributes to segregation by separating students according to a definition of "ability" that too often suffers from racialized and classist perceptions of potential. Similarly, disciplinary disparities can stem – at least in part – from false but long conditioned perceptions of black and brown criminality. These beliefs do not disappear simply because a school is diverse. This work is not only about making students feel a sense of fairness; it has serious academic effects. Critically, research shows that reliance on exclusionary school discipline (expulsions, suspensions, and arrests in schools) deprive students of learning time, and can lead to students later falling behind or leaving school.[10]

Child Trends found that a majority of school suspensions are for nonviolent offenses, and another study determined that 95 percent of out-of-school suspensions were for relatively minor infractions.[11] This is particularly true for black children, who are more likely to be suspended, expelled, arrested, or referred to law enforcement from preschool through high school. Black students are suspended at a rate three times greater than white students; while they represent 16 percent of national student enrollment, they comprise 27 percent of students referred to law

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[8] Halley Potter, "Stamford Public Schools: From Desegregated Schools to Integrated Classroom," (Century Foundation, October 14, 2016), https://tcf.org/content/report/stamford-public-schools/.

[9] Kimberly Quick, "Chicago Public Schools: Ensuring Diversity in Selective Enrollment and Magnet Schools," (Century Foundation, October 14, 2016). https://tcf.org/content/report/chicago-public-schools/.

[10] New York State School Boards Association, "Rethinking School Discipline," (April 2017), http://www.nyssba.org/clientuploads/nyssba_pdf/rethinking-school-discipline-04272017.pdf

[11] Christopher Boccanfuso and Megan Kuhfeld, "Multiple Responses, Promising Results: Evidence-Based, Nonpunitive Alternatives to Zero Tolerance," (Child Trends, 2011) https://www.childtrends.org/publications/multiple-responses-promising-results-evidence-based-nonpunitive-alternatives-to-zero-tolerance/; US Department of Education, "Key Policy Letters from the Education Secretary and Deputy Secretary," (2014) https://www2.ed.gov/policy/elsec/guid/secletter/140108.html

enforcement and 31 percent of students who were subject to a school-related arrest.[12] Other research indicates that black children are most often disciplined for behaving disrespectfully, loitering, or being noisy, whereas their white schoolmates are most often disciplined for less subjective offenses such as smoking or other substance abuse at school, skipping classes, or vandalism.[13]

As the federal Department of Education toys with rescinding Obama-era guidance that sought to close racial gaps in suspensions, expulsions, and restraints for children of color in schools, New York City's public schools must remain vigilant in their commitment to correcting existing inequities. The city must continue to collect data about how disciplinary measures are applied to students of color, low-income students, and students with special needs. It should also consider banning suspensions for minor infractions such as "willful defiance", and implementing restorative conflict resolution practices in its schools – particularly for non-violent offenses.

I will end my comments by again commending this committee and NYC education leaders for tackling this important equity and justice issue. School segregation originated as the government-mandated, institutionalized oppression and marginalization of children of color, maintained through both law and private choices. To allow it to persist as it does today signals to children that we either agree with that discriminatory system, or that, because it is difficult to undo, Americans and New Yorkers lack the will to dismantle injustice. Thank you to the Committee on Education for refusing to be complacent in the face of this ugly legacy and for taking steps to create a stronger and fairer education system. Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

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[12] US Department of Education Office of Civil Rights, Civil Rights Data Collection: Data Snapshot (School Discipline), (March 2014)
http://blogs.edweek.org/edweek/rulesforengagement/CRDC%20School%20Discipline%20Snapshot.pdf

[13] Edward J. Smith and Shaun R. Harper, "Disproportionate Impact of K-12 School Suspension and Expulsion on Black Students in Southern States," (University of Pennsylvania, Center for the Study of Race and Equity in Education, 2015), http:///www.gse.upenn.edu/equity/SouthernStates.

City Council Education Committee Oversight Hearing FOR THE RECORD
"Diversity in New York City Schools"
Testimony by Elliotte Crowell Simian, Parent, Brooklyn, District 15
December 7, 2017

Thank you for the opportunity to share my experience with public school diversity in Brooklyn's District 15.

I have two children at Success Academy Cobble Hill charter school, which is one of the most diverse schools in District 15. 65% of students are black or Hispanic and 38% are low income.

Charter schools provide a great opportunity to create more integrated public schools. They offer alternative models that attract parents from across segregated school zones. Community Roots, International Charter School, and Brooklyn Prospect Charter all offer unique curriculum and draw a highly diverse student body.

Attending an integrated school is important to my family. My son started out at a popular zoned school. It wasn't a great fit for him and it was also almost entirely white and affluent, which I found troubling.

I applied out for third grade, and he was accepted to a G&T program and to Success. When I toured the G&T program, I found that the school served mostly black and Hispanic students but virtually all the students in the G&T classrooms were white. I also discovered there was a 40 point performance gap between white students and students of color. It reminded me of my own childhood in the south, where so-called integration consisted of busing in some white students to a largely African-American school and placing us in a segregated "honors" class.

Success Cobble Hill was different: it offered real diversity. I saw students of many races and incomes learning as one community. I saw that not only was the school high performing, but students of *all* ethnicities and incomes

performed equally well. This convinced me that the school was adding real value.

When we talk about advancing diversity, we must pay attention to this critical issue of within-school achievement gaps. Success Cobble Hill has erased the within-school achievement gap: black and Hispanic students perform roughly the same or higher than white students in the school, and the school is the highest performing in District 15.

This is not true for many integrated schools in District 15. PS 261 has a 25 point black-white achievement gap and a 40 point white-hispanic gap. Before all parents opted out at Brooklyn New School, it had a 40 point achievement gap. Some of our most sought after District 15 middle schools — MS 51, MS 447, the School for International Studies — have achievement gaps that range from 25 to 40 points.

The point of these statistics is to say that integration is critical — but it's not enough to mix children together in a school. We also need schools that are teaching every student at a high level, regardless of background and the advantages they bring to school. White parents might feel good about the fact that their children are learning in a diverse environment, but I don't see how it helps parents of color without an equally urgent effort to ensure schools are delivering effective and equitable education to their children.

As you move forward in this effort, I hope charter schools are an integral part of a plan to increase the number of diverse schools that serve *all* students well. At a minimum, the City should provide provide existing DIVERSE public charter schools with middle school space — so these highly equitable schools can continue through 8th grade.

TESTIMONY OF
Leanne Nunes, IntegrateNYC

NEW YORK CITY COUNCIL
COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION
December 7, 2017

My name is Leanne Nunes. I am the Director of Equity and represent the Representation committee for IntegrateNYC. Representation is one of the 5 R's of Integrate's desegregation policy for NYC schools, the other R's are: Race and Enrollment, Resource Allocation, Relationships, and Restorative Justice. Together these policies push for integration and better quality of education for ***all*** students.

The Representation Committee is responsible for ensuring the diversification, inclusion, and ***voice*** of teachers, faculty, and board members of color in classrooms, school buildings, and throughout the entirety of the school system. Acros New York, nearly half of all White students — 48 percent, or more than 560,000 White students — are enrolled in schools without a single Latino or Black teacher. Eighty-four percent of White students — more than 977,000 students — attend schools without a single Latino or Black principal or assistant principal. Latino and Black students outside of the Big 5 school districts are nearly 13 times more likely than their Big 5 peers to have no exposure to a same-race/ethnicity teacher.[1] When schools and classrooms in particular lack the representation of people of color, misrepresentation of those groups and a deficit of knowledge and understanding of these groups and their cultures develop leading to racial, ethnic, and cultural boundaries made in schools among students. Teachers are meant to be windows and mirrors for growing minds to show them the world of possibilities that lies beyond and within them. Students of color are missing the opportunity to see themselves in those who answer the call to help mold the next generation.

We call on the Mayor and this Council to commit to the 5 R's of real integration and as they do diversity work, to remember to not only fill positions with people of color that can accurately reflect a student body with majority students of color, but also include more teachers of color in majority white schools, ensuring that they all have a voice in the system. We would also like to call for a curriculum that accurately recounts stories about or containing people of color, without a white lense or perspective. This would solidify a more well-rounded and truthful education for all students that more fairly represents people or color of the past, present, and future. We look forward to representing and standing by the voice of students as these initiatives take shape.

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[1] https://newyork.edtrust.org/press_release/edtrust-ny-releases-first-ever-look-educator-diversity-districts-across-new-york/

TESTIMONY OF
Aneth Naranjo, IntegrateNYC

NEW YORK CITY COUNCIL
COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION
December 7, 2017

My name is Aneth Naranjo. I am the Director of Youth Engagement and I represent the relationships committee for IntegrateNYC. IntegrateNYC stands for the 5 R's of real integration: resources, race and enrollment, representation, restorative justice, and relationships. Building strong relationships across group identities in schools is crucial to achieving ***Real Integration.***

Each day, 1.1 million students are expected to go to school and learn the material presented to them, but often they can't concentrate on the work because they don't feel safe in their own schools. We need educators and spaces who can address the internal and external trauma students bring into the classroom. Too often we hear about students being attacked for their identity, both physically and mentally. Swastikas are being drawn on tables, "white power" is being screamed down hallways, the word racism is being googled to defend a racist comment made by a teacher, and students don't feel safe.These are just a few examples of what I experienced in my high school, and my experiences are not uncommon. These are clear indications of an education system plagued with racism and white supremacy. This is why we believe diversity initiatives that do not include investments in cultural competency training for teachers and staff are insufficient.

IntegrateNYC stands with the Coalition for Educational Justice in calling for mandatory professional development and courses on culturally responsive education for all NYC teachers, staff, PTA, and students. These actions coupled with pro-diversity initiatives would ensure all 1.1. million students have access to diverse, equitable, and inclusive schools.

We call on the Mayor and this Council to commit to the 5 R's of real integration as they do diversity work, and follow through on commitments to invest in cultural competency and anti-bias training for teachers. Students demand diverse and equitable schools. Students demand to have a voice in the decision making that affects the quality of their education. We are here to represent their voice as these initiatives take shape.

TESTIMONY OF
Dekaila Wilson, IntegrateNYC

NEW YORK CITY COUNCIL
COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION
December 7, 2017

My name is Dekaila Wilson. I am Chair of the Restorative Justice committee for IntegrateNYC. IntegrateNYC stands for the ***5 R's of Real Integration***: Restorative Justice, Resource equity, Race and enrollment, Representation, and Relationships. We believe ***Real Integration*** requires the adoption of discipline policies that do not criminalize Black and Latino students, and that disrupt the school-to-prison pipeline.

According to a report by the New York Civil Liberties Union (NYCLU), 99% of all students handcuffed in New York City schools in 2016 were Black and Hispanic. Because of data points like this one, which can be easily found on the internet, we created the Restorative Justice committee as a point in our 5 point platform.

As a student in the public school system in New York I have witnessed this quotation come to life. As the City begins to invest in Diversity initiatives, we insist that they are coupled with funding and implementation of district-wide restorative justice approaches to discipline, including guidance interventions, instead of suspensions. We must begin to invest in our students, not officers. We need social workers, not more officers.

We call on the Mayor and the City to commit to the ***5 R's of Real Integration*** and will continue to represent the voices of students in this process.

Thanks

TESTIMONY OF
Matthew Diaz, IntegrateNYC

NEW YORK CITY COUNCIL
COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION
December 7, 2017

My name is Matthew Diaz. I am a junior in highschool and represent the Resource Allocation committee for IntegrateNYC. IntegrateNYC stands for the 5 R's of real integration: resource equity, race and enrollment, representation, restorative justice, and relationships. Access to schools offering a **sound basic education** is the legal right of every student in New York, and it is essential to achieving ***Real Integration.***

According to the research conducted by the Fair Play Coalition, over 17,000 students of color do not have access to sports teams year round. Sports teams are an important resource for students. They provide leadership development, team building, and opportunities for college scholarships. Sports teams are just one piece of a sound basic education that students in segregated school do not have full access to. Because of this fact, we developed the Resource Allocation Committee and included it in the 5 R's of ***Real Integration.***

IntegrateNYC stands with organizations like the Alliance for Quality Education, the Center for Educational Equity, and the Coalition for Educational Justice who have long called for equitable funding and resources to all New York schools. Without full investment in each of our schools, efforts for diversity fall flat.

We call on the Mayor and this Council to ensure that all schools follow the law, and provide qualified teachers, up-to-date curricula, expanded programing, appropriate class sizes, up-to-date books, supplies, libraries, technology, and laboratories.

We call on the Mayor and this Council to commit to the **5 *R's of Real Integration*** as they do diversity work, and follow through on commitments to ensure each school in New York City provides a diverse and equitable educational opportunity for 1.1 million students.

We look forward to representing the voice of students, and the ***5 R's of Real Integration*** as member of the School Diversity Advisory Group.

Education Council Consortium
Equity & Diversity Work Group

Draft Proposal

Vision Statement
Every student in New York City has equal access to a high quality education.

New York City is one of the most segregated public school systems in the nation. That segregation in any school system has been proven to be a major barrier to equity.

Policy recommendation
Central DOE will commit to creating equity by enacting an official policy that:

- mandates the development of school integration plans in each Community School District;
- allocates appropriate resources - both financial and human - for the plan development and implementation;
- requires inclusion of Students with Disabilities, English Language Learners, Students in Temporary Housing and students living in poverty in the plan;
- monitors and assesses implementation of the integration plan

Process recommendations
Central DOE will designate the Office of Equity & Diversity as the lead office that ensures availability of resources for local districts, schools and parents on school integration.

Community School District Integration Plan must:

- articulate a vision for the success of all schools in the district;
- have a set of metrics for evaluating the plan implementation;
- Include race either as one of the diversity metrics or as a discussion;
- Include a plan to improve schools that are struggling;
- be developed by the CEC in partnership with the Superintendent and OSE;
- engage parents in the district in a community-driven planning process (e.g. CEC1)

City Council Hearing on Diversity
December 7, 2017-12-07
Testimony from Chevion Weaks-Lopez
Parent and member of the Alliance for Quality Education and the Coalition for Educational Justice

Good afternoon and thank you to the Council and to Education Chair Danny Dromm for having this hearing on diversity.

The diversity efforts the City is embarking remind me of my own experiences. I remember being bused from a predominantly Black community to a junior high school in another school district which was predominantly White with a smaller percentage of Asian students. The landscape of my school changed but I did not see many reflections of myself in the teaching community; as there were very few teachers of color.

Having been placed in an accelerated SP or special progress class, I was one of two black students. The adjustment was not easy but it was made more difficult when the next year 's Social Studies timeline included Reconstruction through The Civil Rights Era and the other black student transferred to another class; leaving me alone. My teacher noticed my discomfort but was not able to effectively deal with my loneliness, level of confidence, and isolation. This Social Studies section was the only time I was reflected in the curriculum other than when we read the required 'To Kill a Mockingbird' for my English class.

I was also not able to share experiences that were proud moments in my family's history. I am a relative of one of the students known as The Little Rock Nine. They were the nine black students to integrate Central High School in Little Rock, Arkansas in 1957. I was extremely proud of the courage that this group endured and succeeded but I did not have my voice or support needed to share my thoughts. My family nor I was ever asked about the experiences in the Civil Rights struggle that could have added to the discussion and what was being taught. It was a lost opportunity for my teacher to tap into the expertise of my family and our lived experiences. The school never saw that as valuable when in fact it was.

What would have made my educational experience better are the same things students need today. Greater diversity in teachers, a diversified curriculum that is inclusive of the many races, religions, and cultures that make up our city, is essential.

Thank you

December 7, 2017

I am Carrie McLaren from the Coalition for Equitable Schools in Brooklyn District 15. Our group formed last spring to help spark dialogue around elementary school segregation. We do not have an official decision-making body so I speak only for myself.

When we think about school integration, we can't ignore that some of the most racially and socioeconomically segregated schools in the city are elementary schools. By the time students reach 6th grade, most of them have already been in segregated schools for 7 years! Any reforms put in place that only address middle and high school admissions are bound to be superficial. Everyone benefits when diverse groups of learners are actively and thoughtfully integrated at a young age.

It is said that zoning and residential patterns prevent elementary-level reform. The Mayor has said equity sharing of PTA funds -- as is done in Portland, Oregon -- is also politically untenable. I think we need to stop letting barriers prevent us from acknowledging the problem and making a real effort for change.

Creating more equitable schools can happen in any number of ways. We'd urge the DOE to be guided by IntegrateNYC's 5R's. This can't about simply moving bodies from one to another. You could take a majority Black and Hispanic school and a majority white school and mix them but if that's not done with intention and planning and a well-trained and diverse staff, you'll just repeat the same patterns -- you may even make things worse! We've seen this in the DOE's "gifted" programs, where affluent kids are presumed to be smart and "high-achieving" and black and brown kids, English Language Learners, and students in under-resourced neighborhoods are presumed less able.

I'm a parent, not a policy guru, and I so I won't pretend to have all of the answers. But I'd urge you go beyond the superficial reforms outlined in the diversity plan. We need to start re-thinking school zoning; we need to be planning system-wide reforms such as—but not limited to—the Controlled Choice model in District 1.

There are many parents, teachers, and school leaders who'd like to be a part of the solution. Please let us.

Sincerely,

Carrie McLaren
Coalition for Equitable Schools
D15schools.org
District15schools@gmail.com

TESTIMONY OF
MICHELE GREENBERG

NEW YORK CITY COUNCIL
COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

December 7, 2017

My name is Michele Greenberg, and I am the parent co-chair of the diversity committee at PS 372 (also called The Children's School) in Brooklyn. We are a district-wide, unzoned school in Community School District 15 and one of the original seven schools chosen to participate in the pilot admissions program with the goal of increasing and maintaining diversity at individual schools throughout the city. I believe that this program has been transformational in increasing access to individual schools like ours, but, as I outline below, schools and districts need more support from DOE with outreach and support to achieve true integration. Moreover, the DOE needs a plan to address school segregation across District 15 that includes input from the youth who have already taken leadership such as IntegrateNYC and other stakeholders.

What needs to happen in our individual school, (which is currently majority white), is that we must do the work to ensure that our school is not just diverse in numbers but is integrated and inclusive in our culture, staff, and curriculum. This means not only doing outreach to neighborhoods and communities in our district that are underrepresented, but making sure we translate communications, have a culturally responsive curriculum, provide buddies for new families, invite organizations such as Border Crossers to do workshops with parents and staff, make sure our after-school program is viable as more families are unable to pay the full fee, make school events affordable to families of all economic means, and the list goes on. We lobbied for years to be able to have an admissions system like this and we want to see it succeed in a real way.

So far, most of the efforts that we have made in this direction, while supported by our administration, have been parent- and teacher-initiated and -run. This means that all of the work I mentioned has been done with volunteer labor using a small amount of funds from the administration for printing flyers and from the PTA for trainings. But we need more support from DOE to be able to succeed. We should not have to use PTA funds for this critical work, and these important efforts should not be solely the responsibility of parents and staff. We propose that schools working on desegregation be given funds to hire diversity coordinators to oversee all the above activities as well as network with other schools, produce publicity materials, hire organizations to do anti-racism training for parents, administration and staff, produce signage and other translated materials, and develop culturally responsive curricula.

TESTIMONY TO THE EDUCATION COMMITTEE OF THE NEW YORK CITY COUNCIL

DATE: Thursday, December 7, 2017

BY: Ayanna Behin, President of the Community Education Council for District 13 in Brooklyn

* * *

Hello, my name is Ayanna Behin. Three years ago, I testified before this body as a PTA president and attached a report from the Century Foundation for you to read. In it, Halley Potter wrote:

"Most K-12 education reforms are about trying to make "separate but equal" schools for rich and poor work well. The results of these efforts have been discouraging."

At the time, we were advocating for a tool that would allow school principals to use controlled choice to set aside seats for students based on race, economics, and/or ability to address segregation and increase diversity of all kinds in our schools.

Today, I am the President of the Community Education Council for District 13 in Brooklyn. Our District is large and incredibly diverse – racially, economically, and socially. Our schools include children from Bed Stuy, Park Slope, Fort Greene, Clinton Hill, Brooklyn Heights and DUMBO. Like many of the other school districts in New York City, this puts us on the front lines of the mission to consciously desegregate our schools by every metric. For us, this is not just a conversation, it is a daily reality for students and families, for a community that is striving to overcome the mistakes of our past and chart a better course for our future.

As the home of 2 controlled choice schools, we have seen how controlled choice works and we encourage you to keep it as one of many tools to unravel the deliberate institutionalization of racism, classism and sorting of students into winners and losers.

In the 3 years since your last hearing on diversity, we have learned a lot about how deeply entrenched segregation is and how a parent's fears that the "right" K class will lead to the right college for their student while the "wrong" class will lead to a lifetime of poverty and pain continue to perpetuate a system that while flawed is not irredeemable. Our schools are filled with dedicated and talented teachers and administrators, caring and committed families and most importantly children that are eager to learn.

We can desegregate our schools. By continuing to shine a light on the fact that our schools were segregated on purpose and can only become desegregated on purpose. We need to make sure that our definition of diversity remains broad to include diversity in many forms – racial, economic, gender and ability. But, we must make sure that our clear intention to integrate our schools is not diluted by these other goals.

Diversity is not enough, we need anti-racist pedagogy in the classrooms, which starts with teacher training and classroom observation, as well as providing teachers with the tools to teach,

including books. We need to rethink the way that our schools are financed so that our schools are equitably resourced. In our district, parent choice has made the difference in desegregating some of our schools. An admissions process with integration as a factor could speed this along. This must go hand in hand with Schoolwide Enrichment, adding curriculum and pedagogy that makes schools more attractive and helps them do a better job of meeting the needs of a diverse student body is a critical factor that should not be overlooked.

We do not need to reinvent the wheel, the how and why of desegregation has been measured, debated, and detailed. With the authority, tools, and effective oversight, each district should be able to begin implementing an array of desegregation programs today. None of them will be perfect, but they can move us closer to the vision of an equitable and integrated school system that serves the needs of every student well regardless of income level, race or ability. We can build on each success and modify programs as needed to give each child an opportunity to shine.

Thank you for your time.

TESTIMONY OF BRONX BOROUGH PRESIDENT RUBEN DIAZ JR.

BEFORE THE NYC COUNCIL COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

REGARDING DIVERSITY IN NYC PUBLIC SCHOOLS

December 7, 2017

Diversity in our public schools is a significant issue: Equity in education is required so that all students can have the opportunity to flourish in their careers and lives.

Today, I am submitting testimony on a particular aspect of that issue that impacts many students, including Black and Latino students throughout the city: Diversity in programs for gifted students in New York City.

I highlight this issue in my report Fixing the Pipeline: Solutions to Disparities in Gifted Education in New York City.

- In January 2017, Brooklyn Borough President Eric Adams and Bronx Borough President Ruben Diaz Jr., announced the creation of a new task force to study issues surrounding gifted and talented education in New York City public schools, as well as the admissions process for the city's specialized high schools.

- The task force was comprised of government officials, community members and parents who are familiar with the issues gifted students face in New York City schools. The task force held a public hearing in The Bronx and in Brooklyn earlier this year, and has put forward a set of recommendations for the future of gifted education in New York City, as outlined in its report.

- While 70 percent of students citywide are black or Latino, they make up only 27 percent of the students in gifted programs.

- Only 3.8 and 6.5 percent of admissions offers to the eight specialized high schools went to black and Latino students this year, respectively. In terms of actual numbers, that means that more than 6,600 Latino students in NYC applied for the specialized high schools but only 330 earned admission.

OFFICE OF THE BRONX BOROUGH PRESIDENT - 851 GRAND CONCOURSE, SUITE 301, BRONX, NY 10451 - (718) 590-3500

- Nearly 5,800 black middle school students in NYC applied to eight of the city's specialized high schools but only 194 were admitted.

- The admissions numbers for Black and Latino students are well below the approximately 18 percent of total test takers that gained admission to one of the eight schools.

- On June 20th, Borough Presidents Diaz and Adams stood together in front of Tweed and announced the release of the report.

Overview of The Report's Recommendations:

This report makes the following recommendations and we are calling for their immediate implementation.

1. **All communities must have equal access to G&T programs in kindergarten.**

For far too long, the DOE has not done enough to ensure that G&T classes exist in the earliest grades in every community in this city. A student's zip code should not decide whether or not they have access to an accelerated learning environment, and these programs should be available from the kindergarten level upwards.

2. **All students in public pre-K programs must be tested for G&T programs.**

If more students are tested more students will qualify for gifted and talented programs. The DOE should immediately enact a plan to test every student in a public pre-K program for gifted and talented classes, in order to ensure that students in underserved communities are not left out of the selection process because of an information gap or any bias as to who is encouraged to take the test. An opt-out option should be available to parents.

3. **Students who qualify for a gifted and talented program must be offered a seat in their community.**

Every student who qualifies for a G&T program and wants a seat in their district must be found a seat in their own community, be it their zoned school or another school in their local school district. Students should not have to leave their borough for a seat in a G&T program.

4. **Middle school G&T programs must be expanded, so that the pipeline to high school is never broken. More citywide G&T programs[i], which are proving a successful model, should be implemented in The Bronx and elsewhere in the city where they are lacking**

The dearth of middle school G&T programs in this city, especially in traditionally underserved communities such as the South Bronx and North Brooklyn, is unsustainable and perhaps the largest impediment to a strong K-8 pipeline to the city's specialized high schools. Strong middle school G&T programs must be created in all communities, be they district level or citywide.

5. **All students who need it should have access to free or low cost test prep for the Specialized High School Admissions Test (SHSAT).**

Parents who cannot afford additional test prep services for the SHSAT should not see their children left behind for lack of funds. Programs that provide free test prep services for the SHSAT should be expanded dramatically to reach all students that would benefit from them. The top 15 percent of each Bronx middle school's 5th and 6th grades should be given automatic offers into a DREAM-Specialized High School Institute programming.

6. **The DOE must move to using admissions methods that do not rely solely on the SHSAT for the eight schools that rely on it.**

Access to high-quality high-level public high school education should not be based entirely on the results of a single test. Additionally, the top 5 percent of each Bronx and Brooklyn middle school graduating class should be offered an automatic seat at a newly created, borough specific NYCSHS. This will serve as an explicit incentive to children and drive performance.

7. **G&T Education Should be Inclusive**

G&T should allow for instances of students with IEPs.

8. **The DOE should pay for a student's bus transportation to a program in another borough.**

Currently, parents who do not have citywide G&T options in their own borough are forced to pay for costly bus service to send their children to schools in other boroughs. If adequate programs do not exist in a student's community, it is the school system, not the student's family, who should pick up the cost of busing the student to a program in another borough.

- For too long, students in communities all over the city—such as the South Bronx and Central Brooklyn—have been denied the opportunities that their counterparts in other neighborhoods have been provided when it comes to gifted and talented programs.

- Our students are denied the ability to experience the highest level of learning at the lowest grades. Additionally, minority enrollment in our specialized high schools is low.

- I have long advocated that the Department of Education test every single student in a public pre-K program for a gifted class. More students tested will mean more students qualify for these classes, and more local gifted classes should open in our neighborhoods.

- The Department of Education has refused to move on this simple request to bring equity to our youngest students.

- We cannot send our children to Stuyvesant, Bronx Science and Brooklyn Tech if they are not prepared. And we cannot expect them to be prepared if they do not have the same advantages that are offered to other communities.

- Our children lack gifted programs and adequate test prep resources, and are then forced to use a single high-stakes test to get into our specialized high schools.

- We also call for fairer busing policies and the creation of Citywide gifted and talented programs in underserved geographic areas such as The Bronx. The results of the currently broken system are predictable, and we can no longer stand for this level of systemic inequity.

- Our report outlines several very straightforward proposals that the Department of Education can implement right now to allow gifted elementary and middle school education and the specialized high schools to better serve some underserved populations. There is no need to wait. We can take steps to better serve all of New York City and truly promote equity today.

I urge the Department of Education to implement the recommendations of this report and to increase diversity in programs for gifted students in New York City.

I thank the committee for taking the time to consider these recommendations.

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[1] Citywide G&T programs are programs that accept students from all boroughs and typically go from kindergarten through eighth grade (with the exception of one program that goes through high school). Students must score a 97 or above on the placement test to gain admission.

Testimony of the New York Immigration Coalition and Flanbwayan Haitian Literacy Project

Oversight Hearing: "Diversity in New York City Schools"

December 7, 2017

Thank you to the members of the Council for convening this hearing and to Chairman Dromm for his continued leadership for immigrant communities. This testimony is submitted by Kim Sykes, Director of Education Policy at the New York Immigration Coalition (NYIC) and Darnell Benoit, Director of Flanbwayan Haitian Literacy Project.

The NYIC is an umbrella policy and advocacy organization with over 200 members across New York State, and we aim to achieve a fairer and more just society that values the contributions of immigrants and extends opportunity to all. We fight to increase English language learners' (ELLs') and immigrant students' access to a quality education and to expand opportunity for their parents to be engaged.

The mission of Flanbwayan Haitian Literacy Project is to transform the lives of Haitian newcomer youth through education and leadership development and to raise awareness of immigrant education issues both in the community and citywide. Since its founding in 2005, Flanbwayan has supported over 600 Haitian newcomer youth to graduate high school by ensuring that they are appropriately placed into schools that have the capacity and resources to meet their unique needs as English Language Learners (ELLs). As part of this work, Flanbwayan has led Your School, Your Choice, a campaign informing newcomer immigrant youth and families about how to enroll in high school in New York City and gathering stories regarding the barriers that they face.

Woven within the diversity in schools issue is the question of which students get access to "good schools" or schools best positioned to meet their needs. Newcomer English Language Learners (ELLs) face challenging issues that put them at a disadvantage from the very beginning in accessing those schools because they are often enrolling "over the counter" through Family Welcome Centers.[1] While the DOE has made some progress in recent years and has recently taken steps toward working together to improve Family Welcome Centers' ability to support immigrant families, we feel it's important to raise challenges immigrant families have been experiencing in order for Council to have a full picture of the diversity in schools issue. If we want to increase the number of ELL students who enroll in schools with quality instruction that are

adequately equipped to meet their needs, one step we need to take is addressing the barriers to making informed enrollment choices that newcomer immigrant families often face at Family Welcome Centers[2].

Issues at Family Welcome Centers have not been given the visibility that inequities within the formal high school choice[3] process have received. (This spring alone, high profile coverage in The New York Times[4] and Chalkbeat[5] rightly brought to light significant problems around high school choice.) This limited focus ignores a critical facet of the broader discussion around why only some students get access to an education that meets their needs.

ELLs in New York City lag far behind their peers for whom English is a first language, evinced by the fact that merely 31% graduate (compared with 73% of all students); further, their state test scores are in the single digits realm[6]. Only 8.5% of ELLs are prepared for college and careers[7]. ELLs have extraordinary potential, outperforming their native-English-speaking peers when they get the right support[8], making this a particularly devastating situation.

Many ELLs encounter a first hurdle at one of the DOE's Family Welcome Centers. There are a range of barriers facing newcomer immigrant families in finding a good match at Family Welcome Centers. While Family Welcome Centers have made some important improvements, they still routinely fall short of providing families with essential information and an opportunity to discuss ELL program options and the corresponding rights in this context[9] for students soon-to-be identified as ELLs[10]. Staff fail to engage immigrant families in a conversation regarding the student's interests, family's preferences, and nature of the enrollment process - resulting in uninformed parents and ELLs being sent to schools that do not meet their needs.

The Centers themselves often lack cultural competency and are largely considered by community leaders and members as uninviting at best to immigrant families. They often treat immigrant families in a deeply disrespectful manner that further discourages ELL parents' active participation in identifying the most appropriate program and school for their child or speaking up for their child's interests. Though difficult to measure, qualitative feedback from community leaders indicates that these dynamics serve as a marked disincentive for immigrant families to more fully engage or place trust in the public school system.

The end result is that newcomer immigrant families are not given a real chance to put their child in a "good" school - one with programs the family believes will give that child a likely opportunity to succeed - because the family was not given the opportunity to have a conversation about what a "good" school means for them.

Research has demonstrated the inequitable outcomes of students enrolling through Family Welcome Centers. In their 2013 report *Over the Counter, Under the Radar*[11],

the Annenberg Institute for School Reform studied enrollment through the city's enrollment offices outside of the high school choice process. Children and families who enroll outside the choice process, or over-the-counter (OTC), are among the school system's highest-need students, including newly arrived immigrants. The report found that these students are "disproportionately assigned to struggling high schools and high schools that are subsequently targeted for closure or are undergoing the closure process." As such, the highest-need students are concentrated in struggling high schools that are often ill-equipped to serve them.

Given the disparate outcomes for ELLs and their distinct needs, as well as Family Welcome Centers' role as the main avenue through which immigrant families learn about and are assigned schools outside of standard application periods, there is a strong imperative to ensure that every opportunity is leveraged to enroll them in schools with programs best equipped to support them.

Community leaders have long seen that the quality of the match between an ELL and their school matters tremendously for their success, and data underpin this as well. New York City boasts a number of strong schools committed to serving ELL and immigrant students - notably, International High Schools, which cater to serving newcomer immigrant youth. That the graduation rates for students from International High Schools are notably higher than those of ELL students from other New York City high schools underscores what is possible for ELLs when they are enrolled in schools that can meet their needs.[12] While the supply of such schools is certainly not unlimited and part of the equation, we must leverage the system we have now to ensure that each ELL gets the best, most informed match possible because their family was given a chance to understand the enrollment process and the programmatic and school options, and to advocate for them.

We look forward to working with the DOE to improve Family Welcome Centers' ability to partner with immigrant families to make informed enrollment placements and thereby improving the quality of education for ELLs who would otherwise attend schools and programs ill-equipped to meet their needs.

We thank Council for this opportunity to provide testimony.

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[1] Family Welcome Centers are the DOE's borough-based enrollment offices that enroll newcomer immigrants in pre-K programs through high school in New York City.

[2] Newcomer immigrant families enrolling students in high school must enroll at Family Welcome Centers if they missed the high school choice process. Newcomer families with a zoned school enrolling students in elementary or middle school may enroll at their zoned school. Thus while issues at Family Welcome Centers are relevant for families enrolling across grades, they are particularly acute for high school families, who have no other option.

[3] Through this process, 8th graders submit a list of high schools that they would like to attend. The DOE then matches student with a school, based on the student's preferences and additional criteria.

[4] www.nytimes.com/2017/05/05/nyregion/school-choice-new-york-city-high-school-admissions.html

[5]www.chalkbeat.org/posts/ny/2017/06/06/city-to-eliminate-high-school-admissions-method-that-favored-families-with-time-and-resources/

[6] http://schools.nyc.gov/Accountability/data/GraduationDropoutReports/default.htm

[7] http://usny.nysed.gov/docs/reform-agenda-hearing-testimony-nyc.pdf

[8] New York City Department of Education, News Release, October 12, 2011

[9] ELLs have a legal right to special supports to develop English proficiency, such as the right to choose among different English language development program options, including English as a New Language (formerly ESL) and bilingual programs.

[10] Family Welcome Centers cannot formally identify ELLs; this happens at the school where the student is placed. However, Family Welcome Centers can, and have been obligated to under New York City's Corrective Action Plan, provide information on ELL programs and rights to families due to longstanding issues in this area.

[11] http://www.annenberginstitute.org/sites/default/files/OTC_Report_Summary.pdf

[12] http://internationalsnps.org/results/student-results/

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December 11, 2017

VIA E-MAIL (HEARINGS@COUNCIL.NYC.GOV)

Jonathan Ettricks
Director, Legislative Documents Unit
New York City Council
253 Broadway, 7th Floor
New York, NY 10007

Re: Civil Service & Labor Committee Hearing Notices

Dear Mr. Ettricks:

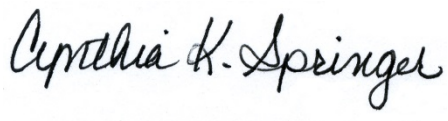
I am writing on behalf of Monta Bolles, Patrick Thompson, Julie Kirkpatrick and myself to inform you that we will be unable to attend the Civil Service & Labor Committee Hearing tomorrow afternoon due to other commitments. Moreover, your letter references "USIC Underground Safety Contractor Workers' *Unfair* Pay and Benefits." The fact that you have already determined USIC is "unfair" cannot help but lead us to determine that you have reached a conclusion and our testimony would be given little consideration.

Despite what the CWA has apparently communicated to you, I can assure you that USIC has been negotiating with CWA in good faith for the better part of two years. Communications from council members reference several topics including wages, sick time, vacation and on-call, all of which have been points of our extensive negotiations and all to which USIC has offered several creative solutions, which, to date, CWA has rejected.

We believe we have made significant progress towards reaching a contract, particularly over the last six months. Our next bargaining session is scheduled for January 16th, and this session (like the four preceding it) will be conducted with the assistance of an experienced federal mediator. We are hopeful that the mediator will be able to help both sides reach agreement on a fair and reasonable contract, which allows USIC to remain competitive while meeting the needs of its customers and its Locate Technicians in New York City and Long Island.

Very truly yours,

FAEGRE BAKER DANIELS LLP



Cynthia K. Springer

Subject: Prof. NoIiwe Rooks : Statement for the NYC City CounciI Education Committee Hearing 12/7

As literary agent for Professor NoIiwe Rooks,, author of the recently published book *CUTTING SCHOOL: Privatization, Segregation, and the End of Public Education*
I am honored to submit the foIIowing statement for today's hearing on her behalf.

Thank you.

Cornell University Professor NoIiwe Rooks reminds us in her new book *CUTTING SCHOOL: Privatization, Segregation, and the End of Public Education,* published by The New Press, publishers also of *The New Jim Crow*, that New York City has struggled with school segregation and the inequality that results since the days of the 1954 Supreme Court Brown vs Board of Education decision, when Black parents and civil rights activists urged city officials to institute desegregation plans, and white parents and politicians protested plans to bus Black and Puerto Rican students from Harlem to Staten Island.

In her book *CUTTING SCHOOL* Rooks also reminds us of the damage done by education systems marked by any kind of inequality: students educated in wealthy schools perform weII as measured by standard educational benchmarks. Students educated in poor schools do not. As Rooks writes, 'Racial and economic integration is the one systemic solution that we know ensures the tide wiII lift aII educational boats equally.

Further, Rooks warns us in *CUTTING SCHOOL* of the danger of offering different educational content to poor children, such as a focus on vocational education for the poor and idiosyncratic forms of educational funding and delivery such as cyber education. While not ensuring educational equality, such separate, segregated and unequal forms of education have provided the opportunity for businesses to make a profit selling schooling.

Rooks caIIs this specific form of educational profit '*segrenomics*.' Segrenomics, or the business of profiting specifically from high levels of racial and economic segregation is on the rise. Educational practices based on segrenomic practices trickle downward from the wealthy and weII connected to poor communities and those of color.

In New York City, we have seen this, Rooks points out, in the rise of what she calls 'contemporary company schools' such as the IBM partnership begun in 2011 for a six-year organizational structure for high schools, whereby corporate employers help to shape the curriculum and students leave with a traditional high school diploma, a community coIIege degree and possibly a job by the time they graduate. 96 percent of the 520 students first enrolled in this program were Black or Latino. By 2014, IBM announced they were on track to open 60 such schools, and companies such as Microsoft and Con Edison began to consider opening their own company schools. Governor Cuomo then announced that 16 such schools would open statewide by this year.

Rooks argues that this is vocational education by another name, as weII as an example of a more utilitarian form of segregated education of the sort that has long been overprescribed for young people in struggling circumstances. While we are still waiting to see if this form of education segrenomics actually benefits the students for whom it was designed, Rooks gives the last word in her book to two students from poor neighborhoods. One of them, Dwight, now a graduate of Princeton, grew up in the South Bronx, in an aII-Black neighborhood, a mix of African Americans, Afro Caribbean including Latinos and West Africans. Dwight has four recommendations, which Rooks would like to pass along to the Education Committee. Dwight says that if he could 'wave a wand', that is, not worry about costs or politics, he would prescribe not the practice of segrenomics but four essential things: 1) smaIIer class sizes, 2) an extended school year, 3) an extended school day [aII things that wealthier schools have] and 4) teachers who either live in or do community service in the community, and thus know the kids - and their parents - outside of school and recognize them 'as humans as opposed to data or obnoxious people', and know the neighborhood not as hostile territory, but as the community it is.

Thank you.

Professor Rooks is reachable at nrooks@cornell.edu
Her personal site is: http://noliwerooks.com
She is on twitter as @nrookie

my best,

Diana Finch

—
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TEENS take CHARGE

Testimony to the City Council Education Committee from members of Teens Take Charge

Thursday, December 7, 2017

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To learn more about our work, watch the video of our testimony, and read additional student testimony from public events we have hosted, visit **teenstakecharge.com**.

E-mail: teenstakechargenyc@gmail.com
Facebook & Instagram: @teentstakechargenyc

Taylor McGraw:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify this afternoon. My name is Taylor McGraw. I host a podcast about school segregation called The Bell, and I facilitate a student-led group called Teens Take Charge that fights for educational equity alongside Integrate NYC and other courageous student leaders.

For the record, I'm disappointed that the seats in front of us are less full than the seats behind us. I hope we can find another forum to make sure that the right people are hearing the messages that these students have.

I used to teach history, so I want to start there. July 24, 1956. New York Times. Front page headline: *City's Schools Open a Major Campaign to Spur Integration*. This is two years after the *Brown v. Board* decision, which compelled city leaders to form an integration commission out of a "moral obligation." In the spring of '57, the board of education unanimously adopted the commission's sweeping plan to integrate schools. It included deep structural changes that would have transformed an unequal school system. The plan was to be in "full force" within a year's time.

But, white segregationist mothers and fathers made sure it never happened. These parents claimed they weren't opposed to "natural integration" – just give it more time, they said. It's funny – also in 1957, a segregationist governor in Arkansas said the same thing, as justification for blocking nine black teenagers from entering an all-white high school. The hypocrisy could not have been more plain.

As far as I can tell, the difference between whites in the South and whites in the North is that the northerners have been far more successful at maintaining segregation. The biggest crime is that sixty years later, we teach students about what happened in Little Rock, but we don't teach them what happened in New York City or Chicago.

Today, we are in a position that none of us would have chosen but all of us – including the mayor – must confront. The schools here are still segregated. And they aren't segregated because of 400 years of American history – they're segregated because segregationist policies continue. Selective and specialized high school admissions are segregationist policies. Gifted and Talented programs are segregationist policies. School assignment zones have been drawn, in many cases, to maximize segregation.

We must teach students of color that these policies are the reason they have inferior resources in their schools. We must teach white students that these policies are the reasons they have outsized access to an elite education. Otherwise, students will continue to think that the conditions in their

schools are normal, that if they get more they must be worth more and that if they get less they must be worth less. We must teach them that this is not a meritocracy, it is a caste system.

When we teach students this truth, when our leaders aren't afraid to use the term "segregation," and when we stop cowering to the pocketbooks of white power, we won't need hearings like this because we will all understand that integration is the same "moral obligation" that your predecessors recognized sixty years ago. And until we finally meet that obligation, we will continue denying hundreds of thousands of black and Hispanic children the equitable education we keep promising them but which they have never seen.

Pilot programs and incremental steps were not the answer in 1957 and they're not the answer now. We don't need another commission or task force to study the issue. Adults have screwed this up for decades. It's time to listen to the students and let them lead the way.

Jederick Estrella:

Good afternoon, my name is Jederick Estrella. I'm a senior at Victory Collegiate High School and a member of Teens Take Charge.

When it came to whether I would attend college I always knew that it was what I was fighting for. I didn't know at the time if I was fighting to go to college for myself or my immigrant family from Dominican Republic. Coming here to this country from Dominican Republic, I didn't expect to be so split. Watching shows on television one would think all high schools across the country are full of this so-called "integration." I came to realize that it was quite the opposite. It isn't daytime television and there isn't any commercial breaks after this dramatic scene. I'm a son of two modest, hardworking immigrants, but it's apparent we're not lucky enough.

I didn't get into the pristine high school in Manhattan. Instead, I got a school in Canarsie. I didn't get the school with kids of different backgrounds, I got a school that is 88.6% black. Ironic that most of us aren't college ready.

When it concerns safety, I don't even get that sense of security at my school. It was December 20, 2016. This is 3rd period, and about a few minutes from class coming to an end. All I can hear are books being shuffled into bags and overall chatter. Then all we hear is a sharp crack and a slam. A bullet fires into the room and all of us collectively huddle under desks. Glass lands on the floor. Some kids at this point are commando crawling out of the room. I felt like I was on a battlefield. As if I had to prove to someone that this education was worth receiving. Like I was at war with something I couldn't see.

That AP Biology teacher quit, and I wonder where she is today. I wonder if she'll ever teach at a school like mine again.

I task you with spending a day in our shoes. Clear your schedules. Get testimony from students that go to these "bad schools." Especially the ones you oversee in your districts that fall behind, because they need your help. They're students just like me, going to schools just like me, trying to make something out of themselves just like me.

Dulce Marquez:

Good afternoon, my name is Dulce Marquez. I'm a senior at New Heights Academy Charter School and a member of Teens Take Charge.

This year I am taking Calculus. In my high school, Calculus is the most challenging math class available. Our Calculus teacher shared with us recently a statistic from *The Atlantic:* "Despite the fact that Latino kids make up a quarter of all public-school students and black children comprised more than 15 percent of students that year, just a third of high schools where at least three-fourths of students were black and Latino offered calculus."

As we allowed this to sink in, she continued, "We don't have textbooks. The textbooks from last year were too broken and in such ugly state that they cannot longer be used. So hopefully our school will soon order our new textbooks."

The majority of the students in my Calculus class are girls and all of the students in the room are Latino or African-American. So, why did my teacher share this statistic with us? She also showed us a picture of a Calculus class at a more privileged school. The students in the picture didn't look like us. In fact, they were white. The majority of the students in the class were boys, holding calculators and textbooks. In our class, we often have a shortage of calculators and some of them hardly even work.

I am here to talk about the shortage of supplies and resources at my school. I am here to represent my classmates, to represent my school, and represent the group of people called the "minority" but are actually the Majority.

My class is the epitome of the future environment of classrooms. My question to you today is, Why is it that if our classrooms of tomorrow will look like my Calculus class, why are we not fighting for these classes to have the best of resources?

According to this article by *The Atlantic*, "the report found that high schools with high numbers of black and Latino students were less likely to offer physics, chemistry, and even algebra II."

Why is it the we offer less opportunities to the minorities but then blame them for the detrimental effects of non-educated people in the American economy? I am here because I don't want to just ask these questions. I want to solve them.

Written testimony submitted by Teens Take Charge members who could not attend in person:

Wyatt Perez
Senior, Eagle Academy for Young Men

Every time I see large groups of Caucasian teenagers on the train, there are usually two reasons why: the Yankees are playing or the kids from Bronx Science have been dismissed.

On the hourlong trip from my public high school on the outskirts of the South Bronx to a college prep program in lower Manhattan, I see the Bronx Science students get off the train at 86th or 59th Street. Like everyone who has ever been on a train before, I sometimes peek at what the passenger next is reading, watching, etc. As my head aches at the thought of thick practice SAT packets awaiting me, Bronx Science kids quickly pack up their complex work into their Herschel bags and go home to rest up.

Later, after two hours of supplemental instruction in math and english, my friends and I will take the train back north and get off at 167th Street or Burnside Avenue. We might make it home by nine. All of this work is done with hopes of attending the same prestigious colleges as the Bronx Science kids – that is, if we receive enough financial aid.

The average household income for 86th Street's zip code is about $340,000. Burnside's zip code? $31,000. The differences in school funding are also two distant numbers. Contributions from parents, alumni, and other private funders give schools like Bronx Science more resources than others. My school, which is located in between a mental health center and a halfway house, seems to exist in a funding desert.

New York City, known for its diversity and embrace of immigrants, has one of the most segregated school systems in the country. Although the high school admissions process theoretically gives all students lots of choices, low-income black and Latino students end up clustered in the same schools year after year. Meanwhile, students at selective or specialized high schools are mostly white or Asian and affluent. Out of the 5,078 students that got accepted into specialized high schools this year, only 524 are black or Latino – in a school system where 7 in 10 students are black or Latino. At Stuyvesant High, considered the city's best, only 13 of the 1,000 available seats were given to black students.

My school is 96% black or Latino and 82% of the students meet the requirements for free or reduced price lunch. The school promotes helping students of color from low-income backgrounds graduate and redefine statistics. But the inferior academic instruction at my school, layered on top of years of inferior instruction in elementary and middle schools, cripples students' chances. My peers perform poorly on Regents Exams and SATs, evidence that they are missing out on material essential for college success.

My school is one of at least 45 high schools in New York City with above average graduation rates that mask college readiness rates below 20%. At my school, 51% of the class of 2016 graduated and went on to college; however, only 9% were "college ready" based on CUNY's standards. The same graduating class at Bronx Science had a 100% graduation rate and a 100% college readiness rate. My school's average SAT score was an 816. Bronx Science? 1389.

Evidently, there are sharp contrasts between the education provided to affluent and low-income students. The idea of educational equality is flawed in the sense that a child's early years, which are the most essential to one's education, depend largely on a family's income. Even if schools were "equal," they could not compensate for years of being at a disadvantage. The problem is, schools widen those existing inequalities.

The admissions test for specialized high schools is flawed. I'll admit that I took the test a few years ago and did not do well enough to get accepted, but the exam is not an accurate measure of a student's ability to perform well at a specialized high school. It is moreso empirical evidence of the achievement gap. Specialized high schools should take more factors, such as academic portfolios and personal statements, into consideration when managing admissions.

I'll continue to make the most of the opportunities that have come my way. As I start my senior year of high school, I think of my competition, the Bronx Science kids of the world. I think of the kids who have grown up in the 86th Streets of other states and countries. For now, I may only see them on the train, but next fall, I'll see them at freshman orientation.

Sabrina DuQuesnay
Senior, Brooklyn College Academy

I will remember those who fought for racially integrated schools in a segregated nation,

Those who, rather than stand on the sidelines, took active participation.

Children are robbed of their opportunity to succeed lacking the tools,

Because they live in an area which forces them to go to low-achieving schools.

In my old middle school, 8% of students met standards on the state math test, that's 8%, imagine the number of those who didn't pass yet.

I'm lucky now to go to a high school that prepares me, yet what about the rest, what about treating them fairly?

My zoned high school 18K635, has a 15% College and career readiness rate, may I ask why?

Prominent Gang affiliations coloring our hallways with shades of red and blue, the irony, that's apart of the cops light color, too.

We're not all too different, yet not exactly the same, but should our socioeconomic difference be justified as blame, that students miss the opportunity for a quality education, based solely on the fact that they reside at a particular location?

We must not be acquiescent. Ready to accept the time for change is gone.
Should not our schools reflect the diversity which we as a city pride ourselves upon?

We must question: What do well-funded schools have, that underfunded schools don't?
Better yet, what can well-off students do that underprivileged students won't?

In this sense, we all have equal capabilities, yet it's educational inequity that limits these opportunities.

New York has one of the most segregated school systems – housing projects and economic backgrounds determining the rate of success. The school funds are unequally spread, leading to unequal resource access.

James Coleman, former president of the American Sociological Association, in 1966 published a report outlining a study of school performance and race relations. The study found that minority students performed better in racially integrated schools, that students had increased academic preparation, with access to these tools.

I remember in middle school not being able to bring textbooks home, weird tasting water ever present at the fountains. Students prosper on the other side of this economic divide, yet we are rendered inert at the end of this mountain.

Young elementary school students lack textbooks in phonology, then are expected to ace the grammar section of the SAT.

Seemingly drain-like, the money and resources flow to one side, as so with this delicate sea of equality, does one see a change in tide.

No afterschool programs increasing potential disruptive behavior. We are the change we seek, yet our apparent success is rooted in failure.

They say that it's residential income segregation—the separation of residents by income and the isolation. The neighborhoods are split, racially segregated, access to better schools determined by location.

Since racially and economically segregated housing leads to racially and economically segregated neighborhood schools, we can increase integration through policies that lead to more integrated neighborhoods.

It’s not just me, but the children we raise, it’s more than the past that we are fighting to erase.

Lest we forget that it's the past that we must remember to face, in times of adversity, we forget that it's commonplace to ignore the problems, ignore the fact that kids need stimulation, recreational programs, resources to aid in their communication.

We have a duty not only to ourselves, but to the future generation, to help the young minds stand steady on a solid foundation, first by taking active roles in our communities instead of supporting mere narrations, and when change is stagnant, we organize demonstrations. To teach the kids that we are more than our past mistakes, that under pressure we’ll persevere because we are well aware of the stakes.

That despite the obstacles, despite the politics and more, we are willing to fight this inequitable war, that the right to a proper education should be granted to all, because united we stand but divided we fall.

Let us be remembered, not for lack of contribution, but as men and women of a society that when given problems, found solutions. Let us not be remembered as dwellers of the past, but as present and future thinkers whose legacy will forever last.

I will remember those who fought for integrated schools in a segregated nation.

Those who, rather than stand on the sidelines, took active participation.

Those who are willing to fight for students to go to quality schools regardless of learning mode.

Those who understand that obtaining an education should not be determined by performance, race, tax bracket, or zip code.

I will remember those who will fight to ensure they are well informed.

Those who are willing to help change the system that we undeniably formed.

Yacine Fall
Freshman Class President, Smith College
2017 graduate of Beacon High School

To whom it *should* concern:

I live in the center of Harlem where I attended middle school, but now I go to an elite public high school in midtown. Two different worlds. Only 5 miles apart.

At my high school 93% of students graduate college ready. At my zoned school in Harlem? 7%. I was one of few students in my middle school to go through the entire high catalogue to find a high school outside of my neighborhood with more resources. I didn't realize that an A in Harlem was not the same as an A in a majority white high school on the upper west side. I had to go through this process on my own as a low income child of immigrants who did not understand the American education system. At age 13, I had to create my own definition of a good high school, not knowing that the high school I attended would largely impact my future college and career.

In my school, I have the privilege of walking through unlocked doors.

Security guards sit in a corner, smiling, wishing us good morning.

Vast hallways, white walls, high ceilings, bright lights.

My own textbooks that I can bring home if I need to.

Multiple recording studios.

Professional 600 dollar cameras that I can rent for a day.

A psychiatrist is offered.

Vegans are accommodated.

Teachers do not have to teach to a test and have flexibility in creating their own lessons, where group discussions about current events are far more common than multiple choice exams.
I go to a school where the majority of students are white, and I wonder how I made it there despite living in a neighborhood where opportunity is slight. Where teachers only stay in schools for 2 years before deciding they've had enough. Where poverty is high and expectations are low, and I cannot

help but think, what made it this way? What happened in 5 miles that determined who got to graduate, who went to college, who got to explore their talents, who learned to question?

To whom it should concern, there's a plague of poverty in my neighborhood that eats at our schools. To whom it should concern, there are two different worlds only five miles apart. Please tell me what happened.

P.S. I've always been told that I had to work two times as hard. I put in extra work and hours into academics and studying so I would not end up at my local high school where I would be cast away as a statistic. I worked through the system to find ways to open up doors for myself; going through ancient books to find the rules to a foreign game.

I was a black girl who was the daughter of immigrants with education the only hope of redefining her life. But it seemed like the bar was always set out of reach for people like me and most of our time was spent elevating ourselves to reach the bar instead of figuring out how to surpass it. It was remarkable that I "beat the odds" and thought I'd find greener grass, but instead I was introduced to an elite education system that had no space for me.

I walked into a school where my black and brown peers struggled to stay afloat and were barely passing their classes. I came into a school where we were made to leave our identities and struggles out of the classroom. My elite school thought diversity ended when you put black and white students together and did not create a space for us to learn from those identities. No one told me about the rooms and spaces I would need to create for myself in order to survive. I remember a teacher saying he wouldn't learn to say the correct pronunciation of my name and another one going as far to calling me an "illegal refugee" within school walls.

The system tells us that getting into elite institutions is the goal to have a better education, but they do not know how to incorporate black and brown identities into their classrooms. I wonder why the more elite opportunities I can attain the more I feel I have to leave parts of me behind.
I am useful beyond numbers, so I ask: when will you be able to find talented black and brown students, and love us, too?

Haby Sondo
Freshman, Boston University
2017 graduate of Manhattan Center for Science and Mathematics

To whom it *should* concern:

High School Musical has always sent chills to my body. The lights, the excitement, the way the characters swiftly moved their bodies, gliding through the hallways of their marble white high school floors. The clean white locker rooms and the picturesque white cafeteria with the blood red trays and the well-prepared meals always made me envious.

That's because I am a product of the South Bronx, the product of a middle school across the street from the 169th projects.

I walked through metal detectors every day before I got into school, and inadvertently normalized the idea of getting shot or stabbed on my way there.

After all, Mohamadou was cornered with a knife and forced to give up his winter coat in exchange for his life.

Sebastian, Landry, and Moses were beaten up at parks after school. Ibn went to prison.

My little sister, Madina, and her friends saw their classmate's lifeless body on the concrete outside of her school.

So, you see, there was a part of me that knew that no matter where I ended up for high school, those picturesque TV scenes would never be my high school reality. I was not Troy, Gabriella, or Sharpay, and I would never attend High School Musical.

I was 12-year-old Haby who knew she had to get out of her neighborhood, the Haby who put an unwavering faith in the high school directory guide which was supposed to serve as my escape from of the dangers I faced in middle school, the guide which was to assure my entrance into a borough where my middle school fears could disappear.

The guide failed me. I was wrong.

I became a victim to the same environment, but with a different name.

My reality is gym lockers with brown rust.

My reality is the suffocating phenomenon known as poverty present on a daily basis.

It is evident that my school is in the middle of a war zone in Spanish Harlem, of people and students fighting their way out of the slums, the cracked roads, the weakened infrastructure, and the increasing poverty rates which work to strangle the community.

I often hear the voices of authoritative figures in my head screaming, "the only escape from your environment is an education, don't take it for granted!" But how can I, how can my brothers and sisters of the South Bronx "beat the odds" if our education system is broken?

I believed all my teachers were going to be like Erin Gruwell in the movie Freedom Writers, a teacher with an unwavering devotion to helping students open their minds to a limitless world of knowledge capable of bringing them to places they'd never imagined.

I believed that my intelligence would be measured by my ability to convey my thoughts through descriptive language, or the sophistication of my literary analysis.

This again was not my reality.

My reality is a teacher who spent class periods discussing how much he would have to pay for child support and custody battles with the mother of his child rather than teaching 9th grade students about the wonders of human organisms.

My reality is a teacher who rarely assigned homework or classwork and assigned grades based off what the students asked him to give them.

My reality is an AP teacher who tells her students who don't feel prepared enough to take the AP exam that their only job is to not disturb those who are.

My reality is a teacher telling me that I plagiarized a paper due to the sophistication of my writing.

My reality is a system in which four months of hard work is overshadowed by a series of midterms exams which account for 50% of my grade.

My reality is a set curriculum in which teachers are restricted to only teaching for a Regents exam, as if a three hour test is enough to sum up what a student has retained from the entire school year, as if a student's complex intelligence can be accurately assessed by bubbling A, B, C, or D.

High School Musical and its false hopes are an unreachable dream.

High school musical no longer sends chills to my body.

High School Musical is not my reality.

A public school in desperate need of reform is my reality.

Sherard Stephens
Freshman, Vanderbilt University
2017 graduate of Hostos-Lincoln Academy

To whom it *should* concern:

I go to a underprivileged high school snuggled in the South Bronx. The walls are painted a depressing shade of tan. Like many high schools in low-income areas, we share our building with another school. During transitions, the narrow hallways are as crammed and slow-moving as the huge line leading to my old middle school's single metal detector – a daily reminder of the lack of resources that schools in the Bronx have and of the way we were viewed as thugs before children that are excited to receive an education.

My high school is always disorganized. Instead of posting my class schedule for the semester beforehand, I must join a never-ending line on the first day of each semester. This disorder has left me stuck taking double periods of gym this semester, all because someone overlooked the fact that I needed to fulfill four gym credits in order to graduate. So, I sit in the gym bleachers most afternoons chatting it up with my friends about our prom arrangements, scroll down my Instagram feed a thousand times, and do my best to dodge errant volleyballs and basketballs.

Fortunately, my freshman year, I went into my guidance counselor's office and asked her how I could challenge myself outside of the not-so-difficult curriculum that my school offered. She recommended a college prep program called Sponsors for Educational Opportunity, which would help supplement the inadequate education my school provides. I applied. I got in.

I immediately noticed that I was becoming a different student amongst my peers. I was being taught techniques and concepts that I had never laid eyes on before in school. I walked into my regular high school classes with the confidence to answer all of the questions posed by my teacher. I found myself writing on the board and teaching my classmates faster ways to solve math problems. I was ahead.

By the end of my tenth grade year I finished all of my New York State Regents requirements. In eleventh grade, I worked toward getting my Advanced Regents Diploma by taking the LOTE Spanish Comprehension Exam and the Physics Regents. I was ahead up until the moment I walked into my guidance counselor's office one Tuesday afternoon and she was singing a different tune. The tune of me not being able to graduate if I didn't waste time sitting on bleachers in a hot gym 90 minutes a day, five days a week.

Despite all of this, my hard work outside of school has earned me a full scholarship to a top-tier university this fall. I'm excited. But as I look around the gym, where boys try their hardest to play basketball, all I can think is that they will never have that opportunity. And it isn't their fault.

Tonie Chase
Freshman, Boston College
2017 graduate of Benjamin Banneker Academy

To whom it *should* concern:

Growing up in East New York, Brooklyn, my mom knew of one decent public school where she wanted to enroll me. This school was an 8 minute walk from my house, but it was "out of my district" so I couldn't attend.

She found out about the Achievement First charter school network, "AF", and in three weeks' time we sat for the lottery calling. My number got called, my mom jumped with joy, and I shrunk into my seat with embarrassment. I was only 5, so I didn't quite understand what this could mean, but to my mom, it like she knew AF could be my ticket to success. Other schools in my neighborhood were low-performing, and AF schools in other parts of Brooklyn were praised. I joined the first graduating class of the new East New York location.

The rules were strict and specific, literally down to the color of my socks. Nevertheless, my foundation at Achievement First helped me value education. Although my school was 100% black or Hispanic, and predominantly low-income, I don't recall feeling disadvantaged compared to my wealthier, white counterparts, not that I met them, but I was aware of the achievement gap. I actually began to see my privilege of AF when I learned that we outperformed public schools on state tests. And even though we tested often, I didn't feel like exams were shoved down my throat or that I was just learning to pass an exam and make AF look good.

Toward the end of middle school, my older sister told me that not all public schools were terrible and failing, so I decided I wanted to venture out and try something new. When I explained this to the AF high school principal in our interview, she kindly "warned" me that I would be better off continuing at AF. Then I found Benjamin Banneker Academy in the high school directory and read the description of the unique extracurriculars and academic programs. Other reviews boasted of the Afro-centric theme of the school.

Soon after I started freshman year, I realized the Banneker on paper didn't match Banneker in real life. The directory outlines pre-professional tracks available to students, like pre-engineering, but some teachers at Banneker hadn't even heard of this. Africa Tours had stopped running because of new pressure from administration, and the student government disappeared after elections.
Even though Banneker has a decent post-secondary enrollment rate, our actual level of preparedness for college is questionable. Getting good grades is mostly based on the completion of an

assignment--not the quality or effort, which leads to an environment where students just want the right answers instead of trying to improve their skillsets.

I'm not saying all charter schools are better than all traditional public schools--both have their benefits. But why is that at every step of my journey, I have had to search for opportunities beyond what was provided to me? Why do I feel like my education was not sufficient without the competitive programs I found my way into? Why is my school's end goal to prepare students for college, yet it instills qualities of mediocrity?

My daughter attended a PreK in a local public school. I chose the school because it was diverse - with a rare occurrence of an almost equal mix of black, latinx, asian and white students. The school was unofficially soliciting parents' preferences for teachers. In conclusion what ended up happening was that many of the white students congregated into one classroom, with a white teacher. I realized over the summer that a lot of parents were putting in a preference for one particular teacher, but I was extremely disappointed in the Fall when we started school that the principal did not make it a priority to keep the separate classrooms diverse.

We stayed at the school for 1.5 weeks and transferred into another school that was higher up on our list. We noticed a somewhat similar situation at the PreK in the new school as well. As we were transferring into the school a couple of parents told us they had heard negative things about Teacher XXX. We ended up in the classroom of Teacher YYY, but it is noticeable that Teacher XXX has the highest number of black and brown students.

My concern is that schools are unofficially soliciting teacher preferences from higher income and wealthier families, but not sharing that opportunity with families of color and/or lower income families. I also do not see any intention by the administration to adequately mix up the students so that classrooms are equal in terms of race, class, and special needs.

Best,

Stacie Johnson

Testimony Submitted by Shino Tanikawa
Hearing on Diversity in Our SChools

December 7, 2017

Thank you for the opportunity to submit this testimony on diversity in our schools. I am a parent of two children, the younger of whom is still in public school. I have served on the Community Education Council for District 2 since 2009 and am currently the Vice President and the Chair of the CECD2 Diversity Committee. I also served as the Chair of the Equity & Diversity Working Group of the Education Council Consortium, an organization comprised of CEC and Citywide Council members. This Working Group worked with the Department of Education on issues of diversity and school integration.

I share this testimony as a parent of color and as a racial justice advocate. This testimony does not represent the views of the CECD2 or its committee or the Education Council Consortium.

All through my two daughters' school choice process for middle and high schools in New York City, student diversity was an important criterion for choosing schools. I believed (and still do) that a school is where my children can meet people who are unlike them, learn diverse cultures and perspectives and embrace differences. I thought such personal experiences are prerequisite to children becoming aware and compassionate adults who can work toward dismantling racism. I also wanted my privileged children to understand their privilege in hopes of curtailing their entitlement. Unfortunately it is becoming increasingly difficult to find a school that has racially diverse students or a school that is engaged in transformative multicultural education that is rooted in anti-racism work. My younger daughter was extremely lucky to have attended a District 2 middle school that has the racial and socioeconomic diversity and was starting on the path to anti-racist pedagogy.

I see school integration as a small but significant step toward dismantling institutional racism that exists in our public school system. I do not mean to suggest people who work in the system are racist or are intentionally perpetuating a racist system. But the fact remains, our public school system is a racist system. Schools are where we nurture the future generation and through education we can change course for our society. I am keenly aware that like any meaningful anti-racism work, school integration will be hard and painful. But there are many of us who are willing to do the hard work. I ask that the members of the City Council join forces with parents and advocates to begin making real changes in the public school system and hold the Mayor accountable to his promise of dismantling the tale of two cities.

Language matters. I want us all to use terminology that acknowledges the problem and reflects the work ahead of us. We, as the City, must first acknowledge and accept that our public school system is deeply segregated by race and class. We must also recognize that diversifying schools is not the goal: creating an anti-racist public school system is. We also need to redefine school integration to mean more than student enrollment. School integration entails culturally relevant pedagogy, equitable resource allocation, racially diverse teacher workforce, and student discipline rooted in racial justice in addition to student enrollment. The student group, IntegrateNYC, has very eloquently spelled out what school integration should be.

School segregation is a systemic problem that requires systemic solutions. As recommended by the Education Council Consortium, I support the idea of creating an office of school integration with a Deputy Chancellor whose sole duty is to oversee school integration efforts. I also support requiring every community school district to develop a school integration plan that is developed in a community-driven process. Furthermore race and institutional and structural racism must be addressed explicitly in all school integration efforts and planning.

Any initiative that addresses school integration must involve both parents and students in a meaningful and collaborative manner. Parents' and students' voices are often forgotten or unheard. Yet, we are the ones who experience the consequences of the segregated system. Parents bring a wealth of knowledge to the table. It is not necessarily academic knowledge but parents' lived experiences give authenticity and reality to the discourse. Parents are also not beholden to any special interest groups: we volunteer our time and answer to no one but our children. I thank the City Council for creating an opportunity for parents and students to share their stories and ideas through the public hearing process. But please also help us find more ways to collaborate with policy makers.

School integration is also not just about Black, Latino and white students. While we make up only 15% of the student population, Asian students are very much a part of this conversation. While our story is complicated largely because of the model minority myth (yes, it is a myth), Asian parents and students must be active participants in this process and their voices must be included. The process of inclusion must be intentional and culturally relevant: a method that works for white parents (e.g., public hearing) is likely not the right method to reach Asian parents. I believe partnering with CBOs in this effort would be critical.

Examining racial and socioeconomic integration of schools will necessarily lead to issues broader than education, such as housing, economic development, and neighborhood preservation, to name a few. We all know how housing segregation contributes to school segregation. We also know that there are communities of color that are fearful of

gentrification (and rightfully so). Clearly it is not possible to fix our public school system without addressing related and intertwined issues such as housing, job training and creation, criminal justice, and social services. Our schools do not exist in a vacuum. The complexity of the problem and the typical siloed approach to problem solving (i.e., each city agency is focused on its own mandate) paralyze us into inaction. But, rather than throwing our hands up and say we cannot undo 400 years of racism, we need to face this head on. After all we are New Yorkers. We have grit. We are stubborn and do not give up easily. We have the brightest and the most creative among us to solve seemingly insurmountable problems. As a city, we aspire to be a trailblazer on many fronts. We should be a trailblazer in creating a truly democratic city free of racism. I urge the Mayor and the City Council to create an interagency task force with civic leaders, parents and students to begin developing ways to dismantling the tale of two cities in earnest.

I love and believe in the vitality of our City. I know we can do better. I'm here to do my part along with hundreds of other public school parents. Let's create a tale of one city.

Testimony by Shino Tanikawa, Chair, Community Education Council District 2 Diversity Committee

Hearing on Diversity in Our School

December 8, 2017

Thank you for the opportunity to submit the testimony on Diversity in Our Schools. I am the Manhattan Borough President's appointee to the Community Education Council District 2 and currently serve as the Vice President of the CECD2 as well as the Chair of the CECD2 Diversity Committee (the Diversity Committee). I wanted to take this opportunity to share what we have done in District 2 on the issue of diversity in schools.

Although I write this testimony as the Chair of the Diversity Committee, this testimony is not an official testimony of the Community Education Council District 2.

The Diversity Committee originally began as the Middle School Committee which examined the admissions process for District 2 middle schools. Discussions during Committee meetings often turned to equity of access and who has advantage in the middle school choice process. Largely due to the nature of the conversations in the Middle School Committee, the CECD2 voted to officially change the Middle School Committee to the Diversity Committee in July 2016. I wanted to share some of the accomplishments and activities of the CECD2 and the Diversity Committee to illustrate how diversity in our schools has become a pressing issue.

Forums

We have titled these forums as *Conversation on Integrating Our Schools* to be explicit about our intent on framing this issue as a school integration issue. To date, we have held two forums.

The Relationship Between Academic Tracking and Segregated Schools (April 2016)
We invited Carol Burris (National Education Policy Center) and Halley Potter (the Century Foundation) to share their research on de-tracking and benefits of diverse classrooms respectively. The forum was well attended with nearly 100 parents and educators from District 2 and beyond.

Creating Diverse Learning Environments to Benefit All Our Students (May 2017)
A panel discussion with a principal, a classroom teacher, a student and an academic researcher on benefits of a diverse classrooms. Panelists talked about diversity in socioeconomic status, race, ability/disability and academic levels as separate, yet, related aspects of diversity in classrooms and shared challenges as well as benefits. This forum was also attended by nearly 100 parents and educators.

Workshops
In order to frame the work of the Diversity Committee through the racial justice lens, we have hosted one workshop with an outside organization and used a workshop format utilizing adult learning theories at many of our meetings to facilitate understanding of deeper issues affecting our school system.

Talking About Race with Your Children (January 2017)
The CECD2 retained Border Crossers to offer a one-day workshop for District 2 parents. Participants were recruited from all District 2 elementary and middle schools. The one day workshop introduced parents to tools and resources on how to talk to their children about race and racism. The conversations were difficult and uncomfortable at time, but important and necessary. The group of parents met on their own twice after the workshop to continue the conversation. As the Diversity Committee chair, I facilitated the follow up meetings which were hosted as workshops to ensure participation by everyone and a focused and productive conversation.

Diversity Committee meetings (almost monthly since July 2016)
Many of our meetings are designed as workshops exploring a variety of topics such as the definition of diversity, privilege, and screened admissions method and more. The Committee has also analyzed demographic and test score data for elementary and middle schools to better understand the current landscape.

Vision Statement
Out of the meetings and workshops, the Diversity Committee developed a vision statement, which was formally adopted by the CECD2 in May 2017. The document is appended to this testimony.

Next steps
The Diversity Committee is continuing to meet. We are now coordinating efforts with the District 2 Diversity Plan Advisory Group convened by the Superintendent. The Diversity Committee will begin developing specific recommendations for middle school integration, including the admissions process.

I wanted to share the work of the CECD2 Diversity Committee to make our efforts part of the official records of the hearing and to illustrate the will and the desire of District 2 parents and educators in creating a more equitable and just school system.

Community Education Council District 2
Diversity Committee

A Vision Statement for District 2 Middle Schools

Preamble
Public education is a public good; the resource is available to all and the benefits extend beyond just the children being educated. As a public good it is critical to remember that the schools are not merely designed to educate specific individuals, but to bring public benefits to our local and national communities. As such, our public schools need to successfully fulfill their obligation to create informed, empathetic, civic minded, problem solving citizens who can contribute to their communities, and one key ingredient are schools and classrooms that reflect the communities they serve.

Vision for District 2 Middle Schools
All eighth graders graduating from District 2 middle schools are compassionate and civic-minded citizens, who will become change agents in creating a just world.

Every District 2 middle school is a fully integrated school. Fully integrated District 2 middle schools:

- each have a student population that is representative of the racial and socioeconomic diversity of District 2;
- educate students who reflect the range of academic levels, learning abilities/disabilitiesand English language proficiency levels found in District 2;
- have racially and ethnically diverse teaching forces; and
- offer racially and culturally relevant pedagogy.

Why integrating schools is the path to the vision
Integration creates equal access to education because “separate facilities are inherently unequal”. Public schools are our country’s largest public institution, with 9 out of 10 children in America attending a public school. Our schools should advance the common good, not drive inequality.

Integration has been shown to reduce the achievement gap. Academic success is correlated to reduced poverty and improved health. A diverse student body helps all students, while concentrating low performing students reduces opportunities for improvement.

Integration teaches our children to embrace diversity so they can learn to live and work better with everyone.

Liz Rosenberg
Testimony for December 9th Hearing on Integrating Schools

To create a context where all of our city schools are reflective of the overall city averages for race, class, ELL status and students with IEPs would be very challenging, primarily because some districts are not diverse **internally**.

I do hold out hope that something could be done to integrate all of our schools, though I encourage some giant foundation to put their money towards finding ways to do this, but what can be done NOW?

The DOE can and should abolish selectivity in admissions in all schools where it is possible. Aside from Stuyvesant, Brooklyn Tech, and Bronx Science, whose admissions policies are tied to state law, all other schools that are selective can be turned into educational options schools **tomorrow**.

Would there be public outcry? Indeed.
Would there be middle and upper class flight? Perhaps.
Do most politicians view this as political suicide? Absolutely.

But while people shake in their boots about all the chaos a change like this would bring, students in segregated schools are living in the reality of the opportunity gap.

In my district (15) three middle schools cream off 87% of the students who score a 4 on the ELA tests in 4th grade. When charter schools cream students, we cry fowl. We seem to know creaming is wrong, and yet we are not fighting selectivity as a mechanism that furthers segregation.

My daughter goes to a school that is allowed to screen out students with chronic absenteeism. So what happens with those students? They are concentrated in other schools. In those schools it can be hard to keep the learning going from day to day because ¼ to ½ of the class will be absent.

Why do we see selectivity as an entitlement? **It is not** and the City Council should be fighting very hard against it.

My main question for all of you is what are you **really** doing to fight for integrating schools? It must be challenging to figure out what will impress progressive voters and what might trigger their ire. In general, progressive voters don't really know what their entitlements are doing to their neighbors.

In District (15), my entitlement, sending my child to a selective school, means I contribute to the 20% disparity in graduation rate between students like my middle class daughter and students who receive FRPL, who attend a school that serves far more than the district average for FRPL students. I could have sent my daughter to a different school, but I am asking that the City Council make it impossible for me to

assert my privilege. In my case, my daughter put three schools on her list, two integrated schools and one selective. That was our compromise. Why didn't I insist on only the two integrated schools? I am an integration advocate, after all. It's a very human reason. I want my daughter to have agency. Do I think she or I are entitled to schools that are so out of whack with district averages? NO! But asking me or any other parent to limit our children's choices for justice is not realistic. Very few of us can do that. It's not that I believe she is at a better school, I just didn't want to constrain her by eliminating the school that most appealed to her.

If the DOE or the City Council is waiting for progressives to give up our entitlements (which range from a child's school preference, to a desire to send our children to schools that perform well on tests), they will be waiting forever. Unless our Councilpeople really want to create a campaign to change parents' hearts and minds, this method (called "pioneering" will not work). What will work is removing selectivity, which will then spread all of the high achievers around, and we will see fewer schools with clustering of students who are chronically absent.

We live in this city together; we should go to school together. Getting rid of selectivity won't solve everything. It needs to be part of a much larger vision including teaching teachers how to differentiate, hiring teachers of color, rethinking school social and emotional supports, and moving towards culturally relevant pedagogy. The people will not ask for this change. Not the progressives, and not the people most impacted, and they shouldn't have to.

As a person who has been fighting for these changes for a few years, I know that it would take heaps of money and a full time staff to make any dent. The DOE has a track record of making changes that are necessary to create opportunity and equity. They moved students with IEPs into inclusion classrooms for this reason. They did not ask districts to come up with a plan. They just did it because they thought it would best serve **all** students. The City Council needs to push the DOE to end selectivity with or without community support to do it. All of our city's students will benefit from attending integrated schools.

THE COUNCIL
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Date: 12/7/2017

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Name: Reyhan Mehran For Carrie McLaren

Address: _____

I represent: D15 Coalition for Equitable Schools

Address: _____

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Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Naomi Pena

Address: 460 Grand St. #14B

I represent: CEC1

Address: 166 Essex Street

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Name: Joshua Sidis

Address: 0

I represent: OPS

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(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Kimberly Quick

Address: The Century Foundation NYC/DC

I represent: _____

Address: _____

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Name: Richard Kahlenberg

Address: The Century Foundation, NYC + DC

I represent: _____

Address: _____

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☐ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Aiyanna Behin, President CEC 13

Address: 130 Washington Ave Bklyn 11205

I represent: CEC 13

Address: Brooklyn

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THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

☐ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: 12/7/17

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Lisa Millsaps

Address: 926 E. 107st Brooklyn, NY. 11236

I represent: MECPS Medgar Evers College Prep

Address: 116 & Carroll Street Brooklyn NY. 11203

THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

☐ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: 12/7/17

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Bisi Iderabdullah

Address: 76-A 5th Ave

I represent: Imani House

Address: 76-A 5th Ave

THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

☐ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: 12/7/17

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: KRISTEN BERGER, CEC3

Address: 219 West 81st ST Street 10024

I represent: Community Education Council 3

Address: 154 W 94th ST NY NY 10024

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms

THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

☐ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: 12/7/17

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: DAVID GOLDSMITH

Address: 464 Willoughby Ave. Bklyn NY 11206

I represent: ECC

Address: /

THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

☐ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: 12.7.17

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Lori Podvesker

Address: 136 Washington Ave Bk. 11205

I represent: Including

Address: 116 E 16th St. NY NY 10003

THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

☒ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Charisse Smith

Address: 980 Bergen St

I represent: Parent Medgar Evers Prep School

Address: _____

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms

THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

☐ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Allison Kell

Address: _____

I represent: Community Roots

Address: _____

THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

☐ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Erin Carstenson

Address: _____

I represent: Community Roots Charter School

Address: _____

THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

☐ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Sonia Park

Address: _____

I represent: Diverse Charter School Coalition

Address: _____

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms

THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

☐ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: 12/7/17

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Megan Devir

Address: 822 President Street

I represent: PS 321 / MS 839

Address: Brooklyn, NY 11215

THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

☐ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Chevon Weeks-Lopez from

Address: Coalition for Education Justice

I represent: _____

Address: _____

THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

☐ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: 12/7/2017

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Miriam Nunberg

Address: _____

I represent: D15 Parents for Middle School Equity

Address: AND Alliance for School Integration & Desegregation

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms

THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

☐ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: 12/7/2017

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Carrie McLaren

Address: _____

I represent: D15 Coalition for Equitable Schools

Address: _____

THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

☐ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: 12/7/17

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Antonia Ferraro

Address: 616 2nd St. Brooklyn, NY 11231

I represent: CEC 15

Address: 131 Livingston St., Brooklyn NY 11201

THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK

high school student

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

☐ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: Dec 7, 2017

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Kaira Watts-Bey

Address: _____

I represent: Urban Assembly School For Criminal Justice

Address: _____

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms

THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

☐ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Randi Levine

Address: _____

I represent: Advocates for Children of New York

Address: _____

THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

☐ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: 12/7/17

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Nicole Mader

Address: _____

I represent: Center for NYC Affairs

Address: _____

THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

☐ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: 12/12/17

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Arye Hershkowitz

Address: _____

I represent: Yaffed

Address: _____

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms

THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

☐ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: 12/7/17

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Tish Doggett

Address: 30 Windsor Place Bklyn 11215

I represent: Parent Brooklyn Secondary School for Collaborative Studies (BCSS)

Address: 610 Henry St. Bklyn

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms

THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

☐ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: 12/7/17

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Teresa Yi

Address: 344 Midwood St. Apt 1F Brooklyn NY 11225

I represent: Myself

Address:

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms

THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

☐ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Sonia Park, Allison Keil, Erin Carstenson

Address:

I represent: Diverse Charter Schools Coalition

Address:

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms

THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

☐ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: CAMILLIA BROWN

Address: _____

I represent: NEW YORK CIVIL LIBERTIES UNION

Address: _____

THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

☐ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: 12/7/17

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Miriam Nunberg

Address: _____

I represent: D15 Parents for Middle School Equity /ASID

Address: _____

THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. Diversity Res. No. _____

☐ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Grant Cowles

Address: _____

I represent: Citizens' Committee for Children

Address: _____

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms

THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK

Student

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

☐ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: José G. Miranda

Address: 5640 Netherland Avenue Apt 6D Bronx NY 10471

I represent: The Fair Play Coalition

Address: _____

THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

☐ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Amina Tofana

Address: 288 Willis Ave

I represent: INTEGRATE NYC Panel

Address: _____

THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

☐ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Matthew Gonzales

Address: 1469 Amsterdam Ave

I represent: New York Appleseed

Address: _____

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms

THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

☐ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Nathan A. Diaz

Address: 3204 159th street Bronx, NY

I represent: Integrate NYC student panel

Address:

THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

☐ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Hebba Jamal

Address: 2040 Bandara Ave

I represent: Integrate NYC student panel

Address:

THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

☐ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Ruth Melo

Address: 513 Olmstead Ave 1st fl.

I represent: CECS

Address: _____

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms

THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

☐ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: 12/7/17

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Arethi Naranjo (Student)

Address: _____

I represent: Integrate NYC Student Panel

Address: _____

THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

☐ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: 12/7/17

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Dehaila Wilson Integrate Panel

Address: CSI NY

I represent: Integrate NYC Student Panel

Address: CSI NY

THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

☐ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: De John Jones

Address: 2165 Crotona Ave

I represent: DAC 3 CEJ

Address: Parent Action Committee Community Education Council

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms

THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

☐ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: 12/7/17

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Leanne Nunes

Address: _____

I represent: Integrate NYC Student Panel

Address: _____

THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

☐ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Lucas Liu

Address: 222 W 83rd St

I represent: CEC3

Address: 154 W 93rd St NY NY 10025

THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

☐ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT) SUBJECT: (Sports Equity)

Name: Melissa Iaconi

Address: _____

I represent: New York Lawyers for the Public Interest

Address: _____

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms

THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

☑ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Chanera Pierce

Address: 30-30 Northern Blvd Suite 302

I represent: Fair Housing Justice Center

Address: Long Island City, NY

THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

☐ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: 12/7/17

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Elliotte Simian

Address: 129 Baltic St. #4B, BK, 11201

I represent: Success Academy Cobble Hill

Address: _____

THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

☐ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Maria Gil

Address: _____

I represent: Make the Road NY

Address: 301 Grove Street

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms

THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

☐ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Natasha Capers

Address: _____

I represent: Coalition for Educational Justice

Address: 726 Broadway, 5th floor

THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

☐ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Michele Greenberg

Address: 11 Reeve Place, Brooklyn

I represent: PS 372

Address: 512 Carroll Street Brooklyn

THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

☐ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Lori Podvesker

Address: _____

I represent: IncludeNYC

Address: 116 E 16th St. NY NY 10003

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms

THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

☐ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: LaShawn Robinson

Address: Executive Superintendent

I represent: Office of Equity + Access

Address: DOE

THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK

has baby with her can she go early?

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

☐ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Tazin Azad

Address: _____

I represent: PS 217 and MS 890

Address: _____

THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

☐ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Josh Wallack

Address: Deputy Chancellor

I represent: Division of Early Childhood

Address: Education + Student Enrollment DOE

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms

THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

☐ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Sandra Hyatt

Address: _____

I represent: Coalition for Educational Justice

Address: 726 Broadway, 5th floor

THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

☐ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Chelvian Weaks-Lopez

Address: _____

I represent: Coalition for Educational Justice

Address: 726 Broadway, 5th floor

THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

☐ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: DeJohn Jones

Address: _____

I represent: Coalition for Educational Justice

Address: 726 Broadway, 5th floor

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms

THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

☐ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Felicia Alexander

Address: _____

I represent: Coalition for Educational Justice

Address: 726 Broadway, 5th floor

THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

☐ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Janella Hinds., VP High Schools

Address: 52 Broadway

I represent: UFT

Address: 52 Broadway

THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

☐ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: 12/7/17

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: DAVID BLOOMFIELD

Address: ~~Be~~ Brooklyn College & CUNY Grad Center

I represent: Self

Address: 62 Bergen St Bklyn 11201

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms

THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

☐ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Taylor McGraw

Address: 501 Atlantic Ave.

I represent: Teens Take Charge

Address: _____

THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

☐ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Jedrick Estrella

Address: Victory Collegiate HS

I represent: Teens Take Charge

Address: _____

THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

☐ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Dulce Marquez

Address: New Heights Academy Charter HS

I represent: Teens Take Charge

Address: _____

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms

THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

☐ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Nelson Luna

Address: Democracy Prep Charter HS

I represent: Teens Take Charge

Address: _____

THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

☐ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: 12/07/17

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Sheindy Weichman

Address: Brooklyn, NY

I represent: Yaffed

Address: NY 10036

THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

☐ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: 12/7/17

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Naftuli Moster

Address: 25 West 45th

I represent: Yaffed

Address: same

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms

THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

☐ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Whitney Stephenson

Address: Democracy Prep Charter HS

I represent: Teens Take Charge

Address: _____

THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

☐ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Nusi Blumenson

Address: Academy of Young Writers

I represent: Teens Take Charge

Address: _____

THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

☐ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Muhammad Deen

Address: Victory Collegiate HS

I represent: Teens Take Charge

Address: _____

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms