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## COMMUNITY BOARD NO. 2, MANHATTAN

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January 30, 2019

Hon. Andrew Cuomo  
Governor of New York State  
The Executive Chamber  
Albany, NY 12224

Richard Carranza, Chancellor  
Department of Education  
Tweed Courthouse  
52 Chambers Street  
New York, NY 10007

Dear Governor Cuomo and Chancellor Carranza:

At its Full Board meeting January 24, 2019, Community Board #2, adopted the following resolution:

### **Resolution In Support of Revised Proposals to Increase Diversity at Specialized High Schools and Other Public Schools and the Disclosure of Data Relating to All Proposed Changes to Specialized High School Admissions**

#### **Whereas:**

1. New York State has the most racially segregated public schools in the nation based on a report by the UCLA Civil Rights Project<sup>i</sup>;
2. CB 2 is deeply concerned about the inadequacy and inequality of education in public schools throughout New York City;
3. New York City's Specialized High Schools (SHS), as well as many screened public middle schools and high schools, lack the racial, socioeconomic and gender diversity of New York City;<sup>ii</sup>
4. The New York State Hecht-Calandra Act of 1971 requires that SHS admissions are based on ranked-order results from a single admissions test, but also permits an alternative route to admission through the Discovery Program for students who are a) disadvantaged, b) score below the cut-off score, c) are recommended by their local school and d) attend and pass a summer preparatory program;
5. The Mayor's administration has proposed changes to the SHS admissions process<sup>iii</sup> by:
  - a. Expanding the Discovery Program to 20% of seats at each SHS by fall 2020 and requiring that disadvantaged students also attend a high-poverty school with an Economic Need Index of at least 60%,<sup>iv</sup>
  - b. Passing New York State legislation to i) replace the Specialized High School Admission Test (SHSAT) with a set of criteria that will include, but is not limited to students' rankings on their 7th Grade New York State Math and ELA exam scores, their rankings within their individual

schools on their 7th Grade English, Math, Social Studies and Science course grades, and their being ranked “in the top 25% of the city;” and ii) make offers to the top 7% of students from each public middle school;

6. The Department of Education did not meaningfully engage families and students who would be affected as well as parent leaders, educators, researchers and other stakeholders in developing any proposals for changing the system;
7. The DOE has not publicly identified nor provided data or details about how it will implement the expansion of the Discovery Program; the past performance of SHS students who were admitted through the Discovery Program; nor, how it will change the criteria for making SHS offers, in particular, comparing course grades from every NYC middle school, limiting offers to students ranked “in the top 25% of the city” and making offers to new or non-public school students;
8. The Mayor’s Proposal to change SHS admissions will reduce the number of CB 2 high school students who attend SHSs and create greater demand for non-specialized high schools in District 2, because approximately 19% of District 2 middle school students attend SHSs and a drop to 7% would reduce seats for District 2 students by 177, excluding offers made to non-public school students and the DOE has not announced any plans to increase capacity at either SHSs or District 2 high schools;
9. More than 300 parents, educators and education activists attended a CEC District 2 and CB 2, 4, 6 and 8 public meeting on December 3, 2018 where the DOE presented the Mayor’s Proposal, and the overwhelming majority of these attendees opposed many of the changes to SHS admissions, as currently proposed.

**Therefore, be it resolved that:**

1. Community Board 2 recommends that the Mayor make revisions to the current Proposal to change the admission process for Specialized High Schools because we are unable to support the proposal as it is currently written, but we are eager to see a revised proposal to increase diversity and achievement among the students of New York City;
2. CB 2 objects to the revised Discovery Program requirement that eligible applicants must attend a school with an Economic Need Index of at least 60% because this will reduce the number of low- income students eligible to participate;
3. Before New York State and New York City change Specialized High School admissions, CB 2 requests public access to all DOE data that are relevant to understanding the proposed changes to Specialized High School admissions; and seeks a comprehensive Review and Report of the impact of the Mayor’s Proposal on middle school and non-specialized high school students and families in our community, District 2 and across the city, including potential unintended consequences, both positive and negative; and,
4. CB 2 also urges the Department of Education to pursue additional initiatives to increase diversity in New York City public schools, such as:
  - a. Starting early and expanding city and state education funding for high poverty schools to provide more resources for 3K, pre-kindergarten, elementary and middle schools, including funding smaller class sizes and expanded special education programs;
  - b. Offering the Gifted and Talented (G&T) test to all pre-K students, expanding G&T programs that start in third grade and reevaluating the 2006 decision to base admissions on a single test that has resulted in the percentage of minority children in these programs to plummet;<sup>v</sup>
  - c. Improving instruction in middle schools, and increasing opportunity for students of color, of low income and of immigrant parents;
  - d. Providing effective outreach for students applying to high school beyond distributing a 400-page high school directory and requiring attendance at high school fairs, including language-accessible and culturally appropriate outreach to help ensure that families are not only informed

- about high school options, but that they also feel secure about the options that best meet the needs of their children, given that there are more than 700 public high school programs in New York City and 70 public high schools in District 2; and,
- e. Building a new District 2-wide elementary or middle school at the Bleecker School site in Greenwich Village with admissions based on diversity, economic need, English Language Learner, students with disabilities or other criteria.

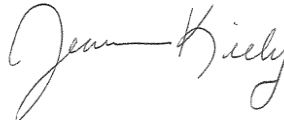
**VOTE: Passed, with 37 Board Members in favor.  
2 Board Members in abstention. (R. Kessler, R. Sanz)**

Please advise us of any decision or action taken in response to this resolution.

Sincerely,



Carter Booth, Chair  
Community Board #2, Manhattan



Jeannine Kiely, Chair  
Schools and Education Committee  
Community Board #2, Manhattan

TB/EM

- c: Hon. Jerrold Nadler, Congressman  
Hon. Carolyn Maloney, Congresswoman  
Hon. Nydia Velázquez, Congresswoman  
Hon. Andrea Steward-Cousins, Senate Majority Leader  
Hon. Carl E. Heastie, Assembly Speaker  
Hon. Brian Kavanagh, NYS Senator  
Hon. Brad Hoylman, NYS Senator  
Hon. Deborah J. Glick, NYS Assembly Member  
Hon. Yuh-Line Niou, NYS Assembly Member  
Hon. Scott M. Stringer, NYC Comptroller  
Hon. Gale Brewer, Manhattan Borough President  
Hon. Corey Johnson, Council Speaker  
Hon. Margaret Chin, Council Member  
Hon. Carlina Rivera, Council Member  
Josh Wallack, Deputy Chancellor, NYC DOE  
Donalda Chumney, Superintendent, District 2, NYC DOE  
Jennifer Greenblatt, District 2 Family Advocate  
Robin Broshi, President, Community Education Council District 2  
Matthew Chook, Co-President, District 2 Presidents' Council  
Leonard Silverman, Co-President, District 2 Presidents' Council

## Notes

<sup>i</sup> “New York State’s Extreme School Segregation: Inequality, Inaction and a Damaged Future” UCLA Civil Rights Project, March 26, 2014, available at <https://www.civilrightsproject.ucla.edu/research/k-12->

<sup>ii</sup> Specialized High Schools vs. NYC Schools: Enrollment vs. Offers

### Demographic Data: CB 2 vs. NYC Schools

CB 2 SCHOOL ENROLLMENT	TOTAL (1) ENROLLMT	SEX (2)		RACE (2)					SUPPORT (2)			EC. NEED INDEX
		% F	% M	% A	% B	% H	% MUL	% W	% SWD	% ELL	% POV	
PS 3	753	49%	51%	9%	6%	14%	5%	67%	18%	3%	21%	19.0%
PS 41	694	54%	46%	8%	1%	10%	12%	69%	15%	2%	9%	7.3%
PS 130	913	48%	52%	87%	1%	5%	4%	3%	14%	16%	47%	59.9%
PS 340 * 30% (3)	83	53%	47%	23%	4%	13%	12%	64%	16%	1%	10%	13.8%
Total	2,443	50%	50%	38%	3%	9%	7%	44%	16%	7%	27%	--
vs. CB 2 2010 Census (all ages) (5)	90,016	52%	49%	14%	2%	6%	3%	75%	--	--	--	--
vs. CB 2 2010 Census (Under 18) (5)	7,936	--	--	15%	1%	8%	8%	67%	--	--	--	--
75 Morton (4)	562	49%	51%	8%	9%	24%	5%	54%	22%	3%	30%	29%

PUBLIC SCHOOL ENROLLMENT (6)	TOTAL (1) ENROLLMT	SEX (2)		RACE (2)					SUPPORT (2)			EC NEED INDEX
		% F	% M	% A	% B	% H	% MUL	% W	% SWD	% ELL	% POV	
D2 Middle Schools (6-8, K-8 and 6-12)	12,621	50%	50%	25%	10%	21%	6%	38%	19%	6%	41%	53.6%
District 2	63,497	52%	48%	22%	15%	33%	5%	26%	17%	8%	54%	53.6%
Manhattan	177,752	51%	49%	12%	23%	45%	3%	17%	20%	11%	67%	66.4%
Citywide	1,135,334	49%	51%	16%	26%	41%	3%	15%	20%	14%	74%	70.7%
Eight Specialized High Schools	15,540	42%	58%	62%	4%	6%	4%	24%	1%	0%	49%	--
vs. NYC 2010 Census (all ages)	8,175,133	--	--	13%	26%	24%	5%	33%	--	--	--	--

MAYOR'S PROPOSAL: OFFERS (7)	TOTAL OFFERS	SEX (2)		RACE (2)					SUPPORT (2)		EC NEED INDEX
		% F	% M	% A	% B	% H	% MUL	% W	% PRIVATE	% POV	
Citywide	--	--	--	16%	28%	40%	3%	13%	n/a	n/a	--
Current SHS Offers	--	--	--	50%	3%	6%	4%	24%	13%	46%	--
Proposed: SHS Offers to Top 7%	--	--	--	30%	19%	27%	2%	15%	7%	67%	--

#### Sources:

(1) NYC DOE Final Class Size Report for cohort and class size by grade for 2017-2018, found at: <https://infohub.nyced.org/reports-and-policies/government/intergovernmental-affairs/class-size-reports>.

(2) Demographic Snapshot for enrollment by grade, sex, race and support for 2017-2018 found at: <https://infohub.nyced.org/reports-and-policies/citywide-information-and-data/information-and-data-overview>.

(3) Approximately 30% of PS 340 enrollment is from CB 2, based on 2010 census tract data.

(4) 75 Morton data from Register, November 27, 2018. % Poverty for 75 Morton from Demographic Snapshot for 2017-2018.

(5) U.S. Census Bureau, 2010 Census, [https://www1.nyc.gov/assets/planning/download/pdf/community/community-portal/socio\\_demo/mn02\\_socio\\_demo.pdf](https://www1.nyc.gov/assets/planning/download/pdf/community/community-portal/socio_demo/mn02_socio_demo.pdf)

(6) District 2, Manhattan and Citywide data is for all grades, including high schools.

(7) Mayor's Proposal, [https://dxbxg0cumj033.cloudfront.net/57812\\_20181111\\_specialized%20high%20schools%20proposal%20-%20public%20deck%20v14%20-%20brooklyn.pdf](https://dxbxg0cumj033.cloudfront.net/57812_20181111_specialized%20high%20schools%20proposal%20-%20public%20deck%20v14%20-%20brooklyn.pdf).

<sup>iii</sup> Specialized High Schools that would be impacted by the Mayor’s Proposal include Bronx High School of Science, Brooklyn Latin School, Brooklyn Technical High School, High School for Mathematics, Science, and Engineering at City College, High School of American Studies at Lehman College, Staten Island Technical High School, Queens High School for the Sciences at York College and Stuyvesant High School.

<sup>iv</sup> The Discovery Program for entering 9th grade students would expand from approximately 200 and 250 seats in 2017 and 2018 respectively to approximately 800 seats by 2020. 2017 and 2018 figures from [opendata.cityofnewyork.us](http://opendata.cityofnewyork.us). For details on the 2019 Discovery Program, visit [www.schools.nyc.gov/enrollment/enrollment-help/meeting-student-needs/diversity-in-admissions](http://www.schools.nyc.gov/enrollment/enrollment-help/meeting-student-needs/diversity-in-admissions).

<sup>v</sup> Leonie Haimson and Diane Ravitch. “The Education of Michael Bloomberg.” *The Nation*. April 17, 2013. <https://www.thenation.com/article/education-michael-bloomberg/>.