

COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION JOINTLY WITH COMMITTEE ON

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CIVIL AND HUMAN RIGHTS

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CITY COUNCIL
CITY OF NEW YORK

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TRANSCRIPT OF THE MINUTES

Of the

COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION JOINTLY WITH THE
COMMITTEE ON CIVIL AND HUMAN RIGHTS

May 1, 2019
Start: 10:06 a.m.
Recess: 7:10 p.m.

HELD AT: Council Chambers - City Hall

B E F O R E: MARK TREYGER
Chairperson

MATHIEU EUGENE
Co-Chairperson

COUNCIL MEMBERS:

ALICKA AMPRY-SAMUEL
INEZ D. BARRON
JOSEPH C. BORELLI
JUSTIN L. BRANNA LUN
ROBERT E. CORNEGY, JR.
DANIEL DROMM
BARRY S. GRODENCHIK
BEN KALLOS
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STEPHEN T. LEVIN
MARK LEVINE
BILL PERKINS
YDANIS A. RODRIGUEZ
DEBORAH L. ROSE
HELEN K. ROSENTHAL
RAFAEL SALAMANCA, JR.
ERIC A. ULRICH

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A P P E A R A N C E S (CONTINUED)

1
2
3 Julisa Perez
Executive College Director at Integrate NYC, INYC

4 Jayme Valentine
5 Senior in New York City Public Schools, Retire
6 Segregation Campaign, Lead at Integrate NYC

7 Bonnie Tang
College Student at Stony Brook University

8 Sokhnadiarra Ndiaye
9 Junior at Brooklyn College Academy, Leader at
Teens Take Charge

10 Richard Carranza
Chancellor of New York City Schools

11 Josh Wallack
12 Deputy Chancellor for the Division of Student
13 Enrollment and Early Childhood Education

14 LaShawn Robinson
15 Deputy Chancellor for the Division of School
Climate and Wellness

16 Charles Barron
New York State Assembly Member

17 Janella Hinds
18 UFT's Vice President for Academic High Schools

19 Henry Rubio
Executive Vice President of the Council for
20 School Administrators

21 Patrick Joseph
Senior Policy Analyst for Manhattan Borough
22 President, Representing Gale Brewer

23 Xiu Jiang
New York City Resident, parent

24 Lu De Quan
25 New York City Resident, parent

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A P P E A R A N C E S (CONTINUED)

1
2
3 Chang Qing Zheng
New York City Resident, parent

4
5 Marcus Alston
Junior at Pace High School, Teens Take Charge

6 Alexander Rodriguez
7 Junior at Urban Assembly School for Law and
Justice, Direct Action Fellow at Teens Take
8 Charge

9 Toby Paperno
Sophomore at Beacon High School, Leadership Team
Teens Take Charge

10 Saphira Cherfils
11 Senior at Brooklyn College Academy, Team Leader
Teens Take Charge

12 Ayana Smith
13 Senior at University Heights High School, Team
Leader at Teens Take Charge

14 Tiffini Torres
15 Junior at Pace High School, Leader at Teens Take
Charge

16 Maya Wiley
17 Henry Cohen Professor of Public and Urban Policy
At the Milano School of Policy, Management and
18 Environment at the New School University, Co
Chair of the School of Diversity Advisory Group

19 Hazel Dukes
20 Chair of the School Diversity Advisory Group,
President of NAACP

21 Diana Noriega
22 Chief Program Officer with the Committee for
Hispanic Children and Families, CHCF

23 Matt Gonzales
24 Director of the School Diversity Project for New
York Appleseed, Member of the School Diversity
25 Advisory Group

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A P P E A R A N C E S (CONTINUED)

Shino Tanikawa
Co-Chair of the Educational Council Consortium

Adam Lubinsky
Managing Principal at WXY Studio

Maria Bautista
Campaigns Director for the Alliance for Quality
Education

Toni Smith Thompson
Organizer for the New York Civil Liberties Union,
Public School Parent

Vanessa Leung
Co-Executive Director of the Coalition for Asian
American Children and Families, CACF

Nada Alnagar
Youth Advocate in the Asian American Student
Advocacy Project, Student at Stuyvesant High
School

Anna Lu
Youth Leader in the Asian American Student
Advocacy Project, Junior at Brooklyn Tech High
School

Amy Hsin
Associate Professor of Sociology at Queens
College, City University of New York, Member of
Executive Committee of SDAG

Alana Mohamed
Brooklyn Tech Alumna

Jason Wu
Graduate of Brooklyn Tech High School

Tasfia Rahman
Policy Coordinator at the Coalition for Asian
American Children and Families, CACF, Alum of
Brooklyn Tech High School

Charles Vavruska
Parent of Specialized High School Student

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A P P E A R A N C E S (CONTINUED)

Kevork Khrimian
Parent of Two SHSAT students

Ivan Khan
CEO of Khan's Tutorial

Wai Wah Chin
President of the Chinese American Citizens
Alliance

Jonathan Roberts
Resident of New York City

Maud Maron
Parent of Public School Elementary and Middle
School, Vice President of Community Education
Council for District Two

Lynne Andrews
Parent of Public School Elementary and Middle
School Students

Liliana Zaragoza
Assistant Counsel at the NAACP Legal Defense and
Educational Fund, LDF

Abraham Velazquez
Co-Facilitator of the Liberation Program of the
Brotherhood/Sister Sol

Andrea Ortiz
Representing the New York Immigration Coalition,
NYIC

Jeannine Kiely
Chair of the Schools and Education Committee for
Manhattan Community Board Two

Yiatin Chu
Parent of Public-School Students

Dao Yin
Executive Vice President of Queens Residents and
Voters Coalition

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A P P E A R A N C E S (CONTINUED)

Phil Wong
Member of CEC 24

Adriene Thorne
Member of the Alliance for School Integration and
Desegregation

Luke Davenport
Member of the New York City Alliance for School
Integration and Desegregation, NYCASID

Anna Minsky
Member of the Community Education Council of
District Five in Harlem, Member of the Alliance
For School Integration and Desegregation, ASID

Sharmilee Ramudit
Member of the Community Education Council of
District Three, Member of the New York City
Alliance for School Integration and Desegregation

Yi Fang Chen
Parent of Gifted and Talented Student

Jin Zhong
Parent of Two Public School Students

Lima
Parent, New York City Resident

Qing Lin
New York City Resident

Sharon Just
Parent Advocate Co-President, Parent

Xu Mui Ni
New York Chung Ying Chinese Community Association
Chairman

David Rem
Parent, New York City Resident

Greg Waltman
CEO and Founder of G1 Quantum Clean Energy
Company

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A P P E A R A N C E S (CONTINUED)

Donghei Zang
Queens Resident, Parent, President of New York
City Residents Alliance

Jamin Jai
New York City Resident, Parent

YuRan Deng
Stuyvesant High School Alum

George Lee
Parent of Stuyvesant High School Graduate

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[gavel]

SPEAKER JOHNSON: Good morning, we
welcome you all to this joint hearing of the
Education and Civil and Human Rights Committees on
our topic today, segregation in the New York City
school system. I'm Corey Johnson, Speaker of the City
Council and we are here today because the New York
City public school system is one of the most
segregated school systems in the country. This is
unacceptable particularly in a city like ours that
prides itself on its diversity. I want to thank my
colleagues, Chairs Treyger and Eugene for holding
today's hearing on this critically important issue
and I want to thank all of the Council Members who
are here today. I want to thank Chancellor Carranza
and his staff for joining us here today and I want to
give a special thanks to all the parents and
advocates and especially the students who have come
out today to share their views and to help us work
through the very difficult problem of school
segregation, an issue that's very important to me, to
the Council and to all New Yorkers. The current focus
on segregation was sparked by recent statistics
regarding admissions at the city's specialized high

1 schools but the lack of diversity at specialized high
2 schools is also a symptom of the overall problem of
3 segregation throughout the school system and that is
4 why I outlined a number of steps in an op-ed last
5 month to address the issue of segregation at both the
6 specialized high schools and the school system as a
7 whole. Addressing segregation system wide will
8 require a dedicated long term effort that must
9 include input from a variety of experts and
10 stakeholders including teachers, principals, parents
11 and students and this is why we are proposing
12 legislation to make the school diversity advisory
13 group a permanent body that will continue to make
14 formal policy recommendations to the Mayor and
15 Chancellor related to increasing school diversity. In
16 addition, the Committees will hear legislation that
17 will create a school diversity monitor within the New
18 York City Human Rights Commission to increase
19 oversight of this work and help inform principals of
20 equity. Segregation must also be tackled at the local
21 level which is why we are proposing legislation to
22 establish district diversity working groups in every
23 community school district that will be charged with
24 creating district wide diversity plans similar to the
25

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2 work that the DOE undertook in district 15 in
3 Brooklyn. Still we can't ignore the shameful fact
4 that despite efforts to promote diversity, in the
5 latest round of admissions to specialized high
6 schools only seven out of 895 admission's offers to
7 Stuyvesant High Schools, the city's most selective
8 school went to African American students. Just over
9 ten percent of admission offers to these high schools
10 went to black and Hispanic students combined in a
11 school system where these two groups together
12 comprised more than two thirds of the total student
13 enrollment, this is totally unacceptable. While a
14 large share of admission's offers went to Asian
15 student and I want to be clear, their success, the
16 Asian American community's success is not the problem
17 here and their voices must be heard in this process.
18 Many of these students come from immigrant families
19 and many of these students come from families that
20 live below the poverty line, I want to support Asian
21 families who have sacrificed and studied hard under
22 the current system because they see it as a gateway
23 to the American dream. And I also at the same time
24 want to support black and Hispanic families who have
25 sacrificed and studied hard just like Asian families

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2 but have been excluded under the current system. It's
3 important to note that admissions to these eight
4 schools is based solely on a single three-hour test,
5 the SHSAT. In fact, these eight schools are the only
6 public high schools in the country that base
7 admissions entirely on a single test score. Even
8 colleges and universities don't base admissions on
9 test scores alone but rather on multiple criteria and
10 there's a good reason for that. There is broad
11 scientific consensus among testing experts,
12 psychologists and educators that high stakes
13 decisions that affect student's educational
14 opportunities should not be made on the basis of test
15 scores alone, that's why I came to the conclusion
16 that the specialized high school admissions process
17 must change. But the truth is that the current single
18 test admissions process was enshrined in state law
19 almost 50 years ago as a direct response to
20 integration efforts and increase the number of black
21 and brown students in specialized high schools and
22 legislation that was based on racism must not stand
23 and I hope to work with our state colleagues to
24 replace the state law with one that better reflects
25 who we are as a city. To address the issue of

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2 specialized high school admissions, I'm proposing a
3 bill along with Chair Treyger, Council Members
4 Cornegy, Borelli, and Powers to create a specialized
5 high school task force and although specialized high
6 school admission's criteria are subject to state law
7 that doesn't mean that the City Council can't
8 contribute to the conversation about what it should
9 look like moving forward. By convening a task force
10 comprised of experts and stakeholders and charging
11 them with conducting a process to solicit public
12 input we hope to see recommendations to ensure a more
13 equitable admission's process to expand opportunities
14 to more students without seeing a reduction in slots
15 for any single community. The Council will continue
16 to advocate for the creation of additional city
17 designated elite or advanced high schools in which
18 the DOE could pilot new admission's criteria. We also
19 need to create pathways for students to excel and one
20 way to do that is to work with the DOE and
21 communities in revamping and restoring full gifted
22 and talented programs in every school district,
23 currently not all districts have full G and T
24 programs that start in kindergarten and to that end
25 the Committee will consider a resolution today to

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2 restore full gifted and talented programs in every
3 school district and revamp admissions to ensure
4 equitable access to those G and T programs. Release
5 of the specialized high school admissions data in
6 mid-March has generated a lot of reaction, much of it
7 heated but precious little dialogue on the underlying
8 issues. Diversifying the test based specialized high
9 schools will not weaken those schools in any way, in
10 fact, diversity strengthens our schools. Research
11 shows that more racially, culturally and economically
12 diverse classrooms enhance problem solving and
13 critical thinking skills, increase academic
14 achievement, improve cross racial understanding,
15 reduce racial prejudice and better prepare students
16 to work in a global economy and this is why we need
17 to push for greater diversity in all of our schools.
18 today's hearing is just a start of what we hope will
19 be a more productive dialogue on the issues of
20 diversity, equity, access and ongoing efforts to
21 eliminate segregation in the New York City school
22 system. For that to happen we all have to commit to
23 listening to one another and to working
24 collaboratively together. We'll be doing a great
25 service to our children if we take advantage of this

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2 critical opportunity, led by example and work
3 together it orders to accomplish greater diversity in
4 our public-school system. I want to thank you all for
5 being here, I look forward to hearing from the
6 Chancellor and his team, I'm very excited for the
7 students who are going to testify and with that I
8 turn it over to our great education Chair, Chair
9 Treyger.

10 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: Thank you. Thank
11 you, Speaker Johnson, for your leadership in more
12 ways than one, which we... which we appreciate and for,
13 for being here and good morning to all. I'd like to
14 welcome everyone here to City Hall for this important
15 hearing, probably one of the most important and
16 consequential this Committee will have. My name is
17 Mark Treyger and I am the Chair for the Committee on
18 Education. I'd like to give a very warm welcome as
19 mentioned to the Speaker of the Council, Corey
20 Johnson and thank him for being here today and for
21 standing up and speaking out on the issue of
22 diversity inside our city's classrooms. I'd like to
23 also acknowledge my colleague and Chair of the
24 Committee on Civil and Human Rights, Council Member
25 Eugene. I'd like to acknowledge and welcome Richard

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2 Carranza our Chancellor of the Department of
3 Education and thank him for being here in person for
4 a topic that I know is critically important to him
5 and a challenge he has taken on from day one on the
6 job. I want to acknowledge and welcome here today all
7 the students, families, educators, administrators,
8 community leaders and other stakeholders; you are all
9 impacted by the issue of segregation in our schools
10 none more directly than our students. The Committees
11 look forward to hearing from students here today. Too
12 often we say we put students first but usually do
13 not. Today we are putting students first literally,
14 we, we have a panel of four students who will be
15 testifying first. I have met with some of them
16 already, they are passionate, articulate and have a
17 concrete set of proposals they have developed to
18 address the problems at hand. I am grateful to the
19 Chancellor for coming to hear directly from these
20 students before testifying himself. While this
21 conversation was initially driven by the admission's
22 offer results at the city's eight test based
23 specialized high schools, we are pulling back and
24 taking a look at the larger issues plaguing our
25 schools as we, we begin the long road to tackle

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2 inequities within this system, the largest in the
3 nation serving 1.1 million students. We as a Council
4 do not have all the answers here today to solve this
5 problem. We are convened today to hear from those
6 directly affected and from a range of experts on ways
7 that we can address segregation in our schools. The
8 package of bills that the Committees will hear today
9 reflect that. The specialized high school task force
10 sponsored by the Speaker and the codification of the
11 school diversity advisory group sponsored by the
12 Public Advocate are not legislating a fix, they're
13 legislating a process that will allow stakeholder's
14 voices to be heard and for all ideas to be considered
15 in developing recommendations to be made to the state
16 and DOE on how we can move the needle and provide the
17 type of education our 1.1 million students deserve.
18 No one should expect an easy fix; immediate and
19 effective change will not happen simply overnight.
20 Decades of failed policies cannot be reversed
21 overnight that is the reason why this Council is
22 looking to codify into law the school diversity
23 advisory group. The work ahead of us as a city will
24 be long and hard but it must be done. There have been
25 countless articles, letters to the editor, op-eds,

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2 editorials and list serves with a diverse range of
3 opinion some of it well reasoned and some of it
4 outright outlandish and uninformed. This is not a
5 zero-sum game. To those who say integration will hurt
6 the quality of schools, I dismiss that argument, that
7 statement is both outrageous and racist. As a former
8 teacher I ask all of us to listen more, listen,
9 listening is sometimes a lost skill these days, we
10 must not allow voices on the extremes to pit
11 different communities against one another. The
12 conversation we begin today and the legislation we
13 will hear is a process that examines the whole
14 system. We cannot lose sight of the bigger issue and
15 focus only on eight schools in a system with more
16 than 1,000 schools. we cannot lose sight of this
17 system as a whole and focus on eight schools
18 educating approximately 15,500 students out of
19 329,600 high school students. All schools should have
20 the resources, staff and educational programs to let
21 our students thrive. All parents should be secure in
22 the knowledge that the neighborhood school their
23 child attends will set them up for success. All
24 students should be secure in the knowledge that the
25 school they attend will arm them with the skills and

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2 tools necessary to compete in this global economy.
3 Some people argue just expand gifted and talented
4 programs and we are all set. I certainly agree that G
5 and T programs should be in every single school
6 district, but we must ensure they all begin in
7 kindergarten. I also believe that G and T must be
8 revamped and reimagined, simply expanding it in its
9 current form will just mirror the problems we see at
10 the specialized high schools. The current admissions
11 process for G and T changed for the worst under the
12 Bloomberg Administration. Up until 2008, the 32
13 community school districts each used various
14 community driven measures to choose kids for G and T
15 classes. Former Mayor Bloomberg decided to centralize
16 G and T admissions and require a minimum of 90th
17 percentile score on national standardized tests.
18 Bloomberg's policy change resulted in the city
19 Department of Education closing down 60 G and T
20 programs, mostly in black and brown communities from
21 2009 to 2013. So, while we must expand G and T or
22 expand some form of enrichment, we must also reform G
23 and T, that is under our control in the city of New
24 York. It is time for this administration to tackle
25 this issue. Let us not have a conversation driven by

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2 misinformation, let us not form opinions based on
3 fear, this hearing is an opportunity for all voices
4 to be heard to help shape the laws and policies that
5 will transform our city school districts, the third
6 most segregated in the nation into one of a true
7 integration where our classrooms are diverse across
8 ethnicities, socioeconomic status, academic ability
9 and disability status among others. I hope the
10 conversation our Committees start here today will
11 lead to others on housing, infrastructure,
12 transportation and other facets of New York City
13 policy that contribute to and exacerbated the
14 segregation that we see in our schools but that shall
15 not stop us from moving forward with respect to our
16 schools. Moreover, I'd like to say that I am proud to
17 sponsor legislation that we will be hearing today
18 that will require DOE to report on the demographic
19 makeup of our staff of over 1,800 schools. Our
20 administrators, teachers and school staff should
21 reflect who we are as a city. Students should be able
22 to see themselves in those people. I look forward to
23 the reports contributing to the conversation around
24 school segregation... integration not only of our
25 students but also of our Department of Education. I

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2 want to just also just very briefly share with, with,
3 with the public about the high school that I went to.
4 I went to Merrill High School, a non-specialized high
5 school and I am so proud to be a Merrill High School
6 graduate, class of 2000, I know I've dated myself but
7 in Merrill we were... we were and I... we, we still are,
8 Merrill High School still is an incredibly diverse
9 school. Diverse not just in terms of student of
10 student body but also diverse in enrichment
11 opportunities, diverse in terms of curriculum. In
12 Merrill I was stronger history student but not always
13 the strongest math student so in history I had
14 opportunities for enrichment courses or advanced
15 placement but in math I was more in the general class
16 because I needed more time and more support. So,
17 enrichment was not based on one measure, it was based
18 on student's abilities and strength areas and I had
19 always opportunities to excel in different subject
20 matters. Merrill also had a very diverse and enriched
21 curriculum that taught me that there is a rich, deep
22 culture out there beyond just western literature, we
23 didn't just read about Macbeth Shakespeare. One of my
24 favorite books that I... that I learned about that
25 impacted my teaching career was the book titled

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2 things fall apart written by a Nigerian author that
3 helped shape my views of the world, I got that from
4 Merrill High School and Merrill High School was...
5 their... it's admission policy was shaped by something
6 called ed-op, educational opportunity where 50
7 percent of the students at Merrill during these times
8 were at grade level, 25 percent above, 25 percent
9 under, there was academic integration which I think
10 also sometimes gets lost in today's conversation as
11 well. So, when some folks say that they would like to
12 see all schools like Brooklyn Tech or Stuyvesant,
13 I'll happily say that I'd like to see more schools
14 like Merrill, I enjoyed Merrill High School, I got a
15 great education from Merrill High School. So, I just
16 wanted to... I felt I wanted share that and to kind of
17 shape and frame this discussion that we have some
18 outstanding schools beyond just the ones that some
19 folks speak about. I want to just also just thank
20 really the outstanding City Council staff that have
21 worked so hard to prepare for today's hearing and
22 other hearings that have been happening and I want to
23 thank Malcom Butehorn, the Committee Counsel; Jan
24 Atwell, Policy Analyst; Kalima Johnson, Policy
25 Analyst; Kaitlyn O'Hagan, Fiscal Analyst; and Chelsea

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2 Baytemur, Financial Analyst. I want to thank my Chief
3 of Staff Anna Scaife and Vanessa Ogle my Policy
4 Director and I will now turn to my colleague, Chair
5 Eugene for his opening remarks.

6 COUNCIL MEMBER EUGENE: Thank you very
7 much Chair Treyger. Good morning. I'm Mathieu Eugene
8 the Chair of the Civic and Human Rights Committee.
9 Today our Committee is joining with the Education
10 Committee to examine the important issue of
11 segregation in New York City schools. before I begin,
12 I'd like to extend my thanks to Chair Treyger for
13 initiating this important hearing and to
14 acknowledging the support and the leadership of
15 Speaker Johnson as shown on this issue. As a nation
16 we have moved on from exquisite segregationist
17 policies as Jim Crow, however, the legacy of such
18 policy have lingered and unfortunately our city
19 school system remains highly unequal and segregated
20 environment. As one of the most diverse cities in
21 this country it is vital that all New York... New York
22 City students have fair and equal access to quality
23 education. This sort of education is the cornerstone
24 for, for academic pursuit and it is essential to
25 providing the fundamental skills for successful life.

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2 As you know education is a passport to the future and
3 that future should be available to all city students
4 regardless of their racial, ethnic and socioeconomic
5 background. Being exposed to different people in a
6 traditional environment helps to instill empathy,
7 compassion and understanding of difference. And also...
8 for instance, research shows that Hispanic and
9 African American students receive higher grades on
10 exams in integrated schools while the gap in SAT
11 scores between white and black students is wider in
12 segregated districts. Dismantling this area of
13 systemic inequality has been a major goal of this
14 City Council. Just last year this Committee had
15 passed legislation to increase the diversity within,
16 within the city public workforce so that it too was
17 more reflective of the city's population. The
18 legislation we are hearing today aims to achieve the
19 same goal in our education system from the
20 opportunities for growth and personal achievement to
21 be as widely available as possible and for access to
22 quality schools do not be hindered by race or class.
23 While this legislation will not completely limit the
24 inequalities that exist in the city or fully address
25 the other important factors that impact school

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2 segregation, we believe that this bill will make an
3 important, very important first step. Today we'll be
4 hearing testimony from the administration, experts,
5 teachers and parents but we will also be hearing
6 undoubtedly from students. The Committee welcomes the
7 feedback and insight that students as those directly
8 impacted by education policy will be able to provide
9 and we greatly appreciate their participation today.

10 I would like now to acknowledge the members of the
11 Committee we have been joined by Council Member
12 Lander and lastly I would like us to, to thank the
13 wonderful staff who have been working... the staff
14 members who have been working hard to make this
15 hearing possible; Balgees Mihirig, Senior Counsel to
16 the... Senior Counsel to the Committee; Leah Skrzypiec,
17 Policy Analyst as well as my staff Debbie Trice. Now
18 I want to turn it over... back to Chair Treyger.

19 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: Thank you, actually
20 turn it back to the Speaker.

21 SPEAKER JOHNSON: I want to thank the
22 Chairs, I believe now we're going to call up the
23 students who are going to testify in the first panel
24 so I believe the, the four students that are here are
25 Soknadiarra, I apologize for not being able to

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2 pronounce your last name, Ndiaye who is a junior, is
3 attending a school in district 36 representing Teen
4 Take Charge, if you're here please come up we're...
5 always great to have you and the second student is
6 Julisa Perez, a graduate who attended school in
7 district 22 and is representing Integrate NYC and the
8 third student is Jace Valentine, a senior attending
9 school in district 20 also representing Integrate NYC
10 and the fourth student is Bonnie Tang, a graduate who
11 attended school in district 22 representing the
12 Coalition for Asian American Children and Families.
13 So, I want to welcome you, you may begin in whatever
14 order you'd like maybe we can start with Soknadiarra
15 and just make sure the red light on your mic is on,
16 you push that button and if you could just ensure,
17 ensure to announce yourself and your name for us so,
18 you may begin, thank you for being here this morning,
19 welcome.

20 JULISA PEREZ: Hello, my name Julisa
21 Perez. Good morning, my name is Julisa Perez and I am
22 the Executive College Director at Integrate NYC.
23 Integrate NYC is a student led organization that
24 stands for integration and equity in New York City
25 public schools. I got the opportunity to get involved

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2 with Integrate NYC during my junior year of high
3 school. I had only gone to predominately white
4 schools all of my life so finding a safe place that
5 made me feel comfortable to truly be myself in was
6 not always easy. My Spanish teacher and Latinx club
7 advisor, Ms. Arciniegas was someone I felt I could
8 confide in and had my interests in mind. She created
9 a safe place for myself and my other Latinx
10 classmates. It was because of her that I got involved
11 with Hispanos Unidos and she introduced me to respect
12 for all, a coalition of cultural clubs as well as the
13 LGBTQ plus club. It was through this club that we had
14 a school exchange with students from a school in the
15 Bronx. This, this exchange shifted the way I saw
16 public schools forever. It was with this exchange
17 that I got the chance to see the disparity of
18 resources, lack of relationships across group
19 identities, unfair enrollment processes, lack of
20 representation in school faculty, and lack of
21 restorative practices present in our schools. From
22 then on, I knew I had to advocate for students in all
23 boroughs that face these inequities. Integrate NYC
24 represents one of many youth organizations in the
25 city, our framework brings together a range of issues

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2 around segregation that's based on what students have
3 vocalized from our monthly youth council meetings
4 which brings over 100 students from every borough.
5 Together, we designed the five R's for real
6 integration. We the students want race and
7 enrollment, equitable enrollment policies;
8 relationships, culturally responsive education, to
9 have access to social justice courses; restorative
10 justice to disrupt the school to prison pipeline with
11 restorative practices; resources, all schools to be
12 equitably funded and representation, a more diverse
13 teaching workforce. We believe students, student
14 voice is essential in the process of creating policy
15 that is affecting them. The students of Integrate NYC
16 urge you to join us to retire segregation because 65
17 years is enough and it's time for transformative
18 policies to honor the dignity of all of our students.
19 We invite Council Members to meet with us to further
20 discuss the proposed legislation.

21 JAHYME VALENTINE: Good morning... [cross-
22 talk]

23 SPEAKER JOHNSON: Julisa I want to thank
24 you for that amazing opening remark, I really
25 appreciate it.

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2 JAHYME VALENTINE: Okay, good morning, my
3 name is Jahyme Jace Valentine and I am 17 years old.
4 I am the retire segregation campaign lead at
5 Integrate NYC. It's been 65 years since Brown versus
6 Board of Education, 65 years is enough. It's time to
7 retire segregation. I'm a senior in high school and
8 being a student of the NYC DOE public schools have
9 been my second home. And I want my second home to be
10 equitable. Integrate NYC has a plan... has a plan of
11 real integration for the 1.1 million students who
12 lack resources, who don't have supportive
13 relationships in their school, whose classrooms do
14 not reflect the true diversity of New York City, for
15 whose teachers do not reflect them and who are pushed
16 into the school to prison pipeline. Every student
17 should have teachers, not a teacher, teachers they
18 can identify with. For me I've only had one, he came
19 from Africa, still had his accent, spoke fluent
20 Russian and was a doctor in math. But the best thing
21 was that he understood me and my religion and
22 understood my world view as a black student. Imagine
23 if every student could have that same feeling. Not
24 just one in their 11th year in the school system at
25 16 years old like I did. Our demands for the retire

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2 segregation campaign center around the five... the five
3 Rs of real integration. Our plan demands the DOE
4 build on Integrate NYC's algorithmic prototype for
5 high school admissions and release a comprehensive
6 plan that will radically... racially, socioeconomically
7 and academically integrate public school high schools
8 so that they will truly effect... reflect New York
9 City. We need the DOE to commit to create a public
10 equity report as outlined by Integrate NYC and NYC
11 ASID, documenting resources available to students
12 across New York City. We expect... we expect the city
13 release money for schools to design curriculum for
14 ethnic studies elective in, in all high schools and
15 pay teachers to do that work. We ask the City Council
16 to approve a budget that, that invests in restorative
17 justice and counselors by stripping away... by
18 stripping away policing and metal detectors. And we
19 call on the DOE to name a group of educators,
20 policymakers and advocates like NYC Men Teach and
21 students to build... to design a blueprint for teaching
22 fellowship and provides scholarships for NYC students
23 to become educators who, who serve New York City
24 public schools because we are the ones who are
25 affected. May 17th will mark the 65... 65th anniversary

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2 of Brown versus Board of Ed and we will be hosting a
3 retire segregation party. We will... we ask each of you
4 to join us there to commit to our... to your part to
5 return... to retire segregation. It has been 65 years
6 but not enough has changed and it's up to you to help
7 us. Thank you.

8 SPEAKER JOHNSON: Jace I want to thank
9 you for that really wonderful, wonderful opening
10 remarks, I really appreciate it, thank you for being
11 here.

12 BONNIE TANG: My name is Bonnie and I
13 went to public school here in New York City from Pre-
14 K to 12th. I'm currently a college student, I study
15 at Stony Brook University. When people think of New
16 York City, the ideas of diversity, inclusion and
17 equity comes to mind. However, this isn't the reality
18 we live in right now in our public schools. New York
19 City does have a very segregated public-school system
20 and access to different resources aren't at equal
21 reach for everyone. Our schools aren't integrated,
22 and our students deserve better. Asian Americans have
23 historically been used as a wedge by society to
24 initiate conflicts within communities of color and to
25 create a distraction from the real issues of equity

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2 and inclusion. Asian Americans face systemic
3 injustices just like other communities of color.
4 Stereotypes may say otherwise but we are not your
5 wedge. We are in the fight for equity and integration
6 in public schools as well. The model minority myth
7 was created with the intention of initiating
8 intergroup fighting within communities of color. This
9 doesn't benefit Asian Americans; in fact, the myth
10 hurts us by telling our Asian youth that we are... if
11 we are unable to attain wealth then they're not
12 Asian. There have been some conversations on making
13 our curriculums more inclusive and reflective of
14 minorities, we are a minority too so where is our
15 history that isn't about the silk road? Almost all of
16 my peers throughout high school didn't even know that
17 Chinese Americans weren't allowed to become citizens
18 until 1943 and that people from Asia were also
19 restricted from immigrating here to the U.S. for
20 decades. Does this sound like that we're the model
21 minority to you? Within our public schools, we have
22 guidance counselors but how many of them are Asian?
23 Representation is another area where we lack in. if
24 there were greater resources available in regard to
25 mental health in our public schools, then our youth

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2 will know more about the model minority ahead of time
3 so like no one's perfect and they should know that
4 too. Being put under the mental stress of everyone
5 being perfect isn't healthy for one's upbringing.
6 Asian Americans have the highest poverty rate in New
7 York City so why don't we talk about that? We're not
8 the model minority and there's no truth to the myth.
9 Just like other communities of color, we have been
10 oppressed throughout history. Integrating our schools
11 will reduce racial bias and counter stereotypes, if
12 students are racially isolated from one another, then
13 it's easier to develop a perception of another group
14 that they have not been contact with or been in the
15 same classroom with.

16 SPEAKER JOHNSON: Thank you Bonnie, thank
17 you so much.

18 SOKHNADIARRA NDIAYE: Thank you for
19 inviting me to speak at this hearing and for allowing
20 us students to speak before the DOE. At the last
21 hearing in December of 2017, all of the DOE leaders
22 left before we had the chance to testify so I'm going
23 to address my remarks directly to them. My name is
24 Sokhnadiarra Ndiaye, I am a junior at Brooklyn
25 College Academy and a leader at Teens Take Charge.

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2 Right now, I am missing my English class, a class
3 filled exclusively with students of color to come
4 speak about a crime that has gone on for too long.
5 Before I continue, I need you to know that I will not
6 be the only student testifying today and I'll be very
7 disappointed if anyone from the DOE leaves before we
8 have the chance to speak to you. At a hearing on the
9 same issue in 2017, you said we do believe that
10 segregation is an issue that needs to be addressed,
11 needs to be addressed is a passive voice, addressed
12 by who? Let me put my skills from English class to
13 use; we, the DOE do believe that segregation in New
14 York City is an urgent issue that we, the DOE need to
15 address. I am in front of you, 65 years after the
16 Supreme Court decided segregation had to go, 62 years
17 after New York City approved a comprehensive
18 integration plan that was never implemented, 55 years
19 after 460,000 students boycotted school against
20 segregation, five years after Mayor De Blasio took
21 office, five years after New York City was called out
22 as having the most segregated school system in
23 America, five years after the City Council demanded
24 that the DOE integrate our school system, five years
25 after I graduated sixth grade, five more years I have

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2 spent in the segregated school system, you, the DOE
3 speak a lot about needing to look at more data but
4 why you continue to look at data a student is
5 traveling an hour and a half to get to school because
6 the school that is a block away from her house does
7 not have enough resources. One student is playing
8 ultimate frisbee..

9 [applause]

10 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Quite please..

11 SOKHNADIARRA NDIAYE: ..one student is
12 playing ultimate frisbee at a school that offers
13 dozens of sports while another student is going home
14 because his school does not offer him enough
15 resources or any sports at all. So, what are you
16 going to say to me today? You need more time to study
17 the issue? You want another task force or diversity
18 group, you need some data, more reports, you want
19 community forums. Let us address segregation today.
20 Let us address the fact that after 65 years of Brown
21 versus Board of Education we are still struggling
22 with the idea of separate but equal. Let us address
23 the fact that we are the most diverse city in the
24 world and yet we have one of the most segregated
25 school systems in the country. That is shameful,

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2 that's a student coming to you talking about that, I
3 should be in class learning about commas. As you know
4 Teens Take Charge is hosting a meeting here in this
5 building on May 17th, the 65th anniversary of Brown
6 versus Board of Education. We look forward to
7 speaking to you directly and presenting to you our
8 enrollment equity plan that we have proposed to
9 integrate an equitable school system. I'll close with
10 this because I think I've spoken enough, I've heard..
11 [cross-talk]

12 SPEAKER JOHNSON: We don't want you to
13 stop.

14 SOKHNADIARRA NDIAYE: Stop. I've heard a
15 lot of adults say how much they love hearing from
16 student voice, how much they value us, I agree... I
17 agree, student voice is great, but do you know what
18 I'd prefer, adult action. So, until you start backing
19 up your words, I don't want to hear your compliments,
20 thank you.

21 [applause]

22 SPEAKER JOHNSON: Thank you Sokhnadiarra
23 for being here today and for those very powerful
24 words and remarks, we really appreciate it, I'm sorry
25 you're missing school but I'm glad that you're here.

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2 SOKHNADIARRA NDIAYE: I hope it's worth
3 it.

4 SPEAKER JOHNSON: Thank you. Are there
5 any members of the Committee that have questions for
6 any of the amazing young people that are here today?
7 Okay, I want to thank you all but before you leave I
8 would... I know Council Member Lander wanted to make
9 some very brief remarks.

10 COUNCIL MEMBER LANDER: So, I've said on
11 a lot of occasions that students of Integrate NYC and
12 Teens Take Charge are the most inspiring thing
13 happening in New York City and I don't want to blow
14 smoke, I think your point that we haven't taken
15 action that would show that we've been listening is
16 really important but I think it's important to hear
17 too and it's not just that you're demanding that we
18 like end our denial and take action on segregation,
19 it's that you're modeling the city we could have if
20 we took it seriously so it's not only tokenizing your
21 voice it's like genuinely listening to the demands
22 you make, taking them really seriously and I would
23 urge people both on the five Rs of real integration
24 and the high school integration plan that Teens Take
25 Charge has developed had dig down into the details

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2 because we're going to hear from the Chancellor,
3 we're going to ask a lot of questions, we're going to
4 hear from a lot of people but both of these groups
5 you have not just elevated student voice, you've put
6 really specific demands out and the work around like
7 the metrics of the five Rs, the work around the high
8 schools and like we're going to hear a lot later
9 about eight of the about 400 high schools but Teens
10 Take Charge and Integrate NYC have put out a plan
11 that will look at integrating the other 392 and I
12 really appreciate it so I just want to say thank you
13 guys for coming, you know we had a first hearing on
14 school segregation about five years ago as a couple
15 of you referenced and at that point we were really
16 just in denial, I'll be honest, you know we did not
17 hear the word segregation or integration from the
18 Department of Education, we did not embark at that
19 time on a serious plan to do something about it and
20 while we still have a long way to go we are in a
21 different place today where we have not yet taken
22 serious action at the scale needed that is for
23 certain but I think maybe we're past the denial phase
24 and if we are it is because young people working with
25 activists and teachers and administrators have made

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2 it impossible for us to ignore or deny any further
3 and I really think it's on both sides of calling out
4 the harm and putting in bright relief what systemic
5 racism and segregation do and also offering us a
6 glimpse of what would be possible if we could have a
7 city led by and educating in a profound and
8 integrated way students like you. So, I just want to
9 say thank you not just for being here today but for
10 the serious organizing work you're doing and for the
11 fact that I know it's not going to end when you go
12 back to class, that we're counting on you to hold us
13 accountable and keep pushing all of us together.

14 Thank you.

15 SPEAKER JOHNSON: Thank you. Thank you
16 Brad, thank you all for being here we really, really
17 appreciate it, thank you so much. So, next up we are
18 going to hear from the Department of Education, we're
19 going to hear from Chancellor Richard Carranza who's
20 here; Deputy Chancellor Josh Wallack and Deputy
21 Chancellor Sean... LaShawn Robinson and then after the
22 administration DOE we're going to hear from Assembly
23 Member Charles Barron, former Council Member Charles
24 Barron whose with us today, he will speak after the
25 administration. This is the way we set it up, we

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2 didn't know you were coming, I'm sorry Charles. I
3 hope that doesn't need to happen. So, we're going to
4 just hear from the Chancellor. Charles your... the
5 Council Member staff just told us it was okay if you
6 spoke after the administration, that's what they just
7 told us. So, we have to swear them in if the
8 Committee Counsel could swear them in.

9 COMMITTEE CLERK: If you could just raise
10 your right hands please? Do you swear to... or affirm
11 to tell the truth, the whole truth and nothing but
12 the truth in your testimony before the Council and to
13 answer Council Member questions honestly?

14 [panel affirms]

15 RICHARD CARRANZA: So, good morning I
16 want to start my remarks by saying that as an
17 educator I could not be more proud of the students
18 that just spoke and I would disagree that while it
19 may be important to be in class learning about
20 commas, this kind of civic engagement is a whole
21 lesson in and of itself so bravo to our students and
22 if you need a, a pass for school I'll be happy to
23 write you one. So, I want to say good morning Speaker
24 Johnson, Chairs Treyger and Eugene and all of the
25 members of the Education Committee and the Committee

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2 on Civil Rights that are here today. I also want to
3 recognize Assembly Member Barron who is here, and I
4 want to thank him for his unflinching voice in the
5 conversations that we're going to have here today, I
6 know you'll be able to hear from him in a little bit.

7 I am joined this morning by Deputy Chancellor Josh
8 Wallack who is Deputy Chancellor for the Division of
9 Student Enrollment and Early Childhood Education and
10 Deputy Chancellor LaShawn Robinson, Deputy Chancellor
11 for the Division of School Climate and Wellness.

12 Thank you for hosting this important hearing and I
13 would also like to thank Speaker Johnson, Chair
14 Treyger and Council Members Lander and Torres and the
15 City Council for your partnership, leadership and
16 advocacy on behalf of our 1.1 million students. Now I
17 know; just as Mayor De Blasio knows that.. and just as
18 everyone else in this chamber knows, that public
19 education is an investment in the future. From my own
20 experience as a student, a teacher, a principal and
21 now Chancellor of the largest school system in the
22 nation, I can tell you that beyond a shadow of a
23 doubt, a public-school education can change a life.
24 Unfortunately, school segregation robs many students
25 and those living in poverty of a high-quality

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2 education they deserve. So, as our students asked
3 let's have some real talk. This month marks 65 years
4 since the Supreme Court issued the landmark decision
5 in Brown versus Board of Education, 65 years. Of
6 course, in that decision, Chief Justice Earl Warren
7 wrote I quote, "in the field of public education the
8 doctrine of separate but equal has no place and
9 segregated schools are inherently unequal", unquote.
10 Sixty-five years later, I humbly with great respect
11 say to you, we have not fulfilled the mandate of the
12 Supreme Court in Brown versus Board of Education. For
13 too long, we've been afraid to confront this reality.
14 We closed our eyes and hoped that the problem would
15 fix itself or simply go away, no more. We can no
16 longer allow such a system to persist, just because
17 the problem is hard to fix, or people will say unkind
18 things. The bottom line; a public, and I underline
19 the word public, school system should represent the
20 entire city it serves. Therefore, today it is my
21 honor to share the New York City Department of
22 Education's efforts to end segregation and integrate
23 our public schools. I started by talking about
24 equality which is very important but my overarching
25 goal as Chancellor is to advance equity as well. More

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2 precisely, to advance equity not maybe sometime in
3 the future, not maybe when we're ready to hear the
4 hard truth, not maybe when everybody ask... we ask and
5 say okay we love the message but to advance equity
6 now. Why? Because advancing equity is the only way to
7 disrupt the entrenched systems that throughout our
8 history have kept underserved students from achieving
9 their potential. Consider please that 70 percent of
10 New York City's public-school students are black or
11 Latino, 70 percent of 1.1 million students yet if you
12 are a black or Latino student you are statistically
13 less likely to be in an accelerated program or our
14 specialized high schools compared to your peers. You
15 have less access to advanced placement courses and a
16 lower likelihood of graduating and of graduating
17 college ready. Only an equity approach can right
18 these wrongs. In New York City, equity means that we
19 have the same high expectations for all of our
20 students, whatever their race, ethnicity, zip code.
21 Equity means that we acknowledge that some students
22 need more support than others and we give them the
23 resources they need to succeed. Equity means that we
24 accelerate our work to reverse historic injustices,
25 empower communities and intervene throughout a

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2 child's journey through our system. Equity means that
3 all of our students are on a path to high school
4 graduation, to college if that's where they want to
5 go and meaningful employment. Integration advances
6 equity, because it allows our children to learn from
7 one another's diverse perspectives, backgrounds and
8 experience. Significant research demonstrates that
9 integrated classrooms lead to improved academic test
10 scores, improved critical thinking and problem-
11 solving skills, lower dropout rates, reduction of
12 racial bias, enhanced leadership skills and better,
13 better preparedness for success in the global
14 economy. Integration doesn't lower academic
15 achievement for any student, it improves it, yet I
16 can't tell you how many times I hear in this
17 discussion where there's an equation to diversity and
18 a lowering of academic students. I will call that
19 racist every time I hear it and I will say it so if
20 you don't want me to call you on it don't say it. We
21 have no illusions, meaningful integration of a system
22 of 1,800 schools is tough work and we know it will
23 not happen overnight. What is more integration means
24 different things to different communities, it is not
25 just about the movement of bodies or giving black and

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2 Latino students access to certain schools, it's much
3 more than that. Achieving meaningful integration is
4 far more complicated and far more important.
5 Segregation on the other hand does shrink
6 opportunity. So, we are confronting this problem head
7 on. With all that said, we have taken real steps to
8 improve integration in schools in some of our most
9 diverse but segregated school districts. After a
10 community driven process, districts one and three in
11 Manhattan and district 15 in Brooklyn are
12 implementing plans to increase school diversity.
13 These districts have prioritized underrepresented
14 students for admission into school's district wide.
15 In each of these districts, the majority of schools
16 have met or made progress towards their diversity
17 goals. I would like to thank Council Members Ayala,
18 Chin, Rosenthal, Lander and Menchaca for their
19 leadership on this issue in their respective
20 communities, they've taken hits, they're taken body
21 blows but they've remained true to the goal. I wanted
22 to take a moment to discuss the work in Brook,
23 Brooklyn's district 15. This is a beautifully diverse
24 district that represents New York City in many, many
25 ways. Unfortunately, due in part to long standing

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2 academic screens for admissions, many district 15
3 middle schools have long served very low numbers of
4 low income black and Latino students, others
5 basically served only low income black and Latino
6 students. The district 15 diversity planning process
7 brought everyone to the table; community members,
8 parents, students, advocates and school staff across
9 the district and they had very tough but necessary
10 conversations, conversations grounded in data and
11 occurring in different languages. The district 15
12 working group looked at a huge amount of data and
13 research including middle school enrollment
14 demographics, patterns of racial housing segregation
15 and academic outcomes. The looked at a variety of
16 potential solutions and then they put forward a
17 comprehensive plan to change the middle school
18 admission's process. Mayor De Blasio and I were proud
19 to approve their plan. Now the academic screens are
20 gone replaced by a lottery where students are matched
21 to the schools they want to attend. District 15
22 middle schools prioritize about half of their seats
23 for students from low income families, multilingual
24 learners and students in temporary housing. We
25 released middle school offers earlier this, this

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2 month and I am proud to say that almost all of the
3 middle schools in district 15 met their diversity
4 targets right out of the gate. This is real action;
5 this isn't just speaking. With real buy in. With real
6 ownership of this plan and its success. It's not just
7 in district 15, you see 87 schools across our city
8 now a diversity in admissions plan in place. That up
9 from just seven schools when diversity in admissions
10 program started three years ago. Based upon our
11 efforts to integrate district 15, we have launched a
12 two-million-dollar grant program to support school
13 districts to develop locally driven diversity plans
14 in communities across New York City. In fact,
15 yesterday I testified before Congress to advocate for
16 additional funding to expand that even further. We're
17 currently reviewing applications and five recipients
18 will be selected before the end of this school year.
19 Slowly but surely, we are disrupting the status quo
20 and we are advancing equity now. Most of this work
21 has come from the grassroots, bottom up, so to speak.
22 These plans are owned by principals and
23 superintendents. By PTAs and parent led community
24 education councils. They are ready to put in the
25 elbow grease to make them successful. And at the same

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2 time, we can't punt integration to individual schools
3 and communities. We must pair grassroots bottom up
4 approaches with top down vision, resources, and
5 action. And New York City is supporting school
6 desegregation like never before. In 2017, we
7 established the School Diversity Advisory Group, SDAG
8 to make formal policy recommendations to ensure that
9 New York City schools become integrated and
10 equitable. The SDAG includes over 40 members,
11 including local and national experts on school
12 diversity, parents, teachers, advocates, students,
13 and other community leaders. We have supported the
14 SDAG in creating multiple, large scale public
15 engagement opportunities for communities in each
16 borough can come together and share their
17 perspectives on school diversity and integration. In
18 fact, I will be speaking at one of these events
19 tonight. The SDAG has released an initial report,
20 which Mayor De Blasio and I have been reviewing and
21 very excitedly I am anticipating that we will
22 responding in the weeks ahead. In addition, SDAG will
23 release a second set of recommendations by the end of
24 the summer which I'm looking forward to reviewing. We
25 are appreciative of SDAG's hard work and I look

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2 forward to meeting with them and Mayor De Blasio
3 later this month. You see we agree on much of the
4 substance and recommendations. In fact, consistent
5 with SDAG's recommendations, we have recently hired a
6 director of student voice through a hiring process
7 that included youth input. This individual, this
8 colleague is charged with establishing, sustaining
9 and centering student voice throughout our agency. We
10 want to reduce the barriers and increase access for
11 students at the decision-making table not just hear
12 from students but to know that their voices will be
13 used as part of the policy development process.

14 Additionally, I deeply agree with the importance of
15 investing in culturally relevant education and
16 practices, we are actively considering the best way
17 to implement some of the SDAG's recommendations that
18 are specifically related to this work. We are also
19 taking a hard look at more of our citywide enrollment
20 practices from 3-K through 12th grade. In fact, our
21 recently released birth to five early childhood care
22 and education RFP aims to make early education
23 classrooms more socioeconomically and racially
24 integrated by bringing together programs that have
25 traditionally served low income families with our

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2 universal 3-K and Pre-K programs. As you know, we are
3 continuing our efforts to eliminate the specialized
4 high school admissions test. No other city in the
5 country uses a single test for admissions. Let me
6 repeat that, no other city or system in the country
7 uses a single test for admissions to their
8 specialized schools. What outcomes has a single test
9 led to in New York City? This year, black and Latino
10 students received only ten percent of the admission
11 offers to our eight specialized schools, in a school
12 system that is nearly as I've mentioned 70 percent
13 black or Latino. This is despite significant
14 expansion in after school test prep, offering the
15 SHSAT during the school day at 50 schools and
16 outreach to increase the number of students taking
17 the SHSAT. A dramatic expansion of these programs
18 that are not changing the status quo and would not be
19 a good use of resources. Simply put, the single
20 admissions test is unfair, and the status quo is
21 unacceptable. If we are to advance equity now, we
22 must eliminate the single test for specialized high
23 schools now. I want to turn to a broader discussion
24 of integration, which as I discussed before, goes
25 beyond admissions and enrollment. Meaningful

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2 integration is about giving all students equitable
3 access, opportunity and the chance to succeed. It's
4 also about priming school communities for this
5 change, by creating classroom cultures that respect
6 and celebrate diversity, the beautiful diversity of
7 our city. So, let me share another way we are coming
8 at this problem. It involves the 125,000 people who
9 are employed by the Department of Education. Starting
10 this school year, we've made a historic investment in
11 anti-bias training for each of these individuals who
12 works with our children. Now, this term may seem
13 abstract to some, but let me assure you it's not an
14 abstract term. When we examine our implicit biases,
15 we understand why we may have different expectations
16 for different students. We understand why certain
17 strategies or practices may affect different students
18 in different ways. Implicit bias training is
19 foundational to everything we do, it allows us to
20 raise expectation for all students and build more
21 inclusive school environments. It's central to
22 advancing equity now. We are also expanding
23 culturally responsive education through the teaching
24 materials that are culturally relevant and include a
25 diverse range of communities and topics. This

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2 includes the passport to social studies curriculum
3 which has lesson plans about African, Latino, Asian,
4 Middle Eastern, Native heritage people as well as
5 about gender, LGBTQ and religious history. Across our
6 vast system we are working to show our students,
7 through the literature we read, in the language we
8 use, and, in the way, we invest our resources, that
9 we are deeply connected... a deeply connected society
10 made of different voices and perspectives. Like anti
11 bias, this is not an abstract concept; it is central
12 to creating schools that engage and motivate students
13 and advancing equity now. I cannot thank the enough
14 this Council for its advocacy on culturally
15 responsive education, gracias. All of our work to
16 increase diversity and dismantle the status quo goes
17 hand in hand with our equity and excellence for all
18 initiatives which are increasing opportunity for
19 every student through historic investments in all of
20 our schools. 3-K, Pre-K for All, Universal Literacy,
21 Computer Science for all, and College Access for All
22 are game changers for our students especially in
23 those districts that have been historically
24 underserved and starved of these types of programs
25 for far too long. The basic premise is this; whether

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2 our students attend a school with mostly white peers
3 or mostly black and brown peers, they all deserve
4 excellence. Every student deserves it. And we are
5 going to work to ensure it. We must believe that
6 every student can achieve it and we must have the
7 same high expectations for every one of our students.
8 When we invest in our students and tell them they'll
9 achieve greatness, you will see amazing results. And
10 as we talk about equity here today, I urge you all to
11 keep one other question in mind; how do we best reach
12 and serve our communities? We must truly empower
13 parents and students, not just pay lip service to
14 parent and student engagement. For example, do
15 parents know about their child, what their child
16 should be able to take... do for algebra in the eighth
17 grade or college prep courses in high school? Do
18 students and parents... do parents know what their
19 children should know at the completion of the second
20 grade of the third grade or the fourth grade? You
21 see, knowledge is power and with this in mind, I have
22 established a new division at the Department of
23 Education for Community Empowerment, Partnerships and
24 Communications that specifically focuses on how to
25 communicate with our parents and communities. We are

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2 creating the infrastructure for our parents to be the
3 empowered and active parents that they are especially
4 in historically underserved communities. Now I will
5 turn to the proposed legislation. These bills would
6 create a task force to issue recommendations for new
7 admissions criteria for the specialized schools,
8 codify a citywide school diversity advisory group,
9 create district level diversity working groups,
10 expand reporting on demographics and create a school
11 diversity monitor within the New York City Human
12 Rights Commission. The goals underlying these bills
13 are consistent with our goals. We are committed to
14 soliciting input from a wide range of stakeholders
15 throughout the city on increasing diversity in our
16 schools. We are excited about the SDAG's work and our
17 next steps with them. We will continue to support
18 district level groups as they develop locally driven
19 diversity plans that are responsive to the needs in
20 their communities. We believe in transparency and the
21 importance of reviewing data for trends. In fact, my
22 transparency has not rubbed everybody the right way
23 but that's okay because the data is the data. We are
24 committed to urgent reform on the specialized high
25 school admissions process as our existing proposal

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2 demonstrates. We welcome the support of the Council
3 in, in achieving these goals and look forward to
4 further discussions on these bills. The goal of our
5 diversity agenda is to build a future that is not
6 bound by history, not bound by demography or by
7 income. That is what equity in excellence is all
8 about. We believe we can create a school system that
9 truly reflects the best of our diverse, inspiring,
10 and innovative city. We believe that we can unleash
11 our students' innate brilliance, unlock their
12 creativity and put them on a path to their dreams. We
13 believe we can disrupt the status quo and achieve
14 meaningful integration. We believe we must advance
15 equity now and we are grateful for the City Council's
16 continued partnership and support in this necessary,
17 hard work. I want to thank you for your time, I want
18 to thank you for your dedication to this topic and I
19 would be happy to answer any questions that you may
20 have.

21 SPEAKER JOHNSON: Thank you Chancellor
22 Carranza, thank you for your testimony, thank you for
23 being here. I'm going to start off with a few
24 questions and then turn it over to the Chairs. So,
25 you spoke of course at length about some of the plans

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2 and programs and vision that you have for the DOE in
3 trying to address segregation but what is the
4 Department's overarching plan, overarching plan to
5 address segregation in a meaning... in a meaningful
6 systematic and sustained way?

7 RICHARD CARRANZA: So, I've talked a
8 little bit about the role of the school diversity
9 advisory committee and I think this is an important
10 committee that we are working with, these are
11 individuals that have given of their time for a
12 number of years to study the problem, to look at the
13 problem and dive deeply into the problem. As I've
14 also mentioned we're going to get a second set of
15 recommendations which I understand will include
16 recommendation on screens. We don't want to get ahead
17 of that student... that advisory group out of respect
18 for the hard work they're doing that being said it
19 has been my experience that the only way you can
20 tackle issues of segregation and integration and
21 diversity is by looking at the systems and structures
22 that underly the very systems and structures that
23 give you the kinds of results that you get and by
24 that you have to look at the data and once you look
25 at the data you have to examine what those policies

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2 are. The results are really clear Mr. Speaker, when
3 you have students that only ten percent of students
4 in a specialized school environment are made offers
5 to that specialized school environment and the very
6 process, the very structure by which students get
7 that opportunity is unlike any process anywhere else
8 in the country is it any wonder then that you get
9 such a skewed result so we are looking at systems,
10 we're looking at structures and from a community
11 based perspective our community organizations and our
12 community school districts are taking on this issue
13 through a grassroots organization process as well;
14 district 15, district one, district three as I've
15 mentioned have all made significant proposals. It's
16 a... both grassroots and top down approach but let me
17 be very clear, the overall strategy is to continue to
18 lay a vision for integration of our schools to
19 continue to focus on systems and structures that
20 perpetuate the unacceptable status quo and to really
21 seed, support and, and help the local organizing that
22 is happening including our students that... who's
23 voices are becoming more, more significant around
24 lifting the issues that keep the current status quo
25 in place. We hope to act upon the, the recommendation

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2 of SDAG and our various input groups as we go forward
3 and that's the immediate plan.

4 SPEAKER JOHNSON: So, SDAG, the school
5 diversity advisory group which you mentioned in your
6 testimony is made up by about 40, 40 individuals?

7 RICHARD CARRANZA: Yes.

8 SPEAKER JOHNSON: And, and you mentioned
9 here today Chancellor and I think you've shown in
10 your time as Chancellor a real willingness to have a
11 partnership with the City Council, there isn't a
12 single appointee of that group that the Council had
13 any say in though our bill would say that the City
14 Council does have appointees to the SDAG, SDAG, would
15 you support the Council having some role in deciding
16 who some of the appointees of the advisory group
17 should be?

18 RICHARD CARRANZA: Well I think there...
19 the, the group has been working now for quite a while
20 and so it is a working group, it's chaired by two
21 very capable chairs, again I would like to learn more
22 about what that would look like. I know under the
23 current proposal there would be another group that
24 would be appointed, it would have more direct
25 representation by the city, I don't think that we're

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2 far apart here, I think that when you look at who is
3 part of that SDAG group the City Council would be
4 very impressed with and in fact would probably name
5 some of the same people on that group but again I'd
6 like to learn more about what that would actually
7 look like in terms of an implementation.

8 SPEAKER JOHNSON: So, the, the districts
9 that you mentioned, you mentioned district 15 and you
10 mentioned 87 schools across the city that now have
11 diversity admissions plan in place, what about school
12 districts that wouldn't want to participate in
13 looking at how to desegregate, what, what would your
14 vision or approach be in those instances?

15 RICHARD CARRANZA: So, I, I'll share some
16 comments and, and I also wanted to mention for the
17 Council that I have two very capable deputy
18 chancellors that may just chime in as well so I want
19 to give them free reign to be able to do that. I
20 think it's critically important that as I've spoken
21 from a top down and a bottom up approach this is
22 where the rubber meets the road, you have a coalition
23 of the willing so you will have communities and
24 community districts that are willing to take this on,
25 want to have this organizing initiative and we're

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2 going to support them and there will be some ideas
3 that will be generated from the local community. I
4 think that's really, really important but to your
5 point there are going to be communities that will say
6 we don't want it, we don't have an interest, we don't
7 see this as a need that's where its critically
8 important that from the top down perspective where
9 we're looking at policies, we're looking at
10 practices, we're looking at regulations that we are
11 taking a look through an equity lens with the support
12 obviously of our elected officials but we are looking
13 at are there policies, protocols, regulations that
14 are not equitable and changing them when we need to
15 and again part of this very difficult but very
16 important conversation is lifting those tough
17 conversations so that when those policies are
18 identified and there is movement on them people at
19 least have been heard about what... either their
20 support or their opposition to those could be.

21 SPEAKER JOHNSON: But, but Chancellor and
22 before Josh before you go you highlighted a few
23 school districts which I think we are really proud of
24 and... [cross-talk]

25 RICHARD CARRANZA: Yep... [cross-talk]

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2 SPEAKER JOHNSON: ...the work that they've
3 done and they deserve tremendous accolades and I
4 think they're a model for other school districts
5 across the city but that's a very small handful of
6 school districts, that's a handful out of 32 school
7 districts, it's a very small number so if we're going
8 to make meaningful, systemic change letting an
9 individual school district opt in and receive a
10 couple of million dollars to work on a plan that
11 doesn't seem like a way to make rapid systemic
12 change.

13 RICHARD CARRANZA: Yeah, so... [cross-talk]

14 SPEAKER JOHNSON: And what would you say
15 in response to that?

16 RICHARD CARRANZA: Yeah, so Mr. Speaker
17 that's not the plan, so it's both a bottom up with
18 the coalition of the willing but it's also a top down
19 where we're pushing the engagement process, we're
20 pushing changes in enrollment processes, again
21 looking forward to the final recommendations from the
22 school diversity advisory committee taking those
23 recommendations which are ground, grounded in a
24 process years long and actually implementing some of
25 those things. So, it's, it's not just one or the

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2 other and I think it's really important that where
3 there is a conversation and we have some lessons
4 learned that we take those lessons learned and
5 actually help share with other community education
6 districts, you know the irony of, of the question
7 though is... it's a good question but I recently spent
8 countless hours in conversation with folks about the
9 issue of mayoral accountability, mayoral control if
10 you will and there was this great push back about the
11 fact that well you don't listen to parents, you don't
12 listen to communities what about community education
13 districts and as I talk to parents in the community
14 education councils and parent leaders I said to them
15 we're listening to you, we're not going to come and
16 shove something down your throat, you're going to be
17 part of the conversation, this is exactly what we're
18 talking about there has to be that kind of
19 engagement, there has to be this kind of a
20 conversation but make no mistake advancing equity now
21 means that there will be some changes and that
22 perhaps not everyone is going to like those changes
23 but in the spirit of the urgency of what is happening
24 to our children we want to make sure that people are

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2 having an opportunity to engage in those things but
3 we want to do the right thing.

4 SPEAKER JOHNSON: I... that's very helpful,
5 that's a very helpful level of context to understand
6 that, that even outside of an individual school
7 district or community education council not wanting
8 to participate in something like district 15 did
9 there will still be support given to individual
10 schools and support given... or, or policy change that
11 would still help integration efforts in a significant
12 way even outside of a process to the local school
13 district be resistant to, is that an accurate way to
14 say it?

15 RICHARD CARRANZA: That is a very
16 accurate way.

17 SPEAKER JOHNSON: Okay...

18 RICHARD CARRANZA: Yes, sir.

19 SPEAKER JOHNSON: Josh?

20 JOSH WALLACK: Yeah, thank you I would
21 just add that I think we've seen a... an... in an
22 encouraging way across the city in districts and all...
23 you know across all five boroughs schools and groups
24 of schools stepping forward to be part of our
25 diversity, diversity in admissions programs and just

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2 in the next month or two we will be announcing awards
3 from that first tranche of funds for planning with
4 five districts stepping forward to... [cross-talk]

5 SPEAKER JOHNSON: That's great... [cross-
6 talk]

7 JOSH WALLACK: ...replicate that community
8 planning process with five more behind it... [cross-
9 talk]

10 SPEAKER JOHNSON: That's great... [cross-
11 talk]

12 JOSH WALLACK: ...soon and then I... on the
13 top down end I would just say as an example of that
14 one move that we made over the last year under this
15 Mayor and Chancellor's leadership is transitioning
16 away from a high school admissions method where you
17 had to know about a tour or open house in order to
18 compete for seats to one where just as, as Chair
19 Treyger described the educational option or
20 opportunity model and 132 programs across the city
21 made the transition just in the last two years to
22 that model which fosters much more academic diversity
23 and that just happened from the top down method if
24 you will across the city as a citywide policy so we
25 are taking both of those approaches as we go forward.

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2 SPEAKER JOHNSON: Okay, I, I want to get
3 to a few other questions quickly and then turn it
4 over to my colleagues. According to the center for
5 New York City Affairs at the new school students are
6 opting out of their zoned schools at higher rates now
7 than they did ten years ago while Asian and white
8 students are less likely to opt out of their
9 neighborhood zoned schools than their black and
10 Hispanic peers are, research shows that an increasing
11 number of students are opting out, almost 60 percent
12 of black students opted out of their neighborhood
13 zoned school, up from 38 percent a decade ago and in
14 2016 and 17, 39 percent of Hispanic students opt out
15 of their zoned school. I want to understand why are
16 so many students opting out of their neighborhood
17 schools and what is the DOE doing to address this
18 issue?

19 RICHARD CARRANZA: So, again we... I'd like
20 to dive in a little deeper and then I'm going to ask
21 Deputy Chancellor Wallack to, to opine as well. I
22 think what's important is that when you look at the
23 indicators of schools in New York City the, the data
24 is pretty clear that schools are getting better;
25 graduation rates are up, dropout rates are lower,

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2 academic achievement is improving so the schools are
3 getting more robust but I also think that its
4 critically important that if parents are going to
5 have a choice you have to give them a school that's
6 worth choosing and that is the crux of our work,
7 improving schools across the city in every
8 neighborhood. I think it's also important that... and
9 I'm not sure how that data is cut so how many of
10 those students are choosing to enroll in a charter
11 school, how many students are choosing to go to a
12 private school. We know that in the last ten years
13 the options that students and families have in New
14 York City are much greater and much more robust than
15 they've ever been so there's more options for
16 students so that's... when I say I want to cut that
17 data a little bit finer that's part of what I'm
18 talking about but let's, let's be very, very clear
19 the equity in excellence agenda is focused on doing
20 just that, creating equitable and excellent options
21 for parents and students in every community of our
22 city. I think part of that is making sure that we
23 know where they are, we know what they are and that
24 it makes sense from a cohesive perspective in terms
25 of what options parents and students have.

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2 JOSH WALLACK: I would just add onto that
3 to say that we do have a, a... we have choices for
4 families as part of our enrollment system for
5 kindergarten and part of what you're seeing in that
6 data is families exercising that choice but as this
7 administration and this Chancellor's equity and
8 excellence for all agenda kicks in and we have more
9 3-K in our city, more Pre-K for... more Pre-K in our
10 city the integration of early education programs, the
11 successful universal literacy initiative which is
12 improving early literacy instruction through all our
13 early elementary grades, Computer Science for All
14 throughout all our elementary schools and as those...
15 as the performance and the experience in those
16 schools improves more and more families are excited
17 about the elementary schools and staying in the
18 schools in their neighborhoods or finding excellent
19 options elsewhere and, and we're seeing that success
20 as the Chancellor says year in and year out as we go
21 through our school improvement agenda.

22 SPEAKER JOHNSON: So, Josh we've been
23 trying to get data from you all on universal literacy
24 and DOE has not given us that data, why is that?

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2 JOSH WALLACK: I, I'm not sure what data
3 you've been asking for but if you... if we can talk
4 about it and we can try to get you the data you're
5 looking for, we're, we're proud of that program and
6 happy to share.

7 SPEAKER JOHNSON: Okay, so Chancellor the
8 school diversity advisory group as you mentioned
9 earlier this year released their first set of
10 recommendations with respect to integration efforts
11 in our school system, does the administration have a
12 plan to adopt... to adopt any of the specific proposed
13 recommendations that were outlined that you could
14 outline today?

15 RICHARD CARRANZA: So, I can't outline it
16 today because we want to do... we do want to circle
17 back, I mentioned in my testimony we're going to be
18 meeting with the school diversity advisory council
19 and we want to share with them but we... there are a
20 number of recommendations that we are prepared to
21 adopt and I want to congratulate it, they did some
22 great work.

23 SPEAKER JOHNSON: Have time frames been
24 established for those recommendations that the
25 Department plans to adopt?

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2 RICHARD CARRANZA: Again, there is a
3 second tranche of recommendations coming later this
4 summer, it will shortly after the summer where we'll
5 have a more comprehensive conversation about which
6 ones.

7 SPEAKER JOHNSON: Will the DOE publicly
8 release its response to the report?

9 RICHARD CARRANZA: Yeah, all of... all of
10 our responses are public, we absolutely will.

11 SPEAKER JOHNSON: And will the DOE
12 simultaneously brief the City Council on what
13 recommendations they plan to adopt?

14 RICHARD CARRANZA: Well I think it... just
15 from my perspective out of respect for the City
16 Council I think you will get a briefing right before
17 we do a public release, so you know first.

18 SPEAKER JOHNSON: The DOE operates a
19 diverse city admissions pilot program as you talked
20 about which gives priority in the admissions process
21 to students who qualify for free or reduced price
22 lunch, English language learners and those in the
23 child welfare system or who were impacted by
24 incarceration, according to DOE's website currently
25 there are more than 75 schools and programs

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2 participating in this pilot and it just started in
3 just seven schools in 2015 so that is huge progress,
4 does the DOE plan on opening up this program to even
5 more schools above the 75 schools?

6 RICHARD CARRANZA: So, the answer is yes
7 but Josh do you want to add a little color to that?

8 JOSH WALLACK: Absolutely, and, and we,
9 we welcome innovative proposals from all over the
10 city where our goal is to increase that as quickly as
11 we can and include community based organizations and
12 early education as well because we have five of them
13 participating for the first time this year.

14 SPEAKER JOHNSON: How is DOE tracking and
15 evaluating the success of schools participating in
16 this program?

17 RICHARD CARRANZA: Well I think you look
18 at the numbers so are they moving the number in terms
19 of diversity, we're... we also are in deep
20 conversations with the leaders in those schools and
21 by the way happy national principal appreciation day
22 to all of our principals but principals play a
23 critical role in, in that work, it will not happen if
24 principals don't own it so we are in regular
25 conversation with principals about what's working

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2 well and then under our... the leadership of our Deputy
3 Chancellor Wallack and his team we are gathering best
4 practices, what, what can we learn that schools are
5 doing and then how do we share that with other
6 schools that want to engage in a similar process.

7 SPEAKER JOHNSON: So, I want to go to the
8 charts on the screen as shown on these charts black
9 and Hispanic students represent nearly 70 percent of
10 the New York City student population but only four
11 percent and six percent respectively of the
12 specialized high school population. DOE operates both
13 the dream program, an academic program that prepares
14 students for the SHSAT and the discovery program
15 which offers admissions to students from high need
16 families who just missed the exam cutoff and it would
17 attend a summer program. Additionally, DOE expanded
18 SHSAT school day which offers SHSAT during the day at
19 50 middle schools and despite these efforts
20 specialized high schools still fail to represent
21 DOE's overall student population, why, why are DOE's
22 current interventions of increasing test preparation
23 and access not working?

24 RICHARD CARRANZA: You just articulated
25 beautifully through data the crux of the issue and

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2 the crux of the issue is despite all of those efforts
3 you have a flawed system where you have a single test
4 that's aligned to state standards, that is a single
5 determiner of an opportunity for students to attend a
6 specialized school. Now there is not one university,
7 not one university in the country that uses such a
8 methodology, there is not one other specialized
9 school in the country that uses such a methodology
10 so, the, the, the issue here is very clear and, and
11 pardon me for my passion on this issue but either we
12 believe based on that data, either we believe that
13 black and Latino students can... are biologically,
14 physiology, genealogically incapable of being
15 admitted to a specialized school or it is the method
16 and the methodology that is shutting out a vast
17 majority of our students in New York City. I think
18 it's the methodology, in fact I know it's the
19 methodology, there's not one cycle of matricin that
20 has come forward to say that test is the best way to
21 identify specialized schools, students for a
22 specialized school, not one. There is no evidence
23 that shows that is the best way to do it, yet we talk
24 about this thing as if it was... it was printed on a
25 stone brought down from a mountain.

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2 SPEAKER JOHNSON: But what if the state
3 doesn't change Hecht Calandra?

4 RICHARD CARRANZA: Well I think... [cross-
5 talk]

6 SPEAKER JOHNSON: Then what?

7 RICHARD CARRANZA: In your testimony Mr.
8 Speaker and I want to give you tremendous credit, the
9 origin of that law is not based in an enlightened
10 perspective on enrolling students... [cross-talk]

11 JOSH WALLACK: That's right...

12 RICHARD CARRANZA: It was specifically
13 when Chancellor Scribner and the Board of Education
14 at the time were looking to diversify the three
15 specialized schools and that law by the way with very
16 little to no public input of the communities affected
17 was put into place to stop integration and that is
18 the status quo and yet we have people that are
19 defending that law as if it's a birthright, its not a
20 birthright. So, either we believe that students
21 should have a shot and what do we do to students to
22 get a shot, we tell our middle school students go to
23 school every day, do well in your English class and
24 your math class and your social studies class, in
25 your science class, de well, do your homework, get

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2 good grades, play a sport, play an instrument, get
3 involved in a club, become part of the debate team,
4 don't get suspended, don't get into trouble yet none
5 of that matters if they want to go to a specialized
6 school because all they have to do is take a test
7 that is not aligned to the state standards which is
8 what they're studying all day long and they have to
9 get a certain score on that test...

10 SPEAKER JOHNSON: Do you think that the
11 plan that the Mayor rolled out was rolled out in a
12 way that brought people together?

13 RICHARD CARRANZA: I think process is..
14 [cross-talk]

15 SPEAKER JOHNSON: Looking back on it..
16 [cross-talk]

17 RICHARD CARRANZA: ...important... [cross-
18 talk]

19 SPEAKER JOHNSON: ...if you needed to self-
20 scrutinize and say what could have done... been done..
21 been done better, we've seen what's happened in the
22 aftermath of that, would there would have been a way
23 to have less of that if we had engaged communities
24 ahead of time, I don't know what the answer is I want
25 to know what you think?

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2 RICHARD CARRANZA: Yeah, we could always
3 do process better and we should have... we should have,
4 we could have, I mean we'll spend all day on that, I
5 think it's always better when you have more
6 conversation, where you have more process. I can tell
7 you that the proposal would not have been a different
8 proposal and I could tell you that every conversation
9 that I've ever been involved in, in my 30 years as an
10 educator has always started with a proposal, we have
11 a proposal and we have a conversation. What I do
12 appreciate about the Council weighing in and Mr.
13 Speaker I thank you for your personal involvement in
14 this particular issue, is that the conversation has
15 become corrupted by different kinds of attributions
16 if you will of the motive of what this whole proposal
17 is about, that is what this proposal is all about,
18 the unacceptable status quo and when you have a city
19 as diverse as New York City that is getting those
20 kinds of outcomes in some of its schools we have to
21 have a public conversation about that. So, yes, could
22 have, would have, should have always could do better
23 but I think that the proposal that is here on the
24 table now is what we should be engaging in and, and
25 what does the data say, what do the experts say, what

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2 does the research say and what do we ultimately want
3 as a city as diverse as New York City to be the
4 protocol and the process for giving opportunities to
5 all students in the system.

6 SPEAKER JOHNSON: Should we create
7 additional schools to create more seats and more
8 opportunity?

9 RICHARD CARRANZA: The Bloomberg
10 Administration did just that, when Hecht Calandra was
11 in effect there were three specialized schools, they
12 added five, didn't change the methodology and look
13 what we got.

14 SPEAKER JOHNSON: And what if we did it
15 outside of the specialized schools and called them
16 something else and piloted this admissions criterion
17 that you all announced or other admissions criteria
18 so you could still have additional schools but not
19 with the same admissions criteria?

20 RICHARD CARRANZA: I appreciate the
21 sentiment, with all due respect I'm not interested in
22 making an imperfect system a little less imperfect,
23 the issue is still that the current system that we
24 have in place is not effective.

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2 SPEAKER JOHNSON: But what if the state
3 legislature does not change... we're going to hear from
4 the Assemblyman next, what if it doesn't happen?

5 RICHARD CARRANZA: I would only say this
6 and you know I was a teacher for over a decade, I
7 taught American government, I'm a big believer in the
8 democratic process and I know that there are no
9 elected officials that are appointed, they're elected
10 so I think that it's important that the communities
11 involved in this conversation because this is make no
12 mistake, a civil rights issue so I think that we
13 should be talking about it in those terms. Now
14 directly to your question again I think we need to
15 have... there is... by the way and I've done my
16 investigation as well there's no other state in the
17 United States that has a state law that mandates an
18 enrollment process for a local school district,
19 nowhere else. So, I think that's important as well
20 that we should have that conversation, I don't think
21 that we move this conversation, our students were so
22 beautiful, we've talked about it a lot, we need to
23 stop talking and start acting and I think we start
24 acting by not skirting the issue of the state law but
25 taking that on directly and taking on the, the notion

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2 of what it is that we want for our kids and.. [cross-
3 talk]

4 SPEAKER JOHNSON: Okay, I, I want to end
5 with this Chancellor I... we, we just went through the
6 preliminary budget process, the Mayor announced his
7 executive budget last week, we're starting our
8 executive budget hearings next week. The lack of
9 detail that we have received from the Department of
10 Education on the budget is totally unacceptable, I
11 want you to know that from me, unacceptable, cuts,
12 PEGs over 100 million dollars with no new investment
13 in fair student funding, with no new investment on
14 all of the issues that we know work and that have
15 mattered to this Council is disrespectful, from this
16 administration in the budget process and I am saying
17 that here today because we're about to start the
18 budget process on Monday with OMB and I want you to
19 know because you run one of the most important
20 agencies in the entire city of New York that what we
21 saw in the preliminary budget and what we saw in the
22 executive budget is wholly and totally unacceptable
23 so I we want to work together on this plan that we're
24 talking about today, if we want to talk about
25 diversity, if we want to talk about what works, if we

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2 want to talk about investments that budget does not
3 reflect what you're saying here today from my
4 perspective.

5 [applause]

6 SPEAKER JOHNSON: So... no, no, no, please.
7 So, cutting back extended learning time, cutting back
8 breakfast in the classroom, not investing in fair
9 student funding, not investing in all of the things
10 that the City Council spent weeks on putting in a
11 document in a thoughtful way and not getting a
12 response from it I find to be wholly disrespectful
13 and in contradiction to the testimony here today. So,
14 I...

15 [applause]

16 SPEAKER JOHNSON: Please. So, I want... I
17 want you to know that I look forward hopefully, you
18 won't be here but the OMB Director will be here on
19 Monday and I look forward to hopefully DOE working
20 with your counterparts and colleagues at OMB on
21 getting us answers on why certain PEGs are being made
22 in the system that effects students on a day to day
23 basis and why new investments when the budget has
24 grown by two billion dollars in revenue have not been
25 made for the school children of New York City, I need

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2 to know the answer to that, I don't need to know it
3 today but I... since I have you hear today and since I
4 really appreciate your responses, your
5 thoughtfulness, your testimony, your willingness to
6 work together I don't know who from DOE came up with
7 the ideas for the budget, I don't know who from OMB
8 worked with DOE on it but it is in total
9 contradiction to your testimony here today and our
10 budget... our budget is a document of our priorities
11 and our values and I do not see it in either the
12 preliminary budget or the executive budget that was
13 released last week so I look forward to having that
14 conversation with you over the next few weeks and
15 hopefully some of this will be solved and resolved
16 by Monday when the budget hearings start and I wanted
17 to let you know that personally out of a sign of
18 respect, I'm not... I, I don't know who did it from DOE
19 but I am... I am... I'm... I was really aback to see what
20 was proposed by DOE in the budget. So, you don't have
21 to respond, you can if you want and then with that, I
22 want to turn it back to Chair Treyger.

23 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: I, I better not get
24 started on the budget right now...

25

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2 RICHARD CARRANZA: Don't get me started
3 on the budget.

4 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: Yeah, so thank you
5 Mr. Speaker and again I thank the Chancellor and
6 everyone here for, for being here and I just want you
7 to know I, I've done a lot of preparation and reading
8 and a lot of meetings in advance of this hearing
9 including meeting with I think one of our nation's
10 top public school champions, Diane Ravitch who I
11 think an extraordinary resource for educators and for
12 everyone involved in the fight to protect and
13 strengthen our public schools and I guess Mr.
14 Chancellor the, the old teacher in me also had to
15 create a graphic organizer for myself about what is
16 within the state's control versus what is within our
17 control and so I want to just begin some of my, my
18 questions. I agree wholeheartedly Mr. Chancellor and
19 I hope... with... wholeheartedly with those who say that
20 one single exam or one single measure does not fully
21 capture a student's ability. As a former teacher I, I
22 would be contradicting myself about what I believe
23 deeply in our kids if I... if I believed that one test
24 can capture a student's full ability but I also want
25 to say Mr. Chancellor I also believe that simply

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2 focusing on one exam also diminishes the severe... the
3 severity of the issues we face in our system, we have
4 issues far deeper than just this one test to eight
5 schools and...

6 [applause]

7 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: ...and on the topic
8 of the specialized schools comes a, a... I think a
9 deeper conversation about enrichment in our public
10 school system, what does that look like currently,
11 what should it look like and I agree Mr. Chancellor
12 as, as we just discussed that one measure should not
13 determine a student's entryway but let's look at the
14 admissions process for the current Gifted and
15 Talented program? Currently kindergartners, four-year
16 olds are tested on solely one measure so when we
17 hear... I hear a lot today about one measure
18 determining your fate but it is within the city's
19 control right now as we speak to do away with this
20 single measure entranceway which I think at four
21 years old does not really test ability or
22 intellectual capacity it just tests privilege, it...
23 or, or it tests whether a four year old is having a
24 good or bad day and so Mr. Chancellor that is within
25 your control, within the Mayor's control, do you

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2 believe it is developmentally appropriate to be
3 conducting high stakes testing for four year olds?

4 RICHARD CARRANZA: No.

5 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: Great answer.

6 RICHARD CARRANZA: And I've been
7 absolutely clear on that from the minute I stepped
8 foot into the DOE.

9 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: And what are we
10 doing to change that as we speak?

11 RICHARD CARRANZA: Part of what's
12 happening is the diversity advisory committee is
13 going to be making recommendations about gifted and
14 talented programming so we want to hear their voice,
15 within our Chief Academic Officers department they
16 are also working on an analysis of what are a more
17 enlightened process for gifted and talented education
18 and quite frankly we're looking at what are other
19 school systems doing across the country that is much
20 more inclusive in terms of gifted and talented
21 programming but let's be really clear, the research
22 is also very clear that gifted and talented programs
23 tend to segregate students as well... [cross-talk]

24 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: Agreed... [cross-
25 talk]

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2 RICHARD CARRANZA: ...so what I am not
3 interested in doing is promulgating further
4 segregation in our schools... [cross-talk]

5 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: Agree... [cross-talk]

6 RICHARD CARRANZA: ...and I have seen it
7 played out, I've lived and worked now in five states,
8 in five major school systems, every single one when
9 you talk about gifted and talented as a panacea
10 you're talking about further segregating children, I
11 am not interested in doing that, I do think there is
12 a role to play for creating enriched environments for
13 students in every school, every school because every
14 school has students on the spectrum of learning that
15 need more and different, that's the kind of work that
16 I think we should be talking about. So, I agree with
17 you and my answer is so brief, no because I agree
18 with 100 percent but let's start talking about gifted
19 and talented as if it's the solution to everything
20 it's not and, and, and the fact that again we have
21 enshrined gifted and talented as the solution just
22 add water, just add a gifted and talented program,
23 not you... [cross-talk]

24 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: Right... [cross-talk]

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2 RICHARD CARRANZA: ...but in the... in, in
3 the public discourse is very problematic and is a
4 symptom of not having an informed conversation which
5 I'm really glad about this hearing so that we can
6 have that kind of an informed conversation.

7 LASHAWN ROBINSON: And to add to that
8 Chair Treyger I appreciated your framing earlier
9 about your experience at Merrill, a culturally
10 responsive practice is to believe that all children
11 bring gifts and talents to the school community and
12 how do we celebrate young people for their gifts and
13 talents that they bring and allow them to learn in,
14 in environments that have high expectations and high
15 levels of support so I appreciated your framing
16 earlier and along with our Chief Academic Officer
17 those are the models that we're looking at as a
18 system.

19 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: No, I, I definitely
20 appreciate that, I, I just... I just note that I think
21 in this conversation about, you know the specialized
22 schools, I, I... what, what gets lost I think is our
23 current approach to enrichment currently in the
24 school system and its problematic to me that four
25 year olds are tested on simply one measure to

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2 determine entryway into this gifted and talented and,
3 and I actually have a... have a problem with the name,
4 gifted and talented as well, I think we need to look
5 at... I mentioned before about Merrill High School we
6 don't have to reinvent the wheel we have done this
7 before, Merrill had an approach that was based on
8 subject area, there are students who might be, you
9 know strong in history or the humanities, might need
10 some more support in math and that's okay. I, I had
11 excellent classes in, in both... in both subject areas
12 where students who were stronger than me in math
13 helped me and so academic integration strengthen
14 outcomes for all, that's sometimes gets lost, lost in
15 this conversation. In the fair student funding
16 formula DOE uses poverty levels as a proxy for
17 educational achievement for early grades before
18 standardized testing scores are available, do you
19 believe that gifted and talented tests accurately
20 measures the ability of four year olds and other
21 young children and to what degree are test results
22 correlated with economic status and, and the context
23 of this question is that the fair student funding
24 formula is again within the city's control, the city
25 adopted this, now granted it was adopted under the

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2 Bloomberg Administration which I have a lot of
3 problems with but this is within our control right
4 now where test scores are... where poverty levels are,
5 are used as a proxy for educational achievement, if
6 you can comment on that Mr. Chancellor?

7 RICHARD CARRANZA: Yeah, so the answer is
8 no, I don't believe that they, they correlate and as
9 I've publicly stated on numerous occasions everything
10 is on the... on the table, we're looking all systems
11 and structures, this is also one of them.

12 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: Right, I, I
13 appreciate that and, and again I'm just going to read
14 off some quick things about what else is within the
15 city's control; most recommendations outlined as we
16 heard by the school diversity advisory group
17 initiating diversity working group discussions in all
18 school districts to come up with district level
19 integration plans where geographically possible.
20 Another thing that's within the city's control as we
21 just discussed, revamping and expanding enrichment
22 programs and eliminating the sole measure to testing
23 four-year olds. We heard the four about the
24 specialized high school exam not being aligned with
25 the state curriculum, I agree the Hecht Calandra law

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2 is problematic but the Hecht Calandra law does not
3 mandate that the city use this test, the city
4 actually pays Pierson to create this test, we can
5 cancel that contract right now and have, have
6 measures that are actually aligned with, with
7 curriculum, we should also... the city also has the
8 power to reimagine the, the screen schools admissions
9 process. The city also has the power to use metric
10 goals outlined by student advocate groups for
11 socioeconomic, academic and racial integration and
12 other factors such as students with IEPs and English
13 language learners. We could also within our power
14 make integration count be a school and district
15 accountability measure so for example when an
16 executive superintendent visits a school district are
17 one of the questions what are we doing to integrate
18 our districts, is that... is that... is that a question
19 on their, you know performance checklist, I'm not
20 sure if they still use performance checklists these
21 days but that's what I know back in my days of
22 teaching. We can adopt... I heard Deputy Chancellor
23 talk about this, adopt the Merrill High School Ed-op
24 approach to admissions and have carefully thought out
25 comprehensive enrichment opportunities based on

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2 student's strengths. We can increase fair student
3 funding as the... as the Speaker just talked about. Mr.
4 Chancellor it is outrageous that in this budget that
5 we've just saw that not one dime, not one dime was
6 added to increase school budgets in New York City..
7 [cross-talk]

8 SPEAKER JOHNSON: It's pathetic..

9 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: ...but yet the Mayor
10 and some of his folks' campaigns are on the theme of
11 schools not jails in the budget there's billions for
12 jails and not one dime to increase our school budget,
13 that is outrageous. So, we can... we have the power
14 within our city to increase fair student funding to
15 schools in marginalized communities and help fight
16 back the perception of failing schools in those
17 communities with resources and aggressive and
18 effective community outreach so these are just a
19 number of things that, that we have the power to do
20 Mr. Chancellor and I, I also just want to... I know
21 that the Speaker touched upon this, the
22 recommendations of the diversity advisory group, I
23 want to just go through some of them very, very
24 carefully.. [cross-talk]

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2 RICHARD CARRANZA: Mr. Chairman I don't
3 want to interrupt you but I, I... [cross-talk]

4 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: Please... [cross-
5 talk]

6 RICHARD CARRANZA: ...do want to correct
7 for the record one issue, Hecht Calandra required us
8 to have a single test...

9 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: Right...

10 SPEAKER JOHNSON: But you can change what
11 that test is.

12 RICHARD CARRANZA: Right, to what?

13 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: Mr. Chancellor...
14 [cross-talk]

15 RICHARD CARRANZA: To what and, and I'm
16 not... I'm not trying to be argumentative... [cross-talk]

17 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: Right... [cross-talk]

18 RICHARD CARRANZA: ...with you but it is a
19 false narrative to say just change the test, okay, so
20 what, we've talked to many companies that do test
21 prep and quite frankly we don't have the staff to
22 develop a test every day, this is what happens the
23 minute you have a test that becomes the high stakes
24 admissions test there are, true story, there are
25 processes in place for students that have taken the

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2 specialized high school admissions test are asked to
3 memorize two or three questions and post that test,
4 there is a test party and then students come, lots of
5 students, there's food, it's fun and everybody writes
6 down the question they were asked to memorize. Guess
7 what now, that becomes now an exact copy or pretty
8 close to an exact copy of the test they took this
9 year and that starts getting used to prep students
10 for the test next year so when you have a company
11 that does this kind of a test they have to change the
12 test, change the questions, it's cycle metrics that
13 costs money and there's not many companies that will
14 do that. So, I just want to be clear, I agree with
15 you it's problematic, could we change, sure we could
16 change, you're still going to get the same outcome
17 because you're still using a test for a single
18 purpose and people will find a way to game it,
19 they'll find a way to super prep for it, it's the
20 same issue and I just want to be really clear about
21 this that we are on the same page but this... it's,
22 it's a little disingenuous to just say you can just
23 change the test..

24 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: No, no, no Mr.. I,
25 I, I appreciate that response it's just what I'm

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2 saying is that absence state action and the state of
3 course should act on a number of fronts including on
4 CFE 2 quite frankly... [cross-talk]

5 RICHARD CARRANZA: Yes... [cross-talk]

6 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: ...very disappointing
7 that save New York did not actually fulfil that
8 obligation but what I'm saying is that when I hear
9 city officials including folks from the DOE complain
10 that the test is not... is not aligned to state
11 curriculum respectfully the city of New York pays
12 Pierson to create the test so the city actually is
13 responsible for a test that's not aligned to state
14 curriculum that could... that could quickly be changed
15 immediately in, in addition to pursuing state
16 corrective action but that's within the city's
17 control. What, what I'm reading in my research is the
18 city renews Pierson's contracts and keeps paying them
19 millions of dollars to come up with the same test and
20 the only thing they changed in recent years was
21 removing questions on... called scrambled paragraphs,
22 that was the big change. No, we can do a lot more in
23 addition to state... to state action.

24 RICHARD CARRANZA: It would be wonderful
25 if the state law didn't require us to have the single

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2 test and again what I'm going to say is it's a false,
3 it's a false premise to say that you can just remove
4 the test, there is not a whole industry out there
5 dying to do this test, there isn't. Now if there are
6 recommendations about a company or a corporation that
7 can do it better, I'm all ears but until then we have
8 a flawed system based on a flawed law that require
9 us... requires us to use a test... [cross-talk]

10 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: Right... [cross-talk]

11 RICHARD CARRANZA: ...and we can talk about
12 how we could change that test and its under purview,
13 the problem is, the deeper problem, the law is the
14 problem...

15 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: Mr. Chancellor the
16 recommendations that the Mayor put forth in absence
17 of the test also relies on tests because if you're
18 saying that we have to rely on the seven percent top
19 students in middle schools how do you reach the top
20 percentages, yes there are different measures but
21 mostly on exams and if you're going to use simply
22 seventh grade math and ELA test scores Mr. Chancellor
23 there are significant disparities there... [cross-talk]

24 RICHARD CARRANZA: Sure... [cross-talk]

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2 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: ...we have a serious
3 achievement gap in the city of New York and there's a
4 focus on... and, and quite frankly integration should
5 not just begin at the ninth grade in eight schools in
6 New York City...

7 RICHARD CARRANZA: Absolutely and it's
8 not, as we've testified there's a lot of work that's
9 happening in... [cross-talk]

10 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: Yes... [cross-talk]

11 RICHARD CARRANZA: ...many areas of the...
12 [cross-talk]

13 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: Yes... [cross-talk]

14 RICHARD CARRANZA: ...DOE, I agree with you
15 but at least... [cross-talk]

16 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: Yeah... [cross-talk]

17 RICHARD CARRANZA: ...that top seven
18 percent is studying the state standards in their
19 classrooms every day.

20 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: Right...

21 RICHARD CARRANZA: At least and students
22 and parents aren't told they have to go to a certain
23 middle school because they have a better percentage
24 of students going to specialized schools, this is one
25 topic of a much broader... [cross-talk]

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2 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: Right... [cross-talk]

3 RICHARD CARRANZA: ...agenda and I agree
4 with you, I'm not... [cross-talk]

5 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: Right... [cross-talk]

6 RICHARD CARRANZA: ...quibbling with that...
7 [cross-talk]

8 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: Right... [cross-talk]

9 RICHARD CARRANZA: ...but let's be precise
10 in what we're talking about here... [cross-talk]

11 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: Right... [cross-talk]

12 RICHARD CARRANZA: ...because I think we're
13 on the same page.

14 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: Right, so I, I want
15 to read off very quickly and then I'll be mindful of
16 my time because other colleagues have questions and
17 my Co-Chair. A couple of the key recommendations that
18 were put forth by the school diversity advisory group
19 report I really encourage folks in the public to read
20 this report. I want to credit the stakeholders that
21 worked really, really hard and some of their
22 recommendations here are really outstanding and I
23 think can make dramatic change but I just for the
24 sake of being on the record Mr. Chancellor I just
25 want to ask you for example some of their key

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2 recommendations. Do you commit to one of the short-
3 term goals, elementary and middle schools should be
4 measured against their district's racial economic,
5 multilingual learner and students with disabilities
6 percentages, do you... do you commit to implementing
7 that goal?

8 RICHARD CARRANZA: I think that's a great
9 idea, as I've testified, we are going to meet with
10 the school diversity advisory committee and let them
11 know exactly which ones we'll implement but it thinks
12 it's a good idea.

13 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: Do you commit to
14 creating a chief integration officer?

15 RICHARD CARRANZA: I am the chief
16 integration officer and let me give you an example of
17 why that's important because in every system that
18 I've worked in the minute you create the chief
19 academic officer or the chief integration officer or
20 the chief whatever officer it lets the system off the
21 hook because integration is now not my
22 responsibility, it belongs to the chief integration
23 officer, let them worry about integration, I don't
24 want anybody to be off the hook, integration is
25

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2 everybody's job and I as the Chancellor am
3 responsible, I am the chief integration officer.

4 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: So, Mr. Chancellor
5 respectfully and I appreciate that response but
6 respectfully yesterday I sat through the DO... another
7 hearing with the DOE about hearing from your... from
8 your folks that everyone in the DOE should be aware
9 of Title IX or everyone should be, you know trained
10 and skilled. We had students testify yesterday that
11 not one of them knew that there should be or that
12 there is distributed Title IX brochures or Title IX
13 posters or that there even is a Title IX coordinator
14 in the school system. So, when I hear folks say we
15 all should do this Mr. Chancellor, yes, in an ideal
16 world, yes but you do need someone who is... who has...
17 who is empowered and can hold folks accountable and
18 with the... with the skills and qualification and the
19 time and capacity beyond just overseeing, you have..
20 you have an enormous job Mr. Chancellor and I... you
21 know I was a teacher but I wasn't a social worker,
22 does that mean schools don't need social workers, we
23 desperately need more social workers in our school
24 system.

25 RICHARD CARRANZA: I agree.

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2 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: And so, I'm, I'm
3 careful about titles and, and, and capacity, we need
4 folks geared in these roles. Do you commit to adding
5 metrics to school quality report related to diversity
6 and integration?

7 RICHARD CARRANZA: As I've testified, we
8 are going to meet with the school diversity advisory
9 committee and have a conversation with them, I think
10 it's a good idea.

11 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: Do you require... do
12 you commit to requiring all nine school districts
13 with sufficient demographic diversity of population
14 to develop diversity and integration plans and
15 notably they are districts one, two, three, 13, 15,
16 22, 27, 28, 31?

17 RICHARD CARRANZA: As I've testified, we
18 are going to meet with the school diversity advisory
19 committee, and we will have that conversation with
20 them directly but I think it's a good idea.

21 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: Do you commit to
22 ensuring that all family welcome center staff should
23 be trained to support students with disabilities and
24 should be prepared to help students consider all
25 school options within their community?

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2 RICHARD CARRANZA: Yes.

3 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: Do you commit to
4 ensuring that school staff should be trained to
5 welcome and accommodate students and family members
6 with disabilities as well as immigrant families who
7 need interpreters at school fairs and tours?

8 RICHARD CARRANZA: Yes.

9 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: Do you... in terms of
10 resources, in September 2018 DOE announced a two
11 million dollar school diversity grant program for
12 districts to develop community driven diversity
13 plans, do you commit to expanding this funding if...
14 you know should you receive additional... more
15 applications and quite frankly is two million dollars
16 enough to have a citywide conversation about how to
17 diversify our school districts?

18 RICHARD CARRANZA: If we get the
19 resources, we will allocate those resources.

20 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: Oh, Mr. Chancellor
21 we will fight for those resources.

22 RICHARD CARRANZA: Thank you.

23 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: We just have to
24 make sure that the Mayor and OMB works with you and
25 works with us to get those resources into, into the

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2 DOE budget. Another key item for us, do you commit to
3 investing in program offerings to ensure that high
4 poverty schools have the same curricular,
5 extracurricular and after school opportunities as
6 schools in more affluent communities?

7 RICHARD CARRANZA: We will meet with the
8 school diversity advisory committee and have the
9 specific conversation with them, I think that is a
10 phenomenal idea.

11 SPEAKER JOHNSON: Let me just interject
12 here and Chancellor I say with respect, I mean I
13 understand your answering that question in a certain
14 way, the school diversity advisory group is not a
15 separate branch of government with oversight over
16 this administration, the City Council is so when we
17 ask questions at an oversight hearing it's not I will
18 go to a group that was handpicked by the
19 administration and give them answers and give you a
20 briefing just ahead of time, we expect answers so if
21 you have the answer and you know what the answer is
22 give the answer and don't say you're going to wait to
23 inform a group of people who are not democratically
24 elected and each represent 170,000 people and who
25 have a... who have a charter mandated responsibility to

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2 have oversight over your agency and this
3 administration...

4 RICHARD CARRANZA: Mr. Speaker, thank you
5 but with all due respect... [cross-talk]

6 SPEAKER JOHNSON: I mean it's
7 disrespectful to keep answering questions like that
8 to the separate branch of government that our just is
9 to hold oversight over you.

10 RICHARD CARRANZA: I'm familiar with the...
11 yes... [cross-talk]

12 SPEAKER JOHNSON: So, please don't answer
13 the questions that way.

14 RICHARD CARRANZA: Well... [cross-talk]

15 SPEAKER JOHNSON: It's not a way to work
16 together.

17 RICHARD CARRANZA: Mr. Speaker if I may,
18 it is also disrespectful to that committee that has
19 dedicated two years and put together a list of
20 recommendations who is going to come back to us in
21 June with the second set of recommendations for me in
22 a public meeting without giving them the respect of
23 their time and effort, incredible time and effort to
24 come out ahead of them without having the courtesy of
25 meeting with them first so it's a matter of how I

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2 have been so transparent today and every time I come
3 to this City, City Council because I respect the role
4 of the City Council. In fact, some of our greatest
5 advocates for the positions and the initiatives are
6 sitting here in the City Council so I have tremendous
7 respect but I am not going to disrespect that hard
8 working committee and the work that they've done so
9 we can choose to look at this as being disrespectful,
10 I would respectfully ask that you don't look at it
11 that way and I am going to say do I commit, I'm going
12 to give you the exact same answer because I'm going
13 to speak to that committee and then I'm going to let
14 everybody know including the City Council where it is
15 that we stand but I'm going to respect their work
16 first.

17 SPEAKER JOHNSON: Okay, but I... [cross-
18 talk]

19 RICHARD CARRANZA: And I need to let them
20 know... [cross-talk]

21 SPEAKER JOHNSON: ...Chancellor I
22 understand that but let's be clear, that committee of
23 course deserves a huge amount of praise and kudos and
24 accolades and respect for the work that they did...
25 [cross-talk]

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2 RICHARD CARRANZA: Yes... [cross-talk]

3 SPEAKER JOHNSON: ...they do not supplant
4 the charter mandated responsibility and authority
5 that we have as the municipal legislature so our spot
6 ranks far above a great group of people who we
7 respect because we are the ones who approve your
8 budget annually... [cross-talk]

9 RICHARD CARRANZA: Uh-huh... [cross-talk]

10 SPEAKER JOHNSON: ...we are the ones who
11 have subpoena power over your agency, we are the ones
12 who can pass laws that have to do with data
13 collection at DOE so I understand what you're saying
14 but there's not a equation here on we're on the same
15 ground, the City Council is the municipal
16 legislature, we hold a different spot than an
17 appointed group of people who have done great work
18 and it's important for me to establish that as leader
19 of this body.

20 RICHARD CARRANZA: Noted sir, thank you.

21 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: And, and just for
22 the record the diversity advisory group is not a new
23 creation, this was born in 2017... [cross-talk]

24 RICHARD CARRANZA: Uh-huh... [cross-talk]

25

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2 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: ...and their report
3 came out in February of 2019, it's now May, I... we
4 have been reading their recommendations that the DOE
5 asked them to put together so when hearing that the
6 DOE needs to go back to meet with them again to
7 discuss things that they asked them to recommend in
8 the first place years ago is a circular argument Mr.
9 Chancellor, I think we, we have the capacity to
10 process their recommendations and begin implementing
11 them right now and, and that is why I'm asking just
12 for the sake of being on the record about some of
13 their key recommendations which I... which I think are
14 really outstanding and I'm just going to continue
15 because I have a couple more and then I'll turn to,
16 to, to my... to my Co-Chair. In... does the DOE commit to
17 investing in, in growing and strengthening high
18 performing schools, again with the understanding that
19 we revamp enrichment and not use the Bloomberg's
20 style enrichment approach to schools outside of
21 Manhattan?

22 RICHARD CARRANZA: It's a good idea.

23 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: Do you commit to
24 ensuring that every school have the resources for a
25 high-quality student council?

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2 RICHARD CARRANZA: I think that's very
3 important for every school.

4 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: Do you commit to a
5 general assembly that should be created with
6 representatives from every high school to develop a
7 citywide student agenda and vote on key issues?

8 RICHARD CARRANZA: Student voice is
9 critically important, and I think that's a good path.

10 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: Do you commit to
11 creating a standing committee of students on high
12 school admissions to advise the Chancellor?

13 RICHARD CARRANZA: Another good idea.

14 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: Do you commit to
15 also make... well actually this, this initiative I
16 think you and I have discussed quite a bit working
17 together to provide culturally responsive pedagogical
18 practices at all schools and for all students, this
19 is an issue I think you and I have quite... have seen
20 quite a bit, bit of alignment and one budget... final
21 note, note Mr. Chancellor in your testimony you
22 talked about making sure that, that this conversation
23 is deeper than just admission policy, making sure
24 there our schools respect all, appreciate all that's
25 why I was also deeply disappointed that the, the exec

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2 budget eliminated 1.3 million dollars in restorative
3 justice programs for our schools that again is
4 contradictory to some of the things that we're
5 hearing, hearing today, we need to incorporate the
6 discussions about how we view and what we're seeing
7 in terms of school, school climate practices, we're
8 still waiting respectfully for an MOU that has not
9 been... we've been told for quite some time where the
10 NYPD needs to release their strangle hold over the
11 police... over our school system, it's a school system
12 not a police system so, so there is quite a bit of
13 things that we're still wait, waiting for and so I
14 would like to now just turn... if you have... want to
15 respond and turn it to my Co-Chair who's been very
16 patient.

17 LASHAWN ROBINSON: Thank you Chair
18 Treyger, I just want to correct the record, we are
19 actually ramping up restorative practices across
20 school communities and this year we went from one
21 restorative district to four and we are increasing
22 the impact in restorative practices next year and I
23 welcome an opportunity to meet with you and Council
24 to talk more about that work and how we're leveraging
25 internal resources to do that.

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2 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: Thank you, thank
3 you very much and I'll now turn to my Co-Chair, Chair
4 Eugene.

5 COUNCIL MEMBER EUGENE: Thank you very
6 much Chair Treyger. Chancellor first let me thank you
7 for the education and all the effort that you and
8 your staff here are doing to address the segregation
9 in our schools and thank you for your testimony but
10 in your testimony you mentioned that this month
11 marked 65 years since the Supreme Court issued the
12 landmark decision in Brown versus the Board of
13 Education and you mentioned also we have not
14 fulfilled the mandate of the Supreme Court and I'm
15 going to continue, you said that school systems
16 should represent the entire city it serves and as a
17 Chancellor my goal is to advance equity, those are
18 very important and beautiful statements but the
19 young... the students who were speaking recently and it
20 seemed like she was tired of rhetoric of you know
21 ideas and data but I think that if she was here she
22 would ask Chancellor what you will do differently
23 with your staff with regard of the education to make
24 sure we really address the segregation in schools,
25 what it will take to do that because we have been

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2 trying and waiting for 65 years, what you will do
3 differently?

4 RICHARD CARRANZA: So, the student was
5 incredibly poignant with her words and what she said,
6 I think what's different is I, I would ask you just
7 to think about a couple of things. Name a Chancellor
8 in the last 30 years that have spoken so bluntly
9 about segregation in the schools, I think it's
10 important that this conversation be had in not
11 flowery diplomatic terms but in the real talk that I
12 hear when I visit schools and I hear from students in
13 the community, I think that's important. I think it's
14 also important as our Deputy Chancellor has mentioned
15 that we are investing in building capacity for the
16 adults that work with our children to do that in a
17 much more enlightened way so the work around implicit
18 bias training that we're doing, the work around
19 creating restorative practices in all of our schools,
20 the work that we're doing to invest in socioemotional
21 learning conditions so that the conditions are
22 better. To Chairman Treyger's point there is an MOU
23 that is going to look very different in terms of the
24 roles of law enforcement in our schools, the work
25 that Deputy Chancellor Wallack has talked about in

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2 terms of the organizing and the seeding organizing
3 that is happening in local community education
4 councils and districts across the city, all of this
5 points to real work that is happening right now with
6 real investments but we also have to recognize that
7 the conditions that exist are decades in the making,
8 years and years and years and years so it also is
9 important to recognize that this will require the
10 kind of conversation that we're having here today.

11 COUNCIL MEMBER EUGENE: When we talk
12 about segregation in schools we are talking about the
13 student and those students they come from different
14 communities, they come from the community, what are
15 you going to do to engage those communities where
16 they come from just to ensure that you address
17 properly the issues that they're facing and the
18 issues that are a part of the segregation in our
19 schools?

20 LASHAWN ROBINSON: Thank you so much for
21 your question and I just wanted to build upon what
22 the Chancellor previously shared, I think it's
23 important for us to just kind of like take a moment
24 to really think through what has happened over the
25 course of this administration. In a few short years

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2 we released an equity and excellence agenda and
3 citywide implemented two additional grade levels;
4 Pre-K for All, that happened nowhere else in this
5 country so let's think about that for one second, the
6 work that we've done with Pre-K. I personally had the
7 honor of leading a body of work called Advanced
8 Placement for All where we implemented advanced
9 placement courses in schools that did not previously
10 have them and the largest payoff has been for
11 students of color, young girls in STEM and also for
12 low income students, that's a huge task. This year we
13 hit and exceeded the first target and ensuring that
14 75 percent of our high school students have access to
15 five or more advanced courses. So, when we talk about
16 equity and excellence for all that's the kind of work
17 that we're talking about and we're not just talking
18 about going to places where those courses were not,
19 we went to schools with robust AP courses where you
20 find that while you may have a diverse school
21 community when you take a look at advanced classes
22 those classes are not diverse. The AP for all agenda
23 did not call for us doing that body of work but we
24 did it anyway because that was the right work to do.
25 Let's reflect on 65 years ago, where were you 65

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2 years ago and let's imagine if you weren't physically
3 here where would you have been 65 years ago, what
4 were you doing, what would your legacy be, what would
5 you say about this time and this moment? When I think
6 about that work, I'm proud of the gains that we've
7 made so far and I'm looking to build with Council,
8 and everyone assembled here today to take the next
9 steps. This is the Department of Education agenda but
10 it's on all of us, all of us collectively to do the
11 work on behalf of our young people, I can go on in
12 talking about what we've done with universal
13 literacy, college access for all, middle school and
14 high school and other initiatives, I don't want that
15 to be lost in this space. I also want to add as we
16 talk about integration the implicit bias work is an
17 important part of that conversation, that's about
18 changing mindsets, that's about self-reflection, that
19 work is about awareness. The NYC Men Teach that's
20 starting the work about ensuring that our school
21 communities are reflective of the young people that
22 we serve. So, let's not miss the forest for the
23 trees, let's take a moment to think about what we've
24 accomplished and then all of the work that's left to

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2 do, that's on all of us collectively as a city to
3 realize our vision for the New York City graduate.

4 COUNCIL MEMBER EUGENE: You know I love
5 talking about that and we all know that this is a...
6 the reality of New York City, New York City is home
7 to so many people coming from so many places probably
8 first generation but immigrant people when they come
9 over here they come to be to the goodness of New York
10 City they bring with them the culture and also they
11 are facing so many challenges for them, for their
12 student to succeed even when we will do a better job
13 and addressing segregation in school they will need
14 also a lot of support to navigate through the system
15 and to make sure that their children, you know get
16 access to the desegregation school that we're going
17 to create but what do you have in mind, what is your
18 plan to help those people who don't speak English
19 properly and English is not their first languages,
20 those people are facing language barriers, cultural
21 barriers, what is in your plan to ensure that their
22 children also they are a part of these desegregated
23 school that we are working together to create?

24 RICHARD CARRANZA: So, again we, we, we
25 are very committed when we talk about advancing

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2 equity now and those particular issues, I will tell
3 you that language access is critically important.

4 When I reconfigured the Department of Education
5 within months of arriving one of the departments that
6 we created was our Department of Family Empowerment
7 and, and Communications because there was a, a real
8 need to make sure that we were as an organization
9 focusing on providing those supports to families. Now
10 have we gotten where we need to be, absolutely not
11 but there is a new focus and orientation around
12 making sure we're serving our immigrant families, our
13 immigrant students and we're providing the language
14 supports that families need. I would also say that
15 it's important to realize and why this conversation
16 is so important is that schools are microcosms of the
17 greater society so, you know it's been mentioned here
18 when students come to us and those students are in
19 temporary housing, when students come to us and
20 there's issues of intergenerational poverty, issues
21 of intergenerational incarceration, inter... food
22 insecurity, schools in and of themselves can't solve
23 those issues but what we can do is working in unison
24 and synergy with other agencies in the city connect
25 those students and families with the appropriate

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2 resources to help them with those challenges as well
3 and obviously within the Department of Education as
4 well having an orientation so that we're serving
5 those students and have resources available to serve
6 those students as well. That's what we're doing sir
7 and, and that's part of the greater plan that our
8 Deputy Chancellor Robinson was just referring to as
9 well.

10 COUNCIL MEMBER EUGENE: Thank you very
11 much Chancellor but there's a very important part
12 that I wanted to mention also and I want to ask a
13 question about that because you know that those
14 children that came from different countries that
15 speaks of all languages but what are you... what is it
16 for the, the Board of Education is doing to recruit
17 teachers who speak different languages who have the
18 culture of those students in order to facilitate the,
19 the transition to make the bridge because let me tell
20 you I used to be a teacher too myself in my country
21 and I used to teach French literature and Latin, I
22 don't know if they're still teaching Latin but the
23 children when you create, when you offer them the
24 good environment that address their issue they will...
25 they will succeed and let me say that also I had the

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2 privilege to serve in many countries and several
3 languages also but it was possible because of the
4 environment of the school and Rousseau said that
5 Rousseau, a philosopher, a thinker, a French
6 philosopher say that human being is the product of
7 the environment so my question to you what are you
8 doing to recruit teachers who speak the language of
9 those children who come from different ethnicity just
10 to ensure that they can start very good and they can
11 navigate and you know be integrated in the system and
12 to enjoy the desegregation schools that we are trying
13 to create?

14 RICHARD CARRANZA: So, again very
15 insightful question, that is the single greatest
16 challenge of any school system anywhere I've ever
17 worked is to have a diverse teacher workforce, a
18 diverse administrative workforce, we are partnering
19 very strongly with CUNY and the new Chancellor and I
20 have already had conversations about how are we
21 recruiting people into the teacher pipeline that are
22 a diverse group of individuals, we've had some
23 modicum of success in this as we've grown our dual
24 language programs, obviously in a dual language
25 program you have to have a teacher that can speak the

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2 targeted language, this year... this past year we, we
3 started the nation's first Albanian dual language
4 program, obviously we had to have a teacher that
5 could speak the language so we have some modicum of
6 success but it's very small in comparison to the big
7 picture, the big overall school system but it is a
8 focus for us sir and its working with not only
9 community organizations, it's working with our
10 institutions of higher learning, it's working with
11 our advocacy community to identify who are those
12 language people in the community that want to become
13 teachers and then connecting those candidates with a
14 teacher preparation program. Again, lots of work to
15 do but it is one of our human capital areas of focus
16 because we believe as you do it's important to create
17 those conditions in schools.

18 COUNCIL MEMBER EUGENE: Thank you very
19 much Chancellor, I know that there are many other
20 colleagues who want to ask questions I'm going to
21 stop here but before I stop I want to say that we're
22 talking about segregation schools but as long as we
23 are talking about good schools and bad schools it's
24 going to be very, very difficult to eliminate
25 segregation in schools because it is not acceptable

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2 that in New York City, a good city like New York City
3 we are talking about good schools and bad schools and
4 I think as we're thinking, as we think about
5 resolving the segregation in schools we should think
6 about doing the effort to make sure that all our
7 schools they are good schools and the children, the
8 children wherever they live, whatever community they
9 come from they don't have to struggle to try to go to
10 the best school because I believe also the parents
11 they want the best education for their children and
12 it is our big issue in our city as government, as
13 leaders to ensure that all of the children, all the
14 students they got the same access to the best
15 education possible. Chancellor thank you very much
16 for your testimony, thank you. With that I turn it
17 over to Co-Chair Treyger.

18 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: Thank you very much
19 and just before we turn now to our colleagues for
20 questions just note in the interest of time and also
21 the interest of letting sure that we hear from the
22 public as well we'll put the clock up at two minutes
23 for, for questions here and we will begin with
24 Council Member Koo.

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2 COUNCIL MEMBER KOO: Thank you, thank you
3 Chair Treyger and Eugene, Mathieu and thank you
4 Chancellor for coming to testify. Chancellor with all
5 due respect I disagree with you with your statements
6 of abolishing the SHSAT test, I think in this modern
7 world we need to know, we need to identify talents
8 early so if you abolish the test how will we identify
9 students with talents especially now I think you're
10 not a fan... you're not a big fan of G and T programs
11 too? So, how do we identify students with talents
12 because we are all born equal, but we all born with
13 different talents? We.. and you are short we don't
14 play basketball, right, we don't play NBA but you
15 became Chancellor, I became Council Member, we have
16 different talents so a lot of the students they have
17 talents in math, in science, in analytic data
18 especially kids there's a big difference. When you
19 test 100 kids ten kids who are standing out, out of
20 the ten kids maybe five are standing out more so we
21 have to have a system to identify kids that are
22 smart, that, that they, they can achieve academically
23 so, so my, my way to diversify a high school test.. a
24 high school, special high school is to encourage all
25 the families to send their children to G and T

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2 programs in their district, you know you have in
3 Queens G and T programs in Bronx especially in Bronx
4 because you... in my... in Queens, in my district we
5 have... I have how many... I have eight G and T programs
6 but in Bronx, the whole Bronx only has eight G and T
7 programs so my question is to you how do we do this,
8 I mean you have to have G and T programs and you have
9 to have the test otherwise there's no benchmark to
10 differentiate what you know or you don't know so, can
11 you answer that first, yeah?

12 RICHARD CARRANZA: Sure, so I, I will
13 attempt to Councilman Koo so, I think the, the... if
14 you talk to teachers, if we believe that teachers
15 have a professional knowledge about student
16 development which I absolutely agree they do and
17 teachers spend the amount of time they do with their
18 students as you talk to teachers, teachers will be
19 able to tell you who of their students have certain
20 talents in what areas apropos to what Co-Chair
21 Treyger testified earlier in his own personal
22 experience not all students have academic gifts in
23 all areas, some students are better in certain things
24 than other things. I think what happens with the G
25 and T testing first and foremost is that G and T

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2 testing at the early ages I agree completely with
3 what Chairman Treyger has said it, it, it's more of a
4 measure of privilege in the home than it is truly of
5 the gifted and talents of the student. We also know
6 that that's based on a test as well and you know we,
7 we've read newspaper stories about families paying
8 600 dollars an hour to tutor their four year olds for
9 that test, that's not a true indication of what
10 gifted skills that that student may have. So, I think
11 there are a number of, I would say protocols and
12 processes from across the country at school districts
13 and we're compiling those, are using to truly rely on
14 what's happening in a classroom along with the
15 information coming from the home to be able to truly
16 identify students that have extraordinary gifts. That
17 being said at the same time the, the focus of the
18 conversation which, which is... I understand why it's
19 being focused that way but we need to diversify the
20 conversation about creating uplifting and enriching
21 classrooms in every school so that the classroom is
22 able to really meet the needs of students with
23 diverse learning needs including the very gifted
24 students as well instead of saying gifted students
25 are going to be in a very specific program for just

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2 gifted students because all students have different
3 kinds of abilities so it's broadening the
4 conversation but it's also being very specific about
5 having a teacher voice in identifying which students
6 have extraordinary academic skills.

7 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: Done?

8 COUNCIL MEMBER KOO: Okay.

9 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: Okay, thank you
10 Council Member Koo and next we'll hear from Council
11 Member Lander.

12 COUNCIL MEMBER LANDER: Thank you Mr.
13 Chair and thank you for this hearing. Chancellor and
14 team it's really good to see you here, five years ago
15 when we had the first City Council hearing on school
16 integration in decades the Department of Education
17 staff would not say the word integration or
18 segregation out loud, it was a... like a profound act
19 of denial despite the fact that the UCLA report had
20 made clear we had some of the most segregated schools
21 in the country, we as a city and the DOE as a... as an
22 agency was in a state of denial and to hear you come
23 today and give this testimony that reflects clarity
24 about the problem and a commitment moving to the
25 solution is a credit to the organizing that's taking

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2 place, those students before and the partners that
3 have been organizing and it's a credit to your
4 leadership and your team and I also want to shout out
5 Deputy Chancellor Wallack and Robinson and Sadye
6 Campoamor and Emmy Liss and Andy McClintock and a
7 team of people that have been working to do it in
8 partnership with students and activists and
9 organizing and the D15 process as you pointed out has
10 been really inspiring not just in its outcome but in
11 its process. I want to give props to WXY Studio for
12 their role in helping make that happen and the D15
13 working group that really led the way and I do want
14 to offer maybe a, a slightly different metaphor than
15 top down and bottom up as we think about where we're
16 going because it seems to me what we really need is
17 like a north star, we must desegregate our schools
18 along the... in the ways that you've talked about and
19 then we need an inclusive process that doesn't
20 compromise on the north star but works with people to
21 bring them along through it because we can't decide
22 some places and not others, all of the districts that
23 have sufficient diversity for a middle school
24 integration process need to go through it whether
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they applied or didn't apply to the two million dollar grant, do you agree with that?

RICHARD CARRANZA: Yes sir, absolutely I like that north star.

COUNCIL MEMBER LANDER: And you know and I think on the specialized high school process it would have been better to set the north star, make it clear we were going to make change and have a more inclusive process of conversation that was not going to compromise on the goal but did involve people in a process to get there and you did that very well in district... in the district 15 process, you came to an early meeting of the working group and said here's some principles I have as long as you meet those principles we'll be able to support the outcome so I think that might be a, a good way of navigating this tension between we have to do it together and we have to involve and include and have hard conversations along the way. The question I want to ask you is about elementary schools and I appreciate your point of view that the only thing we've really said so far about elementary schools is this conversation about gifted and talented programs and the idea of doing more to segregate our four and five year olds by

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2 whether they're good on high stakes tests is like
3 just excruciating like the idea that that could be
4 anybody's solution to what New York City needs is
5 like let's segregate more of our four and five year
6 olds off from their peers and put the high stakes
7 test taker four and five year olds over here and all
8 the rest of them over here, we know it would
9 segregate racially and economically but it is about
10 the most depressing thing, I've heard about the idea
11 of what the human spirit is and what we want for our
12 city so I appreciate your clarity on that and I
13 really hope that is not the direction that we go but
14 I guess I do want to ask about how you're thinking
15 about the opportunities to start doing more at the
16 elementary school level in thinking about school
17 integration, that is hard because our city is
18 residentially segregated now we saw that lots of our
19 students go... don't go to their zoned schools so
20 there's room for creativity and we've done a little
21 of this but so far it's mostly through the diversity
22 and admissions program and if a school is already non
23 zoned they can use some new criteria, we need a lot
24 more creativity whether that's school pairing,
25 whether that's new ways of thinking about how we plan

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2 for new schools that open, there's a lot of examples
3 around the country and some like what happened in
4 district one. So, there wasn't a lot about that in
5 the school diversity advisory group report one, maybe
6 there will be more in report two but I, I want to
7 hear a little bit what we can look to see in terms of
8 starting to really push some, some new ideas, some
9 experimentation, some pilots and some plans in our
10 elementary schools?

11 RICHARD CARRANZA: So, thank you for the
12 question Councilman Lander, I think... I, I want to
13 publicly also thank you because you were out there
14 taking hits during the process and were steadfast
15 about putting up the north stars, so I want to thank
16 you for, for your commitment to the process. Look, I
17 think these are all interrelated and then I'll try to
18 be as succinct as possible, so there is an ideation
19 that we have baked into the, the, the mindset in New
20 York City that says if you want to go to a
21 specialized school then you have to go certain middle
22 schools because they have a preponderance of
23 admissions to the specialized school, they send kids
24 to the specialized schools if you will. So, in
25 parent's minds that may have that ideation they'll

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2 say then okay of the 600 middle schools I only can go
3 to 21 or 22 of them, those are the only ones I'm
4 going to look at because that will get me to a
5 specialized school and then what we do is we say if
6 you want to go to one of those 21 middle schools that
7 have over 50 percent of seats they send to the
8 specialized schools then you only have to look at a
9 certain portfolio of elementary schools because they
10 send kids to these middle schools that are screened
11 so it becomes this self-fulfilling prophecy that says
12 you have to go to certain elementary schools to go to
13 certain middle schools that will get you to a certain
14 specialized school. Now we know that there are many
15 more students that go to many more schools other than
16 just specialized schools but the ideation is in a
17 very real way baked into what people think about in
18 terms of public schools in New York City and what's
19 important about that is that when you triangulate
20 that ideation over the data which shows that parents
21 are and students are choosing schools outside of
22 their neighborhoods then you can understand why I
23 said that if you're going to have choice you have to
24 give parents and students schools that are worthy of
25 being chosen and one of the things that I think we

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2 don't talk a lot about but I think is really
3 important is that there are some schools because we
4 in, in the... in the Department of Education don't
5 control for housing patterns, we don't control for
6 decades of redlining in terms of where parents and
7 students live and there is this notion that if you
8 have a school that is overwhelmingly African American
9 or overwhelmingly Latino that there is also this idea
10 when we talk about integration that well if you add
11 white students or Asian students the schools will get
12 better, not in and of themselves. The, the issue of
13 integration is about America, that's who we are,
14 we're an integrated or let's just put it this way, we
15 are a diverse nation, integration is good because we
16 learn from each other, we learn about each other, we
17 get to have students learn in an environment that
18 they're going to live in when they leave school and
19 they... especially if they live in New York City but
20 this ideal that we have to make good schools and good
21 school choices, this good and bad, I want to say
22 robust school choices in every single neighborhood,
23 what does that look like? There are some communities
24 that I have spoken with where parents and these are
25 black parents have said you know what stop talking

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2 about integration, we want our school to have these
3 kinds of programs and opportunities for our kids and
4 we know that we're going because of all of these
5 other issues we're going to be a mostly black school
6 but we're okay with that because we know that the
7 academics, the opportunities, the enrichment is such
8 that our kids are going to get a really good
9 experience, that's okay too but it has to do with
10 programming, it has to do with the kinds of resources
11 that you invest to create an equitable opportunity
12 for those students, it has to do with how we create
13 the conditions that parents are empowered to advocate
14 for their children, it's all interrelated but the
15 goal should be from my very humble perspective always
16 to, to use your term the north star should be the
17 better we integrate our schools the better we reflect
18 New York City and the better we will prepare our
19 students to be successful in a post 3-K, 12
20 environment.

21 COUNCIL MEMBER LANDER: So, my, my times
22 well... [cross-talk]

23 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: Yes... [cross-talk]

24 COUNCIL MEMBER LANDER: ...passed... up but I
25 just... [cross-talk]

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2 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: Yes... [cross-talk]

3 COUNCIL MEMBER LANDER: ...would push a
4 little bit on this which is to say, and I won't ask
5 another question... [cross-talk]

6 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: Sure, Council
7 Member... [cross-talk]

8 COUNCIL MEMBER LANDER: ...we should not
9 let segregated residential, geographic history be a
10 dictate to educational destiny and we don't have to,
11 we assign all the kids to all the schools as a matter
12 of public policy and if we believe that integrated
13 education is important surely we would believe it
14 most at the elementary school level and I'd like to
15 see us as much as we're already doing and as bold
16 and... as you've been there's work to do in thinking
17 more seriously about what we can do at the elementary
18 school level if that's our north star.

19 RICHARD CARRANZA: Thank you... [cross-
20 talk]

21 COUNCIL MEMBER LANDER: Thank you and
22 thank you for your indulgence Mr. Chair.

23 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: Thank you very much
24 and next... and again members we, we're trying to be
25

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2 respectful of time because we want to hear from the
3 public as well, next Council, Council Member Powers.

4 COUNCIL MEMBER POWERS: Thank you and
5 thank you, I have to go back and Chair here next
6 store but thank you for that and thank you to this
7 chair for having a... what's going to be a very long
8 day ahead of him but for, for being a, a great and
9 sticking through it. I just have two questions and
10 I'm going to go back; one is, I don't know if this
11 has been discussed yet but can you discuss gender
12 representation in the specialized high schools and
13 where we are in terms of being representative of, of,
14 of gender relative to the general population?

15 JOSH WALLACK: Yes, I can... I can talk to
16 that so, if you look at fall 2019 admissions you see
17 that although females were 51 percent of the students
18 who tested they make up only 46 percent of the offers
19 whereas male students were 49 percent of the students
20 who tested but 54 percent of the offers so they tend
21 to do better on the specialized exam than, than, than
22 girls and women do.

23 COUNCIL MEMBER POWERS: Okay, thank you
24 for that. Is there any... and, and... I actually have two
25 more questions on it, one is, is there any evidence

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2 in... once you get into ninth grade or tenth grade that
3 that, that the grade performance holds to that
4 pattern?

5 JOSH WALLACK: No, there's no evidence
6 that, that, that holds through performance in school.

7 COUNCIL MEMBER POWERS: Great, thank you
8 and my last question is just talking about the
9 scoring a little bit of the exam, I was reading a
10 study from MIT, I'll just use one example but there's
11 a few in here so I'll just... I'm just picking one,
12 scoring 90 percent or 94... I'll just... let's say
13 scoring in the 90 or 94th percentile in one
14 dimension, one dimension being there's two parts of
15 the test, there's a verbal and a math section, I
16 don't know if they're properly titled that but if
17 there's two, two sections here, 95 questions you... if
18 you scored 90th... in the 90th percentile to, to...
19 percentile let's say on verbal but you... you're only
20 required to get 50 or 60 percent in the other section
21 in order to achieve admissions into this... in this
22 case its Brooklyn Tech, those numbers shift as you go
23 into different schools, by contrast a student scoring
24 in the 80th percentile in both would have just missed
25 getting in essentially saying if you do it... like if

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2 you get like 80 and 80, 85 and 85 on both you don't
3 get admitted into like a Brooklyn Tech in this
4 example, if you get 94 and then 60 percentile you do,
5 A, can you confirm that that is the matrix or maybe
6 talk more about the scoring and how that is effecting
7 admissions into the schools?

8 JOSH WALLACK: I can talk a little bit
9 about it, I can't confirm those specific numbers, I
10 don't have them in front of me but I... what I will say
11 as the Chancellor's alluded to is that this single
12 test is designed to do the... you know it is designed
13 to perform a certain function and that function is to
14 rank order students for admission into the
15 specialized high school and to just produce that,
16 that, that ranking but there is no evidence that
17 shows that it's the best way to select students for
18 those schools. In any event what the test does is by
19 weighting certain questions more than others it
20 produces that rank order that is required by the
21 Hecht Calandra law and so I think you're alluding to
22 are features of the, the, the scoring is set in a way
23 to produce that rank order but I think as the
24 Chancellor and as the Mayor has alluded to, you know
25 we, we believe that there are better and fairer ways

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2 of making those choices of which students should be
3 in those schools.

4 COUNCIL MEMBER POWERS: Okay, thank you
5 to the Chair and I... the only reason I ask because
6 there's a resolution here around the scoring and
7 creating clarity on the scoring because of a concern
8 around that it's heavily weighted and then
9 potentially looking at... and also and the Chairs
10 mentioned maybe there should be other subjects;
11 science for instance such that would be included in
12 any evaluation of a student but, but anyway to, to
13 give clarity to that so... and as we have a task force
14 to discuss next steps. Thank you to the Chair.

15 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: Thank you very
16 much, Council Member... next we'll hear from Council
17 Member King.

18 COUNCIL MEMBER KING: Good morning, thank
19 you Mr. Chancellor and your great team. I'm going to
20 come from a perspective talking on both sides of the
21 coin here and understanding the historic perspective
22 of Department of Education and how it was laid out
23 and understanding American society as it is and I
24 would like to ask you as you continue to resurrect
25 the system that having a conversation with everyone

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2 who works for the DOE and everybody that's advocating
3 that it was a system that's doing what it's designed
4 to do, people say it's flawed no, it, it was built to
5 be discriminatory towards people in the United States
6 of America, it's, it's a discriminatory system so
7 it's doing exactly what... but until we have that real...
8 put it out there like this, it's built to be
9 discriminatory and now I'm going to change it, it's
10 not going to be discriminatory any more so that means
11 to all the educators that are in the room and someone
12 wants to have a conversation about diversity or
13 changing it that they don't get punished because I
14 hear from... I hear from educators in the room that
15 when they try to do something differently to be more
16 inclusive into a conversation of history they get
17 punished by being able to have that conversation so
18 I'm asking you on that end to tell your principals
19 and superintendents if you have a strong teacher in
20 there who's trying to help the students be better
21 it's not for them to shut it down because it doesn't
22 go in line with the agenda but it goes in line with
23 the old agenda and I think if we can get it that way
24 we can start changing the mindsets and when you talk
25 about implicit bias those educators that are in the

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2 room have to free themselves of some of the old ways
3 that are on the books. Also, I want to add when we
4 start talking about testing, we are a society that's
5 full of tests. Now I'm not saying that getting rid of
6 the test is the best way to do it, I'm not saying
7 keeping the test is the best way, but we do test
8 everything and it's a way to assess the minds. You
9 hear Council Member Koo talking about hey, he can
10 never play basketball but you know what I can be an
11 engineer because my brain puts me there, there are
12 some students who are going to be physics, they're
13 going to be a scientist but there are brains that
14 whatever age doesn't lead them on that path but I do
15 recall the days when I was in school that we used to
16 have these SP classes and it was a feeder system to
17 the specialized high school, we've, we've shaken that
18 up, put everybody in the same pot so the smart kid
19 kind of just lost with behavior problems because he's
20 not getting stimulated because his brain is not being
21 fed the way it used to be fed. So, I have four quick
22 questions for, the first one is how does ending the
23 test fix the problem of early education because at 14
24 years old you just don't know how to read a 14... so,
25 if someone failed you when you were in the second

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2 grade or third grade so how does ending a test fix
3 that kind of early system? Secondly, where will... this
4 will lead I will say children of color when you say
5 about inclusion and diversity, how does that help
6 them because the adult system is still discriminatory
7 how does me being diverse in this early education
8 stage when I can't get into the boys club when I
9 become 35 so how does that do in this system now, how
10 do we change that as well. My last... and my third
11 question is, you have the professional learning
12 community, you have three phases; the first... the
13 first is when you put together this district
14 representative so I want to know who are those
15 district representatives who are going to have these
16 early conversations to be here but to qualify for
17 phase two and phase three? So, I'm going to stop
18 there because I want to hear your answers because I
19 don't really think the testing is so much as the
20 issue as opposed to teaching our kids greater and
21 better and improving your education system from K all
22 the way up to they graduate from high school so I
23 thank you.

24 RICHARD CARRANZA: So, three quick
25 answers, so yes. So, ending the test, there are

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2 multiple examples from across the country not only in
3 the K, 12 system but also in higher education of a
4 much better processes for identifying students for
5 enrollment in educational programs so ending the test
6 would not equate to diluting the academic prowess of
7 the students being admitted, it would not equate to
8 changing the schools in terms of how they're looked
9 at, you know I, I had this question at a town hall
10 where, are universities going to look less upon the
11 diploma from one these specialized schools because
12 you've changed the admission... no, the, the academic
13 program remains the academic program. The second one
14 or the... yeah, the, the, the children of color and
15 again to the point of testing, I agree, you know to
16 become a teacher we had to take a certification test,
17 to become a, a Chancellor I had to take a
18 certification test, to become a lawyer you have to
19 take a certification test but to get a high quality
20 education should not require you to have to take a
21 test, it should be the right, education should be the
22 birth right of every New Yorker in the public
23 education system just because they're breathing in
24 and out in New York City they should have an
25 opportunity to access all of the incredible

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2 opportunities in New York City and if we have a very
3 specialized way or a specialized environment for
4 students then there should be a process that honors,
5 that enriches, that aligns with our ideals about how
6 fair play happens for all of our students. The issue
7 around... the question that you asked about the school
8 diversity... school diversity advisory group I'm going
9 to ask Deputy Chancellor Wallack to answer that.

10 JOSH WALLACK: Yeah, sorry just remind me
11 the specific question about the advisory group?

12 COUNCIL MEMBER KING: In phase one it
13 says that there's going to be district
14 representatives who are... going to come together to
15 have a conversation so I want... [cross-talk]

16 JOSH WALLACK: Yes... [cross-talk]

17 COUNCIL MEMBER KING: ...who are district
18 representatives?

19 JOSH WALLACK: Yes, so, so the, the
20 school diversity advisory group who's going to
21 testify later today so you can ask members that, that
22 question as well, they went to each borough and held
23 town halls so people were welcome to come and we
24 invited members of, of many community groups and the,
25 the CECs and they are continuing those conversations

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2 in town halls around the city so I think they're
3 engage... I know that they're engaging community based
4 organizations, advocacy organizations, parent groups,
5 student groups and school based groups to attend
6 those discussions so if you have particular groups
7 that want to participate in that process we can help
8 make the connection for you to the school diversity
9 advisory group but also many members are here today
10 and I'm sure would love to talk to you about it.

11 COUNCIL MEMBER KING: Okay and I'll end
12 with this, the sister who was speaking earlier about
13 the hour and a half travel while we're fighting, you
14 know that segregation is wrong and integration is
15 better I would ask us to make sure that all our
16 schools are great because I know it sounds... I don't
17 even want to travel an hour, an hour and a half to
18 come to work, why are we going to tell a 14 year old
19 to travel an hour and a half because the school in
20 the neighborhood is not as great as the school down
21 the street and, and real talk, how many of us who
22 have not gotten past our own biases will say I'm
23 going to travel from this neighborhood to go to that
24 neighborhood because the city changed the policy,
25 there will still be some parents who here are going

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2 to say I'm not sending my kid over there because I
3 don't want to send them to that neighborhood just
4 because of the white and black experience so that's a
5 real... another conversation we're going to have when
6 we start trying to force people to move to different...
7 shift them all the way around the city because we
8 want to do what... are we protecting the system or are
9 we actually helping the student to learn, that's the
10 overall goal is to help our children be better
11 students and that means every schools has got to be a
12 grade A school, thank you.

13 LASHAWN ROBINSON: We absolutely agree
14 with you and this work is not about moving black
15 bodies into other spaces, that's not how we see this
16 work at all. When I posed a question earlier about
17 where were you 65 years ago it's not because I think
18 you were somewhere 65 years ago but wherever you can
19 imagine having have been there where are you now in
20 this moment, how do we elevate the schools in our
21 communities that are doing well, how do we support
22 the schools that need to move to the next level
23 that's our work but it's collective work, it takes
24 all of us. Hearing you talk about your school
25 Merrill, I wonder how many people are listening and

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2 how many people will not include that school as part
3 of the high school application process, which is a
4 great school, I elevate my elementary school, PS 305
5 in Bedford Stuyvesant Brooklyn, everywhere I go
6 because I believe in that school and I believe in
7 that community so how do we engage in this
8 conversation and how do we take... when I imagine where
9 I would have been I would have been participating in
10 Marches, I would have been in the streets, I would
11 have been pushing my elected officials, I would have
12 been pushing the DOE that's the fight that we need to
13 take on, if there's anything worth fighting for is
14 ensuring that all of our young people have access to
15 a high quality education, in this capacity I do it as
16 part of the equity in excellence agenda and I can
17 talk about that and I can talk about real gains for
18 young people and our school system. We should all
19 have a legacy in this space, what will you say you
20 did in this moment because there will be 65 years ago
21 65 years coming where someone will look at this
22 moment and say what we did in this space, what will
23 your legacy be?

24 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: Thank you for the
25 shout out for Merrill High School again and kudos to

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2 your elementary school as well, Bed-Stuy. Next, we'll
3 hear from Council Member Cornegy.

4 COUNCIL MEMBER CORNEGY: Good afternoon
5 Chancellor.

6 RICHARD CARRANZA: Good afternoon...

7 COUNCIL MEMBER CORNEGY: And good
8 afternoon team, thank you Chair. I want to start by..
9 on behalf of all of the PSAL athletes saying that it
10 is not mutually exclusive to play basketball and have
11 some level of intelligence. I want to focus my
12 attention and intention on G and T. I never proposed
13 that it be a panacea like you mentioned however there
14 are pipelines and pipeline schools in Brooklyn in
15 particular that are the predominant... that are sending
16 the predominate numbers of students to specialized
17 high schools. I also want to give a historical
18 context, in the 80s I was an SP student and I went
19 from being an SP to having my father pass away and
20 being in special ed in the same year and that was
21 primarily because we didn't have guidance counselors
22 and or therapists in the office to identify... in the
23 school to identify that I was going through a trauma
24 at that particular period so there is a need for that
25 especially in minority schools who are always... their

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2 students are facing PTSD quite frankly but what I
3 want to talk about is the fact that in the 80s in
4 Brooklyn Tech 59 percent of those students were of
5 color primarily black when Bloomberg decided to
6 decentralize... or centralize the G and T and took the,
7 the ability to judge those students or have those
8 students give a criteria that met the community level
9 criteria it, it changed dramatically so now we're
10 down to below one percent of students in three
11 decades which is... which is phenomenal to me to think
12 about that change so I know that there are pathways,
13 there are... in, in Brooklyn district 21 has about ten
14 gifted and talented programs and the predominate
15 seats in Brooklyn Tech come from that district,
16 there's... it's, it's an easy correlation to make. In
17 my district as of 2014 we were... we were able to
18 reinstitute gifted and talented programs in CEC 16,
19 we have one gifted and talented program in 3rd grade,
20 one in 7th grade. So, I'm still losing parents, I'm
21 hemorrhaging parents daily who are choosing to go to
22 other districts because one, there are so many...
23 there's so little seats for gifted and talented in
24 the district and two, those are very under resourced
25 so my question is, prior to 2008 each community

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2 school district set their own criteria for gifted and
3 talented classes and all districts had G and T
4 programs. In 2008, former Mayor Bloomberg decided to
5 centralize G and T admissions and based admissions on
6 national standardized tests and required that
7 students had to score in the 90th national percentile
8 to qualify for any G and T class, that policy change
9 resulted in DOE closing 60 G, G and T programs mostly
10 in black and brown communities. I also want to point
11 out that those seven zip codes where those G and T
12 programs were closed are also the seven zip codes
13 that populate the upstate prison system ironically.
14 Will the DOE consider allowing districts to go back
15 to using local measures for G and T if not what steps
16 will DOE take to ensure equitable access to G and T
17 programs in every district?

18 RICHARD CARRANZA: Thank you for the
19 question so the, the, the use of local measures and
20 we've been dive... I've been diving into what exactly
21 was that, I think that collectively is the genesis of
22 what we're actually trying to do. So, I want to be
23 really clear about this, using a single test to
24 identify students for a gifted and talented program
25 yeah it may be very efficient but it's not

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2 efficacious for students but having multiple measures
3 and we have historically a portfolio of what those
4 multiple measures are, if we could create the
5 protocol that allows us at large as a system to
6 ensure that there are multiple measures used to
7 identify where students have additional talents that
8 is a good way to go down this path and, and that's
9 actually part of the information gathering that's
10 happening with, with the, the chief academic
11 officer's office. The second thing I think is really
12 important is that when you look at who are the
13 students that are identified for gifted and talented
14 you see a disproportionality there as well and that's
15 not by accident either. We know that correlation and
16 causation are not the same thing however, it's very
17 interesting to see how those numbers correlate which
18 you've pointed out so we're also looking at if we're
19 going to determine and, and establish enriched
20 programs can you imagine how powerful it would be in
21 every elementary school, it was resourced, it was
22 staffed and it was in place in every elementary
23 school an enriched programming for students that
24 truly needed that enriched programming then parents
25 apocoped... to the comment that I made about, you

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2 know you... if you... if you're going to have parent
3 choice you have to give schools worthy of being
4 chosen, parents wouldn't have to choose to travel,
5 they could have that programming right there in their
6 neighborhood, that's what we're talking about and
7 what does that model look like and in an ideal world
8 we'd be able to come to you and say this is what that
9 model will look like, this is what it's based on and
10 for the low, low price of... this is how we're going to
11 be able to resource that. I think that's the kind of
12 conversation you've been pushing for since we first
13 met and I really appreciate but that's really the
14 vision for us to create that kind of programming not
15 so that some schools have it and others don't because
16 we know that's not equitable already but that every
17 school has that in place.

18 COUNCIL MEMBER CORNEGY: I, I want to
19 thank you and I just want to say that waiting this
20 long to ask a question makes you ask it pretty
21 curtly, that's not generally my personality so I
22 don't want to come off as somebody like that but when
23 you wait this long to be able to ask your question
24 you want to be concise and sometimes that sounds a
25 little curt so excuse me.

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2 RICHARD CARRANZA: No, no... I appreciate
3 it sir, you are a gentleman and a scholar, and I
4 appreciate it and I just want for the record to note
5 that I might not be tall, but I can shoot the ball.

6 COUNCIL MEMBER CORNEGY: So, I'm... that
7 sounds like a challenge between DOE and the City
8 Council we'll talk about that offline.

9 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: I, I, I appreciate
10 that, that exchange, it's also just evident when I
11 went to Merrill High School, we didn't really have
12 sports teams, that's... I was not really gifted in that
13 area Mr. Chancellor but that's all... I was on the
14 debate team and all that but I just want to note
15 also, we hear about choice, there was a very powerful
16 article recently, I believe it was in the Times that
17 talked about San Francisco just solely relying on
18 choice, if you don't provide a framework for equity
19 and integration without, without that you, you will
20 still see that type of, of segregation that gets
21 exacerbated and if we solely focus on the expansion
22 of the current G and T model that will also
23 exacerbate problems so we, we need to really revamp,
24 reimagine this whole approach systemically. I want to
25 turn next to Council Member Levine.

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2 COUNCIL MEMBER LEVINE: Not paying

3 attention in class. Hello Mr. Chancellor, always
4 great to see you. I have the pleasure of representing
5 part of community school district three which
6 together with 15 has done some really innovative and
7 important work to diversify middle schools... to
8 integrate middle schools, a plan that they also took
9 a lot of hits for, it's a little different as you
10 know from the plan in 15 but it's not too soon to say
11 it's already succeeding based on offers. We see that
12 schools where challenging... students who have
13 struggled have been under represented now have seen
14 that population grow and schools where students were
15 struggling had been overly concentrated now appear to
16 have a more even distribution and some of the dire
17 predictions that were made about chaos in the... in the
18 application process or parents leaving through a mass
19 exodus haven't happened and so real... I really want to
20 congratulate the parent leadership there for moving
21 forward on this. I think one thing that we've heard a
22 lot today, we all agree on is we can't forget the 95
23 percent of high school students who are not in the
24 specialized schools and the truth is that if you look
25 at the, the, the key STEM AP courses they are in bio,

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2 chemistry, physics and then there's two levels of
3 calculus, there are only five percent of the high
4 schools offer at least four of those STEM AP level
5 offerings and that, that is putting students in the
6 remaining schools at a disadvantage in, in preparing
7 to apply to college and to move ahead in STEM
8 careers. So, why have we not given every student the
9 opportunity for that kind of intense level STEM
10 coursework?

11 RICHARD CARRANZA: So, again thank you
12 for, for broadening the conversation, so actually
13 yeah, that's an area that we are very concerned about
14 as well, our AP for All initiative really aims to do
15 that to bring AP level coursework to all of the
16 schools. I looked at the data when we started AP for
17 All a few years ago the, the absolute disparate
18 numbers of classes, there were some school... high
19 schools in New York that didn't even offer AP
20 coursework so again our goal is to make sure that,
21 that all schools have AP coursework. That being said,
22 we are also doing some innovative things in
23 partnership with the UFT so as part of our contract
24 we agreed to do a remote teaching initiative so that
25 we're not waiting to develop, you know one of the

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2 biggest things and, and Chairman Treyger will know
3 this, one of the biggest components of having an AP
4 course established is having a trained AP teacher in
5 that course so in schools to really jump start this
6 we all know that there are some AP teachers that are
7 absolute superstars so part of this pilot is being
8 able to remotely have that superstar AP teacher teach
9 AP classes in four or five different high schools
10 using technology so students are getting the benefit
11 of that instruction... [cross-talk]

12 COUNCIL MEMBER LEVINE: But, but... so does
13 the goal of AP of All which I strongly support...
14 [cross-talk]

15 RICHARD CARRANZA: Yep... [cross-talk]

16 COUNCIL MEMBER LEVINE: ...has it given you
17 an explicit target of disseminating the STEM AP
18 classes?

19 RICHARD CARRANZA: It, it does... [cross-
20 talk]

21 COUNCIL MEMBER LEVINE: ...or is it more
22 vague than that?

23 RICHARD CARRANZA: No, it, it does give
24 us a specific goal and I'd be happy to come back with
25 specifics on where we are with those goals but your

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2 question is right on point and, and it's in line with
3 what the AP for All initiative is all about.

4 COUNCIL MEMBER LEVINE: Okay and, and
5 very quickly I really want to applaud Chairman
6 Treyger for his bill that would require a publication
7 of demographic data on the teaching force, we need to
8 hear student leaders some of whom spoke this morning
9 who have told us repeatedly that diversifying the
10 teacher force so that it reflects the diversity of
11 the student body is a top priority in every school in
12 the city. I can't believe that given the articulated
13 priority that the administration has repeatedly
14 spoken about publicly of, of this goal of expanding
15 the number of teachers of colors and, and men of
16 color and the teaching force that you're not already
17 collecting and tabulating data on, on this and I
18 wonder why it would require legislation if it's... if
19 it's a goal that you have, have already laid out for
20 your department?

21 RICHARD CARRANZA: So, we can get back to
22 you with, with more specifics, my understanding is
23 we're, we're, we're gathering this data because we do
24 have goals that we're working towards... [cross-talk]

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2 COUNCIL MEMBER LEVINE: So, what, what is
3 the progress then over the last five years?

4 RICHARD CARRANZA: I'll get back to you
5 with specifics on the data, but this is a goal that
6 from day one that I've been here has been very
7 clearly articulated.

8 COUNCIL MEMBER LEVINE: Okay, two, two
9 very quick points and then I'll pass it back to the
10 Chair. We also heard from students about... and we've
11 heard it repeatedly from student leaders about their
12 desire for more resources in their classrooms and in
13 their school buildings so when, when Speaker Johnson
14 spoke about our frustrations in the budget that was
15 not superfluous to the debate around racial justice
16 in our school system because resource questions are
17 at the heart of that, we don't have enough guidance
18 counselors or art teachers or librarians, we, we need
19 more resources to reduce class size and, and so
20 budget questions are at the heart of the agenda that,
21 that students and also your own advisory group on
22 diversity have laid out and lastly I just want to
23 make a point that you might not be surprised to hear
24 me raise because we've, we've spoken about it before
25 about an incredibly successful integration strategy

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2 which is sitting right under our noses which is not
3 getting the attention that it deserves in my opinion
4 which is dual language programs which as you know
5 are... dual language programs are an emerging model
6 where students spend half the day in English and half
7 the day in another language but they happen to
8 naturally bring together phenomenally diverse
9 students body and this is happening organically
10 throughout the system now in hundreds of schools. My
11 sense is that, that, that DOE sees these primarily as
12 a tool for English language learners which they are
13 but that, that you haven't seen them as part of... well
14 first and foremost the strategy to disseminate
15 multilingualism but, but relevant to today's
16 discussion as a strategy to bring together diverse
17 classrooms and generally these are expanding when
18 parents take the initiative and something I've heard
19 you articulate today is you don't want to leave
20 integration such an important priority to the
21 initiative of parents as important as that is, you
22 want to drive this centrally so why aren't we doing
23 that for dual language programs as well?

24 JOSH WALLACK: I would just add quickly
25 that we, we do prioritize those and see them as an

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2 integral part of the equity and excellence for all
3 agenda and this school integration agenda and that's
4 why I think... and then in the 2018/19 school year we
5 added 32 dual language programs and so now we're up
6 to 270 across the city, we are pushing to expand
7 those and if you do have ideas about where we... there
8 would be a good opportunity to expand we're wide
9 open and chief academic officer Linda Chen works hard
10 at that and we're, we're going really fast.

11 COUNCIL MEMBER LEVINE: That's, that's
12 great and I'm over time, I think that those programs
13 collectively as wonderful as they are reach maybe
14 three percent, four percent of students and that they
15 were largely initiated by parents who came to DOE, I
16 don't believe that was the result of central
17 planning, I could be wrong about that but every
18 program that I know emerged out of activist parents
19 who found great partners among the principals and
20 that's resulted in an uneven distribution of where
21 these programs were located in.

22 RICHARD CARRANZA: That's, that's
23 actually part of the protocol for interest in a dual
24 language program, to have a dual language program as
25 you know you have to have a teacher that can teach

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2 but you also have to have a pipeline, a, a level of
3 interest if you will so that you can populate the
4 program and that it will succeed more than just a
5 year or two years so there's actually a protocol much
6 of which is based on is there interest in the
7 community, is there interest with the school
8 community including the principal and the leadership,
9 we're happy to get you the details of that but you
10 and I have talked about this and I appreciate you
11 mentioning it again Councilman, thank you.

12 COUNCIL MEMBER LEVINE: [foreign
13 dialogue]...

14 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: Thank you Council
15 Member, next we'll hear from Council Member Barron.

16 COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: Oh boy... thank you
17 to the Chairs, thank you to the panel for coming and
18 for full disclosure LaShawn Robinson is my cousin of
19 whom I'm very proud so just so that everybody knows.
20 The February 19th on... add, addition of the chronicles
21 and perhaps the greatest charge levied against
22 standardized testing is that it routinely
23 disqualifies otherwise capable disadvantaged students
24 from the admission process so I'm here certainly in
25 favor of Resolution 196 which, which I have

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2 introduced which talks about eliminating the test not
3 tomorrow, not next week but over a period of three
4 years, eliminating that test and using the student
5 population of all of our middle schools to talk about
6 offering spots... slots to the specialized high
7 schools. The American Psychological Association, the
8 American... the American Education Research Association
9 and the National Council of Measurement in Education
10 have concluded that quote, "a high stakes decision
11 with a major impact on a student's educational
12 opportunities such as admissions to a specialized or
13 gifted and talented program should not turn on the
14 results of a single test". And let us be very mindful
15 that historically tests have been found to be
16 racially biased and this is a test which has not been
17 aligned with any of the standards or the curriculum
18 but it's a test which when students have been prepped
19 for has given them an advantage for admission to the
20 specialized high schools. Mr. Chancellor I know that
21 you support that and I know that you I think agree
22 with the fact that as an educator we know that it is
23 the mission of public education to be able to provide
24 formats where all of our students will have an
25 opportunity to display their talents but my question

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2 to you is how... what is the ethnicity of the staff at
3 the specialized high schools particularly the top
4 three so called elite, what's the ethnicity of the
5 teachers?

6 RICHARD CARRANZA: Council Member Barron
7 that's a great question, I don't have that at my
8 fingertips where I can get that to you, I can just
9 tell you based on my school visits I wouldn't
10 consider the ethnicities of the staff that I've
11 observed to reflect the ethnicity of the students in
12 the system but I... we will get you specific numbers.

13 COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: Okay, and that
14 I'm sure is also a reflection of the fact that
15 there's been a steady decline in the number of black
16 and Latino staff, teachers that have been hired over
17 the years but we certainly want to make sure that as
18 students are in these elite environments and
19 specialized environments that they have an
20 opportunity to benefit from the talent and the
21 intellect of black and Latino faculty and that they
22 have an opportunity to see themselves in the future
23 as reflected in the staff that's they're teaching
24 them and finally I just wanted to say that the other
25 measures that we're talking about, a grade point

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2 average, yes, test scores but tests that have been
3 given by teachers during the curriculum year or
4 during the course of the year and we tell our
5 students go to school, do your homework, get good
6 grades but then at the end when they want to get into
7 a specialized high school it all turns in one test
8 and that's really not fair. I want to thank you for
9 that and I also want to say as you spoke about
10 parents in predominately black schools saying they're
11 not so much concerned about changing the composition
12 of the students but that they are concerned about
13 equity, I think that that's an important piece to, to
14 consider and we make sure that we get the resources
15 to those who are not in those other kinds of
16 environments with different kinds of proportions of
17 ethnicities where students can see themselves getting
18 access to the same equipment, resources and
19 opportunities that exist in other counterparts across
20 the city. Thank you.

21 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: Thank you Council
22 Member Barron and just to note I, I have... one of the
23 bills we're hearing today is my bill that would
24 require DOE to report on staff demographics at all of
25 our schools and so we look forward to get the DOE's

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2 support on that, thank you Council Member Barron
3 again. Next, we'll hear from Council Member Rivera.

4 COUNCIL MEMBER RIVERA: Thank you so
5 much, I'll try to speak quickly. So, I know you
6 mentioned in your testimony that things are getting
7 better. I, I do, you know have to note that recent
8 outcomes that we've all seen in the press and even
9 just our own anecdotal data as Council Members and
10 the conversations that we have with parents and, and,
11 and families it, it proves differently and not every
12 person sees education through education that same
13 kind of social justice intersectional lens that I
14 think is exhibited in some of your comments and you
15 know in my district I had a conversation with a
16 parent who told me I can't have my child go to this
17 one school, I want her to be an engineer and I was
18 appalled first and foremost and I was completely
19 heartbroken because she wanted her child to instead
20 go to a school one block away so just in my district
21 alone it is so segregated, it is so problematic in
22 terms of how people see the wealth of resources and
23 how they're shared that I have to give a lot of
24 credit to my community education councils who have
25 been doing tremendous work around this issue of

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2 diversity in admissions and doing it with little to
3 no resources and as volunteers, people like Lisa
4 Donlan and Naomi Pena and Shino Tanikawa who have
5 been giving hours and hours and years of their life
6 to this and so when you say recommendations by an
7 advisory group are important I totally agree with you
8 and, and my bill is trying to build on some of the
9 outstanding work that has been done by my local CECs
10 but also to include every level of educator,
11 elementary and middle school, principals, students of
12 which you said how student's voices are so critically
13 important and so this would be I think a working
14 group that is very diverse and would hopefully build
15 again on all of the achievements so while I'm not
16 expecting you to endorse my bill over any of the
17 incredibly important bills that are in this package I
18 do want to ask what have you learned from the work
19 that has already been done in school districts one
20 and two and three and 15 and how are you hoping to,
21 to really build on that?

22 RICHARD CARRANZA: So, so thank you
23 Councilwoman Rivera, I just want to say that your
24 story about that parent breaks my heart too and
25 that's what keeps me up at night, that any parent

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2 would not feel they could send their child to the
3 school right around the corner, that's the crux of
4 the work that we, we will do together. I also want to
5 thank you for mentioning the incredible leaders that
6 you just mentioned, I, I agree with you, I get to
7 meet with parent leaders regularly and the names
8 you've mentioned are people that have taught me a lot
9 about the work that's happened here in New York City.
10 So, lessons learned are, are, are this; you... one of
11 the Council Members mentioned that in the schools
12 where teachers want to teach in a very different way
13 and do things that are uplifting to students that
14 they are told they can't do that because we don't
15 talk about that in this school part of why I think
16 I've been so outspoken and hopefully clearly spoken
17 about this issue is that I want to empower teachers
18 and paraprofessionals and principals and secretaries
19 and student nutrition worker, the people in the
20 schools to understand that this is the agenda, that
21 you should be talking about this and looking at the
22 work in a very different way but number two, the
23 other lesson that I've learned is that we haven't in
24 the past listened and given an appropriate place at
25 the decision making table to the very kinds of parent

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2 leaders that you've talked about and what we've
3 really been trying to do and I'll let them either,
4 you know verify or, or, or counter, what we've been
5 trying to do and, and I'm going to make it very
6 personal, what I've been trying to do is make them
7 understand through my actions that their voices are
8 being accounted for, their voices are at the table,
9 that their perspectives are influencing policy and
10 you know in the... in the toughest of the days in this...
11 in this kind of a conversation all I have to do is to
12 think about those parent leaders and quite frankly
13 think about the student leaders that have sat with me
14 and shared with me very difficult stories about what
15 their experiences have been to really prop up this
16 notion that this is a conversation New York City is
17 ready to have. Quite frankly the, the reason that
18 I've been so strident here before the, the City
19 Council today about really honoring the work of the
20 school diversity advisory committee is... I... look I, I
21 fully understand the, the, the hierarchy and, and the
22 official capacity of the City Council it's no
23 disrespect to the City Council but here we have
24 residents that have given their time that deserve the
25 respect of a conversation because what I've heard

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2 from those parent leaders in the past is we will talk
3 about something, we will work on something and then
4 all of a sudden we'll hear somewhere that decisions
5 have been made without the respect of having us as
6 part of the conversation so what we're really trying
7 to do here is to honor those voices but I will tell
8 you there's a lot of work that's been done and we're
9 trying to gather that work and those good practices
10 to really create the kind of system that you're
11 describing that a parent doesn't feel they have to go
12 somewhere else to get the kind of education they want
13 for their child.

14 COUNCIL MEMBER RIVERA: I, I agree that
15 they, they have done a lot of work, I stress that in,
16 in my opening statement but you know the, the
17 parents, the educators, the advocates this would
18 enable them to also choose a non for profit that can
19 help them implement some of their ideas that they
20 will flesh out ultimately and I think that they know
21 the not for profits that are also doing the real work
22 around segregation in our school system and, and in
23 terms of visiting my district, absolutely, we have
24 amazing schools there, PS 34, PS 15, they're all
25 great schools, I'd love to visit one with you one day

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2 just humbly born and raised in the district so I
3 could probably show you a thing or two so I hope to
4 see you there.

5 RICHARD CARRANZA: You have my
6 commitment, let's do it.

7 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: Thank you Council
8 Member and next we'll hear from Council Member
9 Rosenthal.

10 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: Thank you,
11 thank you so much, thanks Chairs, thank you
12 Chancellor, always great to see you, appreciate your
13 work on diversity and actually so I have three
14 questions and my first one is about the... an amazing
15 rezoning integration plan that we were able to achieve
16 in 2015. One of the lessons I learned is resources,
17 resources, resources that when you are successful in
18 integrating the schools that they may need and
19 certainly in our case we did need additional
20 resources to guarantee success and let me give you
21 one example, a full time social worker and that was
22 something... and it goes to the Speaker's point about
23 the desperate need for a full time social worker at
24 every school and because the DOE did not do it every
25 year it comes out of the puny amount of money that

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2 I'm allowed to allocate in my district. I, I need to
3 pay for a full-time social worker at a school and
4 that's a problem and yet the principal tells me that
5 it's because of that social worker that they have had
6 the success that they've had. So, one thing to keep
7 in mind. The second question has to do with what are
8 we doing about increasing diversity and integration
9 as it has to do with people with disabilities, they
10 are 19 percent of the students in the system and
11 they, I believe, should always be included in every
12 conversation about diversity and inclusion and
13 integration and by the way as Council Member Barron
14 raised the point about diversity in, in the teaching
15 staff and in administration we must include people
16 with disabilities as a category as well and lastly,
17 I'd like to ask you about a specific high school CTE
18 program which should be, I believe, one of the
19 treasured screen schools in New York City which is
20 food and finance high school. Everyone says this,
21 love that school but they're asking for one thing and
22 one thing only besides to fix their kitchens and
23 their ovens and stoves but in addition to that that
24 they be screened in the following way, why are you
25 interested in a school that's called food and

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2 finance? That's it because many students come to the
3 school because they like to eat food, I do too but I...
4 but it wouldn't have been the right school for me.
5 They have an amazing program, they want to keep their
6 16 percent IEP students, they want to keep their 55
7 percent black students, 48 percent... 43 percent Latinx
8 students, they want to keep all of that. They have an
9 86 percent graduation rate, many of their students go
10 on to college, they want to keep all of that. They
11 want to be able to ask one question and at that
12 juncture I would ask that you list them as one of
13 your prized specialized high schools because they are
14 a prize in my mind's eye, what they do with students
15 is delicious. So, let's start with the integration
16 stuff.

17 RICHARD CARRANZA: So, thank you Council
18 Member Rosenthal so if you don't mind a little
19 friendly amendment I'd like to start with food and
20 finance, that's a great school, I had a great visit
21 there. I know that we are working with it as part of
22 our master facilities plan around some mitigation of
23 some of the issues there, the students were fantastic
24 and I've been quoted as saying that screens are the
25 antithesis of a public school system but what often

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2 doesn't get quoted is what I also said the caveat was
3 unless it for a very specific reason and it's a good
4 reason asking why do you want to come to a school
5 called food and finance high school is probably a
6 really good question so that would fall into that
7 category of a good reason. So, I just want to say
8 that, a big shout out to them, they're a really good
9 school. Now the issue of disabilities, you are
10 absolutely right, one of the things that I think
11 doesn't get talked about often is what is the number,
12 what is the percentage of students that are attending
13 the specialized schools, what is their disability,
14 students disability percentage. I will tell you we
15 have that, that data, it's very, very low so, you
16 know we, we talk about race and ethnicity and we talk
17 about the gender issue, but this is another critical
18 issue in that particular conversation. That being..
19 [cross-talk]

20 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: And I'm just
21 going to double down on that.. [cross-talk]

22 RICHARD CARRANZA: Sure... [cross-talk]

23 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: ...can you
24 imagine kids going to school with kids in wheelchairs
25 or who have hearing loss or are blind in their

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2 classroom so as they become working adults those
3 individuals, 11 percent of our population, are hired
4 which is really the key to it all.

5 RICHARD CARRANZA: I, I couldn't agree
6 with you more and even more, so they do the hiring,
7 imagine that. So, what we have done is this year we
8 instituted a priority for students with disabilities
9 unfortunately I like to say that in New York City of
10 our 1,800 schools we have a portfolio of buildings
11 that is very historic, it's another way of saying
12 they're not all accessible and, and that's an issue,
13 we have old buildings but of the buildings that are
14 accessible we have prioritized in the five year
15 capital plan 750 million dollars to address those
16 issues of accessibility. In addition, we created a
17 priority this year for students with disabilities for
18 any school that is fully accessible they get a
19 priority to go to those schools because of the
20 accessibility, we want to make sure that they go
21 there..

22 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: Do families
23 know that?

24 RICHARD CARRANZA: Yes, we've been doing
25 a robust information campaign to families and we're

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2 going to continue to do that but again this is also
3 that notion of when you include a student its more
4 than just having them go to the same school you have
5 to include them in the very fabric of the classroom
6 and the classroom activities and make it a... you know
7 I heard a story when I first got here of a student
8 that was functionally or physically disabled and
9 couldn't go on a field trip because they couldn't get
10 the appropriate transportation that could transport
11 the wheelchair, I mean we were on that right away but
12 those are examples of when you're going to include
13 you have to fully include, we're with you on that.

14 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: Manhattan
15 school for children no playground, no accessible
16 playground and again the Council Member at the end of
17 the day is going to have to fund making that
18 playground accessible which was my first question
19 which has to do with resources.

20 RICHARD CARRANZA: So, resources again
21 are the life blood, it's interesting, I don't have a
22 printing press, I don't get to print my own money, I
23 don't get to sell things and increase the price so I
24 can increase the revenue I collect, we are funded in
25 the DOE based on the allocations that we're provided

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2 so the conversations around budget are very
3 appropriate, I want to thank the City Council for
4 advocating for those things that are important to us
5 collectively around our students and what students
6 should have but there is also another conversation
7 that we are... we should have as part of how we view
8 schools in the future and that is this notion of a
9 weighted student formula that we currently have in
10 New York City where the money theoretically follows
11 the student and if you have fluctuations in student
12 enrollment you have fluctuations in the allocation of
13 resources and we should have a conversation about
14 what are the essential positions that every school
15 should have and I will tell you that in school
16 systems that I have led across the country when we've
17 had that conversation the push back becomes what
18 you're centralizing, the allocation of resources. I
19 say you should be talking about what are things that
20 are important to you and if they're important to you
21 they should be funded so if we say that social
22 workers are important then it shouldn't be based on
23 the funding, certain schools get them other schools
24 don't if that's an important essential position there
25 is a school of thought that says then it should be

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2 funded as a position, the same thing with counselors,
3 same thing... you, you can name a bunch of essential
4 positions, librarians. So, I think that's the next
5 iteration of conversation that we should have, again
6 it comes with a price tag and, and I don't say that
7 as an excuse, I only say that as to frame the
8 conversation about what is it that schools should
9 look like, we need to have a very, very nuanced but
10 clear conversation which I think you've already
11 started to have.

12 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: I appreciate
13 that... [cross-talk]

14 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: Thank you... [cross-
15 talk]

16 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: ...I mean you
17 could... [cross-talk]

18 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: ...Council Member
19 this is the... this is the last point because then...
20 because Council Member Rodriguez is very patient...
21 [cross-talk]

22 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: Of course...
23 [cross-talk]

24 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: Last point, sure.
25

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2 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: Of course, and
3 thank you for your time and Chair Treyger you're a
4 rock star. By the way food and finance more than 90
5 percent go on to college or further education and
6 some go to non-degree culinary training, most go to
7 college and they're under enrolled and if you had one
8 guiding question why are you interested in food and
9 finance you will get more students at that school.
10 Thank you.

11 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: Full disclosure
12 Council Member Rosenthal, I invited the principal of
13 John Dewey High School to visit food and finance with
14 me a while back ago and that visit inspired a three
15 million dollar plus investment to build a state of
16 the art culinary kitchen at John Dewey High School,
17 it will be opening very soon so Chancellor you're
18 invited to that as well.

19 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: And one way to
20 raise revenue is the students... [cross-talk]

21 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: That's right...
22 [cross-talk]

23 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: ...they do some
24 fine cooking and baking.

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2 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: That's right, they
3 do, they do, our kids... our kids are already gifted
4 and talented, all of them, that's right. Next, we'll
5 hear from Council Member Rodriguez.

6 COUNCIL MEMBER RODRIGUEZ: Thank you
7 Chair. I believe that there's a lot of people
8 responsible in the city of New York for building a
9 system that has been based on racism and
10 discrimination and today we're paying the
11 consequences. I believe that, you know we have guide
12 in this city that we have... we can call her who is
13 right here in the city of New York when we try to
14 make changes so if you touch my privilege then we get
15 in trouble and I feel that unless we recognize that
16 we are investing 21 bill... more than 20 billion
17 dollars to educate 1.1 million students and for
18 decades students have not been reading, writing,
19 math, science at their level and that's how we got
20 here today. If we are not able to do it in this
21 administration I don't think that we don't have a
22 guarantee because we can have a great disagreement on
23 many things but this, this is a more progressive
24 administration that we have, there's a lot of people
25 that we have in this, they've been working there for

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2 Giuliani, Bloomberg following orders, they executed
3 some of this policy, they just follow orders, they
4 just follow leadership so for me the problem is not
5 specialized high school. For me I think that we
6 should lobby together to double the specialized high
7 school and I really mean it. For me this is about the
8 pipeline, as a former teacher for 13 years, as a co-
9 founder to a school wanting a progressive education
10 built on the Chancellor Fernandez I believe what the
11 city has been lacking in this administration, you
12 Chancellor, the Mayor and your team you're doing the
13 best you can to build that pipeline. So, we can
14 explain months and years, you know and studying to
15 prepare for the test in the Chinese community come
16 from the confusion time, that's the specific value
17 that is given to preparing to the test. I believe
18 that what we need to do is one, to learn from the
19 Asian community, we should start preparing the kids
20 since third grade and we should be sure that we have
21 a pipeline that from third grade to sixth grade we
22 already know what choices the student will have and
23 again I believe... I support reforms, I support
24 bringing changes in the formula but I don't think
25 that the target should be the, the specialized high

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2 school because most of the students who go to
3 specialized schools their parents they are working
4 class, they are not the wealthy ones and I think that
5 we need to bring them all together because every
6 single child should deserve to know that when they
7 apply to high school they will be prepared with
8 choices. So, as a father of two daughters I just want
9 every child of New York City to be prepared to have
10 choices. So, in summary my question is how much more
11 can you do to continue expanding the pipeline from
12 kindergarten to high school and middle school so that
13 a student will have real choices?

14 RICHARD CARRANZA: So, thank you for your
15 question Council Member Rodriguez, we, we agree, and
16 I agree completely with you, it's a pipeline issue.
17 Part of what's happened is in this administration the
18 Pre-K for All has been a game changer for students in
19 this... in this city, the ability to start earlier we
20 know through research changes outcomes for students.
21 The addition of even 3-K is even more of a doubling
22 down on that initiative so that's one of the first
23 things that this city has done, and it's been with
24 the support of the City Council and this Mayor, it's
25 a game changer for us. That being said as we look

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2 from an equity perspective in terms of where do we
3 have programs across the city and many of them have
4 been mentioned here; dual language programs, STEM
5 programs, where do we have AP programs, where do we
6 have IB programs, where do we have different kinds of
7 specialized areas of study. As we look at where in
8 the geographical distribution of our city those
9 programs reside there are some glaring, glaring
10 inequities. So, when we talk about from an equity
11 perspective where are we investing in historically
12 underserved communities that's exactly what I'm
13 talking about. When you look at opportunities for
14 students even marrying the issue of academics with
15 sports for example, we know there are some gross
16 inequities in terms of opportunities for students to
17 have that experience as well, all of that we're
18 taking on and as we become more and more focused and
19 you see more and more of those initiatives that come
20 forward it's going to require some funding but it's
21 also going to require the political will that you
22 talked about, privilege, I want to thank you for
23 saying that word in public, you talked about when you
24 are moving what is perceived as privilege from one...
25 from one item to another there's going to be a robust

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2 conversation and push back. I think that's what we're
3 seeing right now but I do think that to the Chair and
4 to the Speaker's great, great credit we have to be
5 able to have this conversation in very unvarnished
6 terms but in a respectful way that is the north star,
7 what are we trying to get to is exactly what you just
8 talked about, great opportunities for students in
9 every one of our neighborhoods.

10 COUNCIL MEMBER RODRIGUEZ: Point taken.

11 One thing that under Bloomberg was stopped, it was
12 some change in... about dollars, about budget was a
13 number of CBOs in the local community they were able...
14 they were down committee to run programs in the
15 schools and DOE used to give a waiver so that they
16 didn't have to pay for the cost, it was a change that
17 happened in the last four years of Bloomberg when the
18 CBO they were charged per square foot, I hope that if
19 you can look at that with your team and look at the
20 possibility, the provider waiver for local CBOs that
21 are interested and provide free program in the
22 schools that they... that can complement, I think that
23 it will... also could help.

24 RICHARD CARRANZA: We will absolutely
25 look into that, thank you.

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2 COUNCIL MEMBER RODRIGUEZ: Thanks.

3 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: Thank you very much
4 and I just want to note Council Members Koo, King and
5 Barron have one and only one more additional follow
6 up question... [cross-talk]

7 COUNCIL MEMBER KOO: One... [cross-talk]

8 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: ...so... because in the
9 interest of hearing from the public we just want to
10 make sure that we... [cross-talk]

11 RICHARD CARRANZA: Mr. Chairman?

12 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: Yes.

13 RICHARD CARRANZA: Is there an
14 opportunity for a bio break, I've been here since ten
15 and I've been trying to hold it... [cross-talk]

16 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: I, I think... I, I
17 think that is... that is very fair Mr. Chancellor, you,
18 you get a bathroom pass absolutely. Five... [cross-
19 talk]

20 COUNCIL MEMBER KOO: Okay... [cross-talk]

21 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: ...five... a five-
22 minute recess.

23 COUNCIL MEMBER KOO: Yeah... [cross-talk]

24 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: A strict five-
25 minute recess.

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2 RICHARD CARRANZA: Thank you very, very
3 much.

4 COUNCIL MEMBER KOO: Wait, wait, wait...
5 oh, five minutes...

6 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: Okay, I think we
7 are ready to begin again and just a note to my
8 colleagues just one question because we, we're trying
9 to be mindful, I want to... want to hear public
10 testimony as well. First, we'll hear from Council
11 Member Koo.

12 COUNCIL MEMBER KOO: Thank you Chair. Mr.
13 Chancellor thank you for your first session, I know
14 you're tired and... so, you spoke about expanding time...
15 you spoke about expanding 3-K, right but this year's
16 expansion doesn't include 3-K in any community that's
17 largely Asian American, not Chinatown, not Flushing,
18 not Elmhurst, Sunset Park, can you explain why?

19 RICHARD CARRANZA: So, I'm going to ask
20 our Deputy Chancellor Wallack to talk a little bit
21 about that.

22 JOSH WALLACK: Yes, so a couple of
23 things, one is that we're very proud that now that
24 we're bringing the early care and education programs
25 together in this administration, we will be able to

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2 offer early education to low income families in every
3 district of New York City as we bring those programs
4 together and second I would say that the way that
5 this administration set priorities for the initial 3-
6 K for All districts was by looking at the ten
7 districts with the most economically challenged
8 families, the lowest income districts in New York
9 City and then all five boroughs of New York City.
10 That being said, our aspiration as you know is to
11 bring 3-K for All to every district in New York City
12 and we are working hard to try to secure the funding
13 for that and we look forward to working and
14 partnering with you to accomplish that so that every
15 child can experience high quality early education at
16 the age of three.

17 COUNCIL MEMBER KOO: But, but in, in my
18 area... [cross-talk]

19 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: Council, Council
20 Member... [cross-talk]

21 COUNCIL MEMBER KOO: ...in Sunset Park
22 there are a lot... [cross-talk]

23 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: Council Member,
24 final... [cross-talk]

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2 COUNCIL MEMBER KOO: ...of poor families...

3 [cross-talk]

4 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: ...question, please.

5 COUNCIL MEMBER KOO: Yeah. Yeah, there
6 are a lot of poor families in, in... [cross-talk]

7 JOSH WALLACK: We, we agree... [cross-talk]

8 COUNCIL MEMBER KOO: ...Sunset Park there
9 are... [cross-talk]

10 JOSH WALLACK: We agree that it... that we
11 should have 3-K for All in every district of New York
12 City and we want to work with you to accomplish that,
13 that's how we chose the initial ones.

14 COUNCIL MEMBER KOO: Okay, I look forward
15 to it, yeah, thank you.

16 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: Thank you Council
17 Member, next we'll hear from Council Member King.

18 COUNCIL MEMBER KING: Thank you again,
19 hope everybody is cool from their bio break but my
20 question to you is that there was a chart up there
21 identifying the breakdown of ethnicity of, of blacks,
22 whites, Hispanics, Asians in the public school system
23 but the number of blacks who... high in being part of
24 the system but a low part of going to specialized
25 high schools, my question to you is, I see in 2019

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2 over 20... 27,000 children took the test, five over...
3 almost 6,000 said come on in and out of that four
4 percent were black, 51 percent is Asian and six
5 percent Hispanic so my question is who made that
6 decision out of all those numbers who goes into a
7 specialized school after taking the test and passing
8 the test, who made those... who, who made the decision
9 to say we're going to take this... that large amount,
10 that, that gets a smaller amount, who made that
11 decision?

12 JOSH WALLACK: Who made the decision of
13 who takes the test, sorry I... [cross-talk]

14 COUNCIL MEMBER KING: No, after they've
15 taken the test and children have passed the test who
16 made the decision to say we're going to take this
17 amount, that amount, that amount, who made... [cross-
18 talk]

19 JOSH WALLACK: I see... [cross-talk]

20 COUNCIL MEMBER KING: ...decision?

21 JOSH WALLACK: So, yeah, so the, the... as
22 the program functions right now, as the... as the... as
23 the system functions right now it's just literally
24 picking kids according to their score on the test
25 starting with the top scorer and going down the list

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2 and I think what the Chancellor and the Mayor pointed
3 out is that when you rely on a single exam like that
4 and that one score to make that decision you wind up
5 with outcomes that don't reflect the diversity of New
6 York City and so what you're seeing is... there's
7 nobody making... there's no person making choices, it's
8 just a, a... an... [cross-talk]

9 COUNCIL MEMBER KING: Computer?

10 JOSH WALLACK: ...the, the order of the
11 test scores.

12 COUNCIL MEMBER KING: Is that a computer,
13 I'm sorry I don't mean to follow up, I'm trying..
14 [cross-talk]

15 JOSH WALLACK: No, it's fine, we..
16 basically just we... I... there is a computer involved
17 but basically, we're just looking at a list of all
18 the test scores that students got and taking the top
19 scorers and they get the first offer to those.. to
20 those seats.

21 COUNCIL MEMBER KING: Well maybe we need
22 to put the human component back into this and then
23 we're really... we can relieve a lot of discrimination..
24 [cross-talk]

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2 JOSH WALLACK: It would be the same...

3 [cross-talk]

4 COUNCIL MEMBER KING: Thank you very
5 much... [cross-talk]

6 JOSH WALLACK: ...it would be the same
7 result unless we changed the system itself as the
8 Chancellor said.

9 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: Thank you, thanks
10 very much and Council Member Barron.

11 COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: Thank you Mr.
12 Chair. I just want to address what is perhaps a
13 subtle undertone of talking about cultural
14 differences and in a negative way casting aspersions
15 particularly on the African American community and I
16 just want to remind people that historically we know
17 that mankind began in Africa and we know that the
18 Greeks and the romans went to African nations to
19 study, they went to the universities of Timbuktu and
20 Sankore to study and we know that once Africans were
21 kidnapped from Africa and brought here to this
22 country that they were denied an education and that
23 they suffered perhaps death if they tried to learn to
24 read but nonetheless they always pursued the dream of
25 being educated and pursuing higher levels of

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1
2 education so for those people who are making
3 inuendoes that well if it were really important
4 perhaps we'd be able to find a way to pay for the
5 training that other communities pay for, I think that
6 that's not based in fact and I just wanted to ask the
7 Chancellor to talk about the fact that even though we
8 know that tests may not be designed to be prejudicial
9 when the results of the test come such as to give
10 disparate results they are in fact discriminatory and
11 I just wanted to ask the Chancellor to talk briefly
12 on that.

13 RICHARD CARRANZA: So, thank you Council
14 Member Barron, so testing in and of itself must be
15 for a specific purpose which points to the validity
16 of the test and it must give you a consistent result
17 which points to the reliability of the test. We know
18 that the human condition especially as students are
19 developing their academic capabilities, as students
20 are developing their vision for what they want to do
21 and what they want to study are much more than the
22 sum total of any one test. Now how those tests are
23 constructed, what the correlation is to the way the
24 questions are worded and the background of students,
25 how the test is put together in order to give you a

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2 certain conclusion, all of that factors into who does
3 well and who doesn't. So, if the notion is that we
4 want to have students who number one, there are a lot
5 of students who could go to specialized schools who
6 choose to go to other schools because they want to
7 study a particular... in a particular school or school
8 environment but for those students that do want to go
9 into a specialized school environment then we know
10 that the test as it's currently configured is not
11 mean to identify talent, it's not meant to identify
12 capabilities, it's not meant or constructed to
13 identify grit and resilience, it's only configured to
14 screen, it's a screening test and in some cases where
15 you may have five answers to a question, three of
16 those answers are all correct but one is a little
17 more correct, that doesn't tell you anything except
18 how well you've been prepared to take that screening
19 test and the results are pretty clear. As I've said
20 in my testimony either we believe it's the kids or
21 perhaps it's the condition, the instrument, the
22 protocol that is giving us the kind of outcomes that
23 we're getting, that can't be the way that we provide
24 opportunities in a city like New York City that is so
25 diverse and, and I also want to emphasize and I

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2 really want to thank you for pointing out the subtle
3 language that gets used when we talk about this
4 particular issue because I like you will not be
5 silent about that, let's be respectful about how we
6 talk about this issue but let's be very, very clear
7 that all students in New York City deserve an
8 opportunity, not a guaranteed space, an opportunity
9 and how we structure those opportunities says a lot
10 about what we believe in, in terms of our city,
11 that's what this conversation is really about, it's
12 not a good system, it's not a good test and it's
13 giving us results even in terms of boys versus being
14 successful, students with disabilities, etcetera, on
15 a lot of different indicators there's no one
16 indicator that shows us this is a really enlightened
17 way of choosing opportunity for students.

18 COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: Thank you Mr.
19 Chancellor, thank you Mr. Chair.

20 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: Thank you Council
21 Member and very strong and much needed point because
22 you're absolutely correct and spot on, I truly
23 appreciate your leadership on, on this. Mr.
24 Chancellor just very quick follow up and just we'll,
25 we'll close out to get here to the public. Do you

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2 believe that charter schools have exacerbated
3 segregation in our school system?

4 RICHARD CARRANZA: Well yeah, I was just
5 on a panel with a number of researchers and the
6 research is, is clear that by and large and I'm not
7 talking about New York City but in... by in large
8 charter schools are more segregated in their student
9 populations than traditional public schools, writ
10 large in American. That being said, there's a lot
11 that's been talked about and written about, well ten
12 years ago, 20 years ago, I want people to keep in,
13 in, in perspective that there are many more
14 opportunities right now than there were ten years
15 ago, 20 years ago, private schools have scholarship
16 programs that offer these opportunities to students
17 of color to go to private schools, there are a number
18 of charter schools that take students and enroll
19 students in charter schools so the, the options and
20 the opportunities are greater particularly for black
21 and Latino students so there's some of that as well
22 but again I, I have no quibble, no, no, no fight
23 except for the fact that we currently have a system
24 in place that I think systematically excludes
25 opportunity to certain groups of students.

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2 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: Right, because on
3 the topic of problematic admissions many charters
4 don't really give you a choice to give you a chance,
5 they give you basically a ping pong ball. From about
6 problematic admissions, a ping pong ball will decide
7 your admissions into a school so that's I think also
8 problematic and I think that should be brought into
9 the conversation and just to wrap up, I, I want to
10 just clarify with regards to the, the important work
11 of the advisory group, deeply value their work and
12 their recommendations, I guess I was under the
13 impression that there was a meeting... or should have
14 been a meeting already between February and now and
15 based on what I'm hearing there was not a meeting
16 yet, is that correct Mr. Chancellor?

17 RICHARD CARRANZA: So, the, the committee
18 is continuing to meet... [cross-talk]

19 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: Right... [cross-talk]

20 RICHARD CARRANZA: ...but there, there is a
21 meeting that we're scheduling where the Mayor and I
22 will both meet with the, the committee to discuss the
23 recommendations and then what the next steps are as
24 well, that's the meeting that I'm referring to.

25

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2 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: Right and just to
3 clarify because I, I want to just credit their work
4 there's just eagerness on our part to begin to
5 implement very key parts, there's an eagerness, a
6 passionate eagerness to start. As we heard from the
7 students it brought to mind the famous words, the
8 fierce urgency of now to start working and
9 implementing and actualizing these things and final
10 note, one of the preconsidered Intros is my bill with
11 regards to asking the DOE to report on staff
12 demographics in our school system, does the DOE have
13 a position on that bill that they can share today?

14 RICHARD CARRANZA: I think it's a great
15 idea and we do compile that data about the
16 demographics of our staff, it... our human capital
17 division has a mandate to look at the diversification
18 of our staff so... [cross-talk]

19 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: Right... [cross-talk]

20 RICHARD CARRANZA: ...it's readily
21 available but I think it's a good idea and I think
22 it's a public... [cross-talk]

23 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: Right... [cross-talk]

24 RICHARD CARRANZA: ...conversation that
25 should be had.

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2 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: Right and I think
3 it's... just to kind of... certainly our school system,
4 our staff should be reflective of our... of our... of our
5 city, of our student body but I also wanted to lead
6 to another deeper issue that I've had, I've shared
7 with Mr. Chancellor about teacher preparation of our
8 future educators, making sure that the curriculum to
9 prepare future teachers is not just focused on
10 content but also pedagogy, culturally responsive, you
11 know approaches as well, there's a lot of work to do
12 around those areas so... and I just want to note in
13 closing Mr. Chancellor you are... you have been very
14 visible and... on this issue from the beginning, you
15 have taken your fair share of hits as well and I
16 think that at times there are some heated exchanges
17 here but I think we're all really on the same page
18 about getting the best system for, for, for our
19 children, just know that there are advocates here in
20 this body that just want more resources for our
21 schools and creating a more fair equitable process
22 for all so I, I thank you for your leadership and,
23 and for... and for your team as well.

24 RICHARD CARRANZA: Thank you.
25

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2 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: Very good, thank
3 you. Okay, I'd like to now welcome, we have a member
4 of, of the New York State Assembly who is certainly
5 no stranger to the New York City Council, former
6 Council Member, current Assembly Member and someone
7 who has been very forceful and outspoken in defense
8 of public schools throughout his career I'd like to
9 please welcome Council... I'm sorry, Assembly Member
10 Charles, Charles Barron.

11 CHARLES BARRON: Mr. Chair once you say
12 Council Member, you're messing with my domestic
13 tranquility, so I just want you to call me... I am the
14 State Assembly Member. Education should be for
15 liberation, it should be for liberation, liberation
16 from poverty and liberation from a racist, parasitic,
17 predatory, capitalist system. It is the system that
18 perpetuates a value system that is hierarchical, the
19 Weberian value system of class, it is the system that
20 maintains poverty and maintains an unequal
21 distribution of wealth. It is a system that has shown
22 there's a gap between the rich and the poor widening
23 every day. So, when we educate our children we can't
24 say that we just want to educate them so they can get
25 a good job or educate them so they can climb up the

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2 ladder or educate them so they can be integrated into
3 a system that even Martin Luther King said in his
4 latter years perhaps I'm trying to integrate into a
5 burning house, this is Martin Luther King not Malcolm
6 X whom I really love and said some other things and
7 I'll tell you about that one day but this is a system
8 that needs radical transformation, this is a system
9 that needs change, root changes. So, often times we
10 organize and talk about the symptoms of a deeply
11 rooted systemic problem. Poverty is a symptom,
12 miseducation is a symptom, inadequate health care is
13 a symptom, the problem is capitalism and its
14 ideological foundation, racism which permeates every
15 institution in this country. I just thought I'd open
16 up with that, how you all doing? So, I firmly believe
17 that a socialist value system, a socialist economic
18 system, a socialist political system is a better
19 system, it is a better system because it has a better
20 value system, it values people, it values people over
21 profit, it values need over greed and I think this is
22 the kind of value system that we must teach our young
23 people, that's why I was so proud of this panel of
24 young people that came up here, they didn't talk
25 about their personal stuff they talked about what

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2 could be better for all of them and that's why I'm
3 here today. So, I want to give you a little report
4 from the state. Two white men are in an eagle battle
5 over the resources and controlling of the education
6 system in New York State and New York City. One of
7 the white men's name is Governor Andrew Cuomo, the
8 other white man is Mayor Bill De Blasio, they are
9 battling each other and trying to punish each other
10 over funding and who's going to pay for what and not
11 caring whether that impacts the children of the
12 system that they're depriving money from. We must end
13 Mayoral control, no one person should have any
14 dictatorial control over the system of 1.1 million
15 children with a budget of 32 billion dollars and
16 1,800 schools and thousands of teachers and
17 principals, no one person who is not an educator
18 should have that control. Some people said well we
19 want to give him that control so we can hold him
20 accountable, accountable, Mayor you are accountable
21 to every agency in the... in the city, you are already
22 accountable, it's not accountability its control.
23 Control, control over an eight-billion-dollar budget,
24 an eight billion dollar contracting budget. Do you
25 know how many people are becoming millionaires off of

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2 the contracting budget of New York City, eight
3 billion dollars, there are some cities that don't
4 have eight billion dollars, and this is just the
5 contracting budget. So, we were upstate, and I was
6 trying to fight for you all to get more money for New
7 York City, we were battling. How do you have a state
8 that has 175.5 billion dollars, 175 billion dollars,
9 27 billion dollars for the state education budget, a
10 city with 92 billion dollars and 32 billion dollars
11 for their education budget, that's a lot of money. I
12 don't even know how to make all those zeros, that is
13 a lot of money, there shouldn't be any poverty, there
14 shouldn't be this kind of unemployment, there
15 shouldn't be hungry children in New York City and New
16 York State with that kind of money but it doesn't go
17 where it needs to go. In 2006, the court said because
18 of the racism of the state and the unequal
19 distribution of wealth to black and brown schools,
20 the campaign for fiscal equity said that they owe
21 these schools six billion dollars, this was in 2006.
22 Here it is 2019 they still owe four billion dollars.
23 So, out of this 175 billion Mr. Chairman we said
24 let's do this, let's do 1.2 billion this year, 1.657
25 billion next year and then pay the rest off in three

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2 years so that we can pay that whole debt off and
3 deliver it to the neediest schools in New York City
4 and across the state and do you know what happened,
5 the Governor said well I'm only going to give 338
6 million. Now remember we were all so happy that we
7 had a democratic senate in a democratic assembly with
8 I don't know what you call governor, whatever he is
9 politically, a chameleon but we had the two parties
10 controlling both houses, one party controlling both
11 houses, everybody thought the democrats have arrived,
12 wow this is great. Let me tell you something last
13 year when there was a IDC and republicans controlling
14 the senate we got... and I have fought hard for it,
15 totally disappointed, by the way I don't vote for any
16 of the budgets because they don't do the right thing
17 by the people, I fought and we got 618 million
18 people... or dollars toward the campaign for fiscal
19 equity, 618 million. This year I said uh-oh we don't
20 have those republicans in control anymore, we got
21 this, guess how much we got, 618 million dollars the
22 same amount that was given under the republican
23 administration, you know I told them that they should
24 stop calling it a two party system, they could either
25 be repulicrats or demicans, they should be a one

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2 party system the way they're acting up there. So, we
3 didn't get the money that should have come to the
4 city for this. So, we're fighting hard and when we
5 say education for liberation we can't just teach our
6 children how to survive a decadent system, we have to
7 train them to change it not to cope, not to survive
8 but to change it and that's a different kind of
9 education. So, when we integrate, integrate into
10 what? Integrate into what and that what is what we
11 got to work out, so it works for our children. We
12 know what it takes to educate children. First of all,
13 it takes teachers who know how to teach, it takes
14 teachers who know how to teach, and I know there's
15 some great teachers but there's some lousy ones that
16 need to go. It takes principals that have vision,
17 leadership and management skills and we got some
18 great principals some need to go do something else.
19 It takes a curriculum and I'm particularly concerned
20 about black people and people of African ancestry we
21 definitely need to have a mandated, mandated African
22 and African American history in that curriculum, that
23 should be a mandate. We know it takes a culturally
24 relevant curriculum, we also know that it takes
25 smaller class size, we know that every school should

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2 have a library, an updated library with high
3 technology, we know that it takes a music and arts
4 and culture and sports because that's motivating
5 students to learn and we know you need to get rid of
6 standardized tests, standardized tests, you know if
7 they take local tests all year long and got grade
8 point average that's it, they don't need to do
9 anything else, they proved that they have education
10 potential. So, we know that's what it takes, it takes
11 a... it takes smart boards, computers, science labs and
12 this City Council has to do most of that in the
13 schools in our local district, I know because I've
14 been a City Council Member for 12 years and we had to
15 do the same thing. So, when we're talking about
16 education we got to educate our children and we talk
17 about integration it's not because Martin Luther King
18 and the civil rights people wanted to sit next to
19 white people at a lunch counter, it's not because we
20 felt we would be better if we went to a white folk's
21 school, it's because we wanted the equal resources
22 and that's the same thing we're talking about today.
23 I'm alright with the all black school just give me
24 all the computers we need, all the qualified teachers
25 we need, all of the gym... nice gymnasiums, give us

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1
2 what everybody else has. Finally, on the specialized
3 test, I think everybody has said it well I could only
4 repeat, I think the Chancellor handled that very well
5 but let me say this to you, first there are no seats
6 reserved for any ethnic group. All of the seats are
7 open for everyone to apply for to get in, nobody has
8 a reserved seat. So, if you change policies, you're
9 not hurting one group because nobody has a reserved
10 seat. These seats are open for everybody. Secondly, I
11 don't understand how anybody can be against a policy
12 that's going to move the numbers from less than ten
13 percent with black and Latino students to in three
14 years 45 percent especially a black person, you know
15 some black people say and it gets all... you all know
16 about the last nerve, right, this gets on my last
17 nerve, well I passed it because I worked hard so why
18 can't they pass it, those are bosh black folk who
19 think that they made it because they were smart and
20 they didn't, they made it because the system was set
21 up for that kind of stuff to happen, a test doesn't
22 make you smart. I know some pretty dumb people who
23 passed that test, the test doesn't make you smart.
24 There are some students who didn't reach the grade
25 level, the score that you spoke of, went on to

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2 Stanford University, went on to Harvard University,
3 oh they can go to Stanford and Harvard but they can't
4 go to Stuyvesant, they can't go to Stuyvesant, these...
5 and don't talk about we need better preparation, we
6 need more test prep and all of that we need to get
7 rid of this test and how could you be against a
8 policy that says seven percent of the top students in
9 each school, I don't even believe in this elitist
10 school stuff, I believe we should have a egalitarian
11 school system, egalitarianism simply means equal
12 access, equal opportunities for all. We should call
13 it an egalitarian school system, that's what we need,
14 that's equal for all and for those who try to escape
15 away from the, the standardized, the, the test being
16 removed and they try to run to oh no we don't just
17 need to talk about the test we need to talk about
18 Pre-K, we need to talk about some of the other issues
19 in education, well we are and we've been talking
20 about that but don't try to run away from the fact
21 that this test needs to go and we need to have equal
22 access for everybody so if a school is all Asian then
23 they will have seven percent, if a school is Latino
24 they will have seven percent, if the school is mixed
25 they will have seven percent that's equal, fair

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2 access for everyone because you want to cram schools,
3 crammed thousands of dollars you spent on cramming
4 your children to, to pass this test that is only
5 teaching them to pass a test that doesn't measure
6 their academic or their education potential it just
7 shows that they can take a test. Let's end it. Let's
8 end mayoral control and let's talk about this state's
9 debt that they owe to this city and to the schools in
10 this city. So, I want to thank you for allowing me a
11 few expressions, I want to let you all know something
12 and I tell this to the public there is a Council
13 Member and I have to confess that I really love this
14 Council Member a lot, I think she's one of the best
15 Council Members and it has nothing to do with the
16 fact that she's my wife and... of 36 years, it has
17 nothing to do... this is an objective opinion, I think
18 she's the most beautiful, smartest, brilliant Council
19 Member that this Council has ever had, that has ever
20 had. So, now that I got my brownie points, I thank
21 you for the opportunity. Thank you.

22 SPEAKER JOHNSON: Does the Council Member
23 have any questions for the Assemblyman or is it after
24 the hearing?

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2 COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: You did well,
3 thank you.

4 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: Thank, thank you
5 Assembly Member, thank you very much. Okay, so now we
6 will now invite members of the public to speak. In
7 the interest of time and trying to keep things along
8 and I know it's been... it's been long already, and I
9 truly praise everyone's patience and time, everyone
10 will be on a, a two-minute clock. We have your
11 testimony in full so please, please summarize your
12 points for the Council Members, if you need an
13 interpreter for your testimony please come to the
14 Sergeant's desk for an... for an appearance card and we
15 do have interpreters here with us.

16 TRANSLATOR: [foreign dialogue]

17 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: Okay, we'll call
18 the first panel... oh, I'm sorry.

19 [off mic dialogue]

20 TRANSLATOR: [foreign dialogue]

21 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: Okay, thank you,
22 thank you very much. So, our first we have Janella
23 Hinds, from UFT; Henry Rubio, CSA; and Patrick
24 Joseph, Manhattan Borough President Gale Brewers
25

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2 Office and I think we've set the clock and you may...
3 you may begin.

4 JANELLA HINDS: Good afternoon Chairman
5 Treyger and good afternoon everyone. My name is
6 Janella Hinds and I am the UFT's Vice President for
7 Academic High Schools. On behalf of the union's more
8 than 190,000 members, I'd like to thank Speaker
9 Johnson, the Chairs of these two Committees and
10 members of the Committees for holding these hearings
11 today. We deeply appreciate your oversight of New
12 York City's recent desegregation plan authored by the
13 School Diversity Advisory Group and in full
14 disclosure, I actively participated in the advisory
15 group's work as a representative of the UFT. We
16 applaud the local community school districts where
17 parents, advocates and educators recognize the system
18 was broken and created their own school integration
19 plans. In Districts 1, 3 and 15, and in over two
20 dozen PROSE schools across the city, stakeholders
21 collaborated on plans to reverse worsening
22 segregation. They took a bold step but as a system we
23 need to do better, it's time for us to focus on all
24 schools. We need a top to bottom retooling of the
25 DOE's approach to high school enrollment from its

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2 application process to the complex placement
3 algorithm. From its screen in specialized high school
4 admissions to the vestiges of the small school era.
5 The UFT believes admission to the specialized high
6 schools must be changed to a system of multiple
7 measures, that's not new. That same standard,
8 multiple indicators to assess the student's academic
9 standing must be applied across the board so a single
10 test does not determine access to gifted and talented
11 programs, middle schools or the specialized high
12 schools. Equally important, the UFT supports a
13 creation of more high schools particularly where
14 existing high schools are overcrowded and the
15 creation of more academically rigorous programs
16 inside more high schools. Frankly no discussion
17 without segregation in New York City's public schools
18 can be complete without reference to one of its most
19 pervasive forms, academic isolation. We do our
20 students a disservice and their parents when we
21 reinforce a narrative that is only about eight
22 specialized high schools and that the only vehicle to
23 success is through those eight when we know there are
24 hidden gems like the school where I teach where
25 students, teachers and community work together to

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2 empower student's academically and socially. Thank
3 you very much.

4 HENRY RUBIO: Good afternoon, my name is
5 Henry Rubio and I serve as the Executive Vice
6 President of the Council for School Administrators.
7 I'm here today on behalf of our President Mark
8 Cannizzaro. More importantly I'm here to represent
9 our members, the nearly 16,000 active and retired
10 principals, assistant principals, educational
11 administrators, child education directors,
12 supervisors of. We welcome and thank you for the
13 opportunity Chair Treyger and other Committee members
14 for the opportunity to offer CSA's perspective and
15 our support on the resolutions. As we argued in our
16 testimony last winter, CSA... at CSA we believe that
17 our students of every race, gender and socioeconomic
18 status benefit from a diverse and inclusive
19 classroom. In fact, thanks to the City Council for
20 its support of our executive leadership institute
21 that also promotes professional development to that
22 and to school leaders across New York City. Now there
23 are of course many possible ways in which... many
24 possible ways in which we can address the systemic
25 segregation in our public schools and our members,

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2 our school administrators, the city's school leaders
3 must always be included in that dialogue to diversify
4 our schools. Let's always be reminded that it is our
5 school leaders who face the critical task of
6 implementing these plans on a daily basis and
7 addressing the fears and concerns of those oppose
8 them. One of the reasons we believed in the potential
9 of the district 15 plan to change their middle school
10 admission policy and other districts is because
11 principals and assistant principals, school
12 administrators had been included throughout the
13 process and the plan had their support. The plan was
14 a result of years of advocacy and months of public
15 input and the result... and, and the result of the
16 challenging thoughtful done by principals, teachers,
17 parents and school community members throughout. Our
18 school leaders must now be given the time and the
19 resources necessary to implement any diversity plan
20 successfully including funding our schools at 100
21 percent. We'd like to take a moment to just thank
22 this Committee and our Chair Treyger for advocating
23 to the Chancellor and the city for that as well.
24 Lastly, CSA looks forward to serving as a voice of
25 school leaders on any task force especially in the

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2 task force of the specialized high school task force.
3 Thank you.

4 PATRICK JOSEPH: Good afternoon, I'm
5 Patrick Joseph, Senior Policy Analyst for the
6 Manhattan Borough President delivering these remarks
7 on her behalf. The Borough President would like to
8 express her strong support for the Council's
9 endeavors to integrate New York City schools. In
10 particular she would like to voice support for the
11 Preconsidered Introductions 4277, 4279 and the
12 Proposed Resolution 417. 4277 is, is a... Treyger's
13 bill that the data on school staff demographics would
14 be shared publicly. We believe this is key, this is
15 essential to monitoring the DOE's progress in making
16 schools reflective of the city's diversity. While the
17 Department undergoes the necessary changes to train
18 teachers in implicit bias and create culturally
19 relevant curriculum for students, there is a well-
20 known dearth of diversity within the teaching force
21 that must be addressed. Recent research demonstrates
22 the significance of diverse teaching staff
23 highlighting benefits that include increased
24 potential for common cultural understanding, improved
25 student engagement, less class time spent on punitive

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2 discipline, higher expectations, improved reading
3 outcomes, improved math outcomes, etcetera, etcetera.
4 We also believe that diversifying the teaching force
5 will help many of our youngest scholars see the
6 teaching profession in a new light as there is a, a
7 shortage of teachers across the country and this
8 might help students of color get more involved in
9 that line of work as well. We'd also like to express
10 support for 4279, which would require establishing a
11 mandate for the DOE to work with all of its
12 communities to integrate schools. Right now, the
13 model is ground up, which is great, but we also do
14 need our school system to comply with the ruling of
15 Brown v. Board of Ed and it is nigh time for that.
16 Thankfully Integrate NYC who I believe is represented
17 here today, has already designed a framework for real
18 integration, a lot of folks conflate desegregation
19 and integration, desegregation is just moving bodies,
20 right, integration is that hard work and so just very
21 briefly the, the five R's is just race and
22 enrollment; equitable distribution of resources;
23 relationships, developing schools that are empathetic
24 towards all identities; restorative justice,
25 decriminalizing schools, I didn't hear too much about

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2 that since I've, I've been here but that, that is a...
3 very much key as we talk about out of school factors
4 that impact our students, the over policing of
5 predominately brown communities is, is key to that
6 discussion and very... just lastly I, I want to touch
7 on that Resolution about G and T. I just want to be
8 clear that our opinions on this, the fact that we
9 should have more opportunity for all students in, in
10 all districts to be part of G and T programs. This is
11 really a lesser of two evils approach. Currently G
12 and T is about privilege, extending those
13 opportunities to other students, it was better than
14 that but in reality we really just need to stop
15 screening kids, stop tracking kids, telling some kids
16 they're intelligent, telling others they're, they're
17 dumb and they won't make it, that's just vile and
18 that just needs to end. G and T is not a solution for
19 racial disparities, it's, it... the research tells us
20 that it actually exacerbates these things like
21 segregation, segregation and so I, I want us to just
22 keep that in mind as we have these discussions and
23 thank you for the time.

24 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: Absolutely and if
25 you heard briefly we had an exchange with the

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2 Chancellor over the MOU that we've been waiting now
3 for quite some time which again the NYPD has
4 incredible power over our school system, our school
5 system is still governed by a Rudy Giuliani era
6 police system which is outrageous, outrageous, it is
7 a school system not a PD system and I fully agree
8 with you and I truly, truly appreciate your, your
9 remarks and leadership. I want... Council Member King
10 has a question.

11 COUNCIL MEMBER KING: Thank you, all
12 three of you for your testimony today. My question
13 goes on the line of... I'll double back to something
14 that Assembly Member Charles Barron said what, what
15 does integration actually mean, you know is it about...
16 we're saying it's not about moving bodies but really
17 getting the resources into our schools that make
18 sense but at the end of the day it starts at the
19 beginning of the day, we're tapping systems... symptoms
20 as opposed to saying this education system is doing
21 exactly... I said it earlier it doesn't exactly... it was
22 built to make sure that certain people do okay and
23 certain people don't do okay and all that is... all of
24 the symptoms that come out of it whether its poverty,
25 health care, miseducation the whole nine yards so I

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2 want to say... ask you all as union present...
3 representing your unions what is the union prepared
4 to do to have a real conversation with this
5 membership in regards to the issues that they
6 sometimes enforce themselves within schools and I
7 come from a perspective talking to principals and
8 talking to teachers about... I'm a teacher who's
9 teaching social studies and when I want to have a
10 real conversation to empower students on the story
11 and the history of America I get chastised or I get
12 suspended or I get punished for having these
13 conversations with kids because it doesn't fall in
14 line with the DOE curriculum so that's a principal
15 throwing a teacher underneath the bus, you represent
16 both of those entities so I'm asking you what
17 conversations are you all willing to have, have as
18 opposed to waiting for a solution to come from the
19 DOE and say we as union, this is the approach we want
20 to take to say the system is doing what it's supposed
21 to do, we got to rip down that whole system and
22 rebuild a new one with solutions that now in turn... in
23 turn inspires your membership as opposed to put your
24 membership in a position that they can't stand up or
25 present new ideas?

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2 JANELLA HINDS: Speaking for the

3 Teachers Union I can say that our members have been
4 very vocal in calling for the kinds of changes that
5 you're talking about, specifically around the
6 specialized high schools members from every one of
7 our schools came together in a task force to talk
8 about what needed to be in place to provide an
9 appropriate education for all students attending
10 those schools, they're the ones who said these
11 schools are not as representative as they need to be,
12 these schools don't offer the same kind of
13 opportunities as they should, these... we as educators
14 need to provide more to New York City's breadth of
15 students and we want to be at the frontline of doing
16 that. By extension I will say that not only in our
17 PROSE schools but across the board our members are
18 involved in conversations about removing the barriers
19 to honest empowerment of our students, right and so
20 you see spaces where our teachers are working with
21 organizations like Integrate NYC and Teens Take
22 Charge that is happening in many schools around this
23 city particularly in the Bronx but in many schools
24 around the city but it is also the responsibility of
25 educators across the system to think about exactly

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2 what you're talking about and we are engaged in those
3 conversations.

4 HENRY RUBIO: Thank you for the question
5 Councilman, I think that we've been on record both in
6 our written testimony and in our participation here
7 and in other venues that our members are
8 overwhelmingly in support of a diverse school system
9 and diverse schools in, in supporting curriculum to
10 that effect as well, the training of teachers, the
11 training of supervisors as well and administrators. I
12 think that there are many other factors, some
13 mentioned by my, my colleague here from the UFT do
14 not... Miss Hinds that are outside the principal's
15 control, alright, zoning is not in the principal's
16 control, enrollment practices that are conducted by
17 the Department of Education are not in the
18 principal's control, budgets despite what the
19 Department might say is really not in the principal's
20 control, right, they're limited. Principals are held
21 100 percent accountable for everything in a school
22 but only given 90 percent of the funding to do it,
23 right and so I think on, on our end there's a lot
24 that our members are open to doing but need the time
25 and the resources in order to effectuate.

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2 COUNCIL MEMBER KING: Okay, I thank both
3 of you for your answers and whatever solutions that
4 you... you're coming with why they... I don't know how is
5 the DOE... because I'm hearing you say it's out of our
6 hands, we don't manage much but one... the problem I
7 have with creating new task forces out of task
8 forces, 65 years we know there's a problem we need to
9 have a task force created... the same problem that we
10 know existed for 65 years, the question is what
11 actions have you told the DOE we need to do this and
12 have the DOE say you know what you're right or the
13 DOE told you get, get away... out of our office, what
14 has the DOE said to the solutions that you're saying
15 in regards to the bias, the prejudice and the
16 discrimination that's happening in this education
17 system that you all know that is hurting children of
18 color period?

19 HENRY RUBIO: I think both Miss Hinds and
20 I serve on the SDAG, right and in our participation
21 that can reap all from the recommendations later
22 we'll have someone from the SDAG that's going to be
23 talking about it so we, we're on board with those
24 recommendations that have been already made to the
25 Department of Education, have been published. Now

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2 there are other things that we have as a union and I
3 said today that we think are going to be key to
4 making anything work, every school different... every
5 school district has its own intricacies and
6 differences and for anything to work you've got to
7 involve the parents in that community, the local
8 elected officials, the community, those plans like in
9 district 15 are the ones that are most likely to
10 succeed because you have community buy in and for us
11 I think that's the most important part in, in, in
12 moving any plan forward, right and that this is not...
13 you're right, this, this is problem we've had for
14 decades and we're not going to fix it in one or two
15 or three years but if... in order for this to work it's
16 got to involve our parents, our teachers, our
17 communities, our, our elected officials and, and
18 we'll find a way forward.

19 COUNCIL MEMBER KING: Thank you.

20 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: I, I thank you and
21 I just want to note in, in this conversation about
22 integrate... desegregate... desegregating schools and
23 integration I want to note as well about students for
24 example in district 75 schools that still don't even
25 have full access to their schools, literally if a

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2 school is not accessible they may as well put up a
3 sign that says this is not for you so I don't want to
4 lose that in this important conversation and hearing
5 today and, and there have been advocates who have
6 been on this from the beginning that deserve
7 attention and resources, we hear resources a lot here
8 today not just in terms of programs and, and
9 educators and culturally responsive education
10 approaches and integrations with admissions policies
11 but making sure our schools are fully accessible to
12 all of our children, that must be a part of today's
13 conversation as well. So, I thank all of you for your
14 leadership.

15 HENRY RUBIO: And thank you for being a
16 champion on that issue as well, it's something that's
17 very important to our members, district 75 schools
18 with some of the neediest children in New York City
19 so thank you.

20 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: Thank you, thank
21 you all, thank the panel. The next panel from Teens
22 Take Charge Alexander Rodriguez; Tiffani Torres;
23 Ayana Smith, Toby Paperno and Marcus Alston.

24 ALEXANDER RODRIGUEZ: My name is
25 Alexander Rodriguez and we'd first like to say that

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2 it's disappointing that the DOE is not here to listen
3 to student's testimonies. We trust social media will
4 do its thing.

5 [off mic dialogue]

6 ALEXANDER RODRIGUEZ: Okay, thank you.

7 MARCUS ALSTON: Hi, my name is Marcus
8 Alston and I'm from the east side of Brooklyn, a
9 place known for its underinvested schools and
10 dangerous tendencies. I guess it's not that dangerous
11 anymore since Molly and Tom made a few coffee shops
12 but we're not going to talk about that. I'm a junior
13 at Pace High School, a school severely underfunded,
14 cluttered and below the state level of performance.
15 My school is one out of the three schools in a four
16 floored building where Pace all 600 Pace students,
17 all 600 of them are crammed into two floors. Maybe if
18 I scored higher on my state test score in the 7th
19 grade my talents would be able to be noticed when
20 auditioning for LaGuardia because I figure that my
21 talent was validated by my ability to sing not
22 whether or not I got a one, two or three on my state
23 test. I couldn't help but think to myself maybe if I
24 was smarter in eighth grade when I sat down to take
25 the SHSAT I'd make it to a specialized high school

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2 but I quickly realized that it wasn't that I was not
3 smart enough it was that I was not wealthy enough.
4 The test isn't about what you know or how good you
5 are at math, it's your ability to obtain prep. The
6 ability to pay thousands of dollars for prep was how
7 you got in, the ticket to endless opportunities. This
8 ticket is grant... isn't granted for people like me and
9 that's a part of the plan. A school like Stuyvesant
10 High School where the majority of students are white
11 and 70 percent Asian has access to so many things
12 like working water fountains, maintained bathrooms,
13 computer labs and libraries, things all schools
14 should have as mine has lead infested water
15 fountains, bathrooms with no dividers, a computer lab
16 with one computer and a nonexistent library, my
17 school of course filled with minorities. The idea of
18 separate but equal is what Jim Crow used to justify
19 the segregation of my ancestors in American history,
20 but this history seems to... seems to be what I'm
21 living right now so I ask, is this really history or
22 his story. Ironically, the New York City school
23 system are... is, is actually separate and not equal so
24 I guess you win Jim where the, the more money you
25 have grants you access to an all-inclusive five star

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2 education while those who don't have are left for
3 scraps. The mission of the DOE is to create a
4 fundamental learning environment for all students,
5 who is included in this all because it's definitely
6 not people like me. I cannot believe that in 2019 we
7 are living in a Jim Crow era; it is time to
8 desegregate and end this racist system. Chairman and
9 people of the DOE who is here, please do not boast
10 about how great the DOE is until people like me make
11 it to the same opportunities as those to the upper
12 west side, don't you dare. Thank you.

13 ALEXANDER RODRIGUEZ: Good afternoon to
14 you all, my name is Alexander Rodriguez and I am a
15 junior at the Urban Assembly School for Law and
16 Justice and Direct-Action Fellow here at Teens Take
17 Charge. Now before I begin to share my story on being
18 processed in the system, I ask all of you to lose
19 the... all the things you think of when you see the
20 logo on my shirt and who I am. My high school journey
21 begins inherently with my middle school journey and
22 the lack of support I received during my application
23 process. Like all the other students in my class, I
24 applied to the brand-named schools that was all the
25 guidance I got on my application, the words of my

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2 peers. Why, because in a school of about 1,400
3 students there were only two counselors. My
4 assistance with this process came from sitting on the
5 floor of my school gym with about 100 plus other
6 students and one guidance counselor. I vividly
7 remember sitting down in my dining room night after
8 night struggling to find a school that aligned with
9 my interests and location. Without the support of my
10 mother who couldn't speak much English. All I knew
11 was the schools I couldn't apply to and the schools
12 everyone was applying to. The SHSAT only seemed an
13 option to those who knew about it so I placed pretty
14 much at random eight schools and I ended up getting
15 my sixth choice, the Urban Assembly School for Law
16 and Justice and to be quite honest with you I didn't
17 know what I was getting myself into. However, when I
18 was placed into my high school I was amazed to hear
19 that I didn't have to make another at random decision
20 again because my school composed primarily of black
21 and Latin X students who was not going to let their
22 students suffer because of a broken system they are a
23 part of because school administration combined with
24 its nonprofit, the Adams Street Foundation was not
25 going to let competent children of color be failed by

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2 a broken system not in my school and so with an
3 expansive list of robust enrichment opportunities
4 dozens of adequately trained counselors and hours of
5 college preparation starting from the ninth grade I'm
6 not another statistic, I'm an example of what could
7 be when adult leaders adopt policies like our
8 enrollment equity plan. Thank you.

9 SAPHIRA CHERFILS: My name is Saphira
10 Cherfils and I am a senior at Brooklyn College
11 Academy. I attended a predominately black middle
12 school in Crown Heights, and I graduated as
13 valedictorian and I got into a selective high school.
14 I felt like I was ready to take on the world. Though
15 my school lacked crucial resources I was happy to be
16 there, and I thought it was norm in New York City
17 public schools to not have several sports or
18 underqualified teachers. It wasn't until I joined SEO
19 Scholars that I learned that I was being underserved.
20 My first day at SEO I was introduced to the
21 achievement gaps, the achievement gap is the
22 disparity and the academic achievement among students
23 based on the... on the basis of race and class. At 14
24 years old hearing this atrocity I was furious,
25 furious at the fact that I had a one-sided story of

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2 this education system. Furious at the fact that I
3 came to the United States to seize the opportunities
4 and make something of myself only to find out
5 there's a limitation to my success because of my
6 income and race but I mostly was furious because
7 lawmakers and the people that can make a real change
8 refuse to do so. The, the achievement gap exists in
9 schools like my high school and middle school that
10 are not equipped with the same resources as the
11 schools in the upper east side. We have one sport,
12 overworked teachers, lack of extracurricular
13 activities, we don't even have a gym, how am I
14 supposed to compete with students from schools that
15 has several gyms, guidance counselors, clubs, sports
16 and all the tools that facilitate success in an
17 allegedly free integrated education system? It's an
18 unfortunate... it's unfortunate that your access to a
19 quality education is dependent on your zip code or
20 socioeconomic status. As a graduating senior I never
21 got the chance to explore different sports or take
22 part in AP classes or elective classes that I might
23 happened to enjoy. I was fortunate enough to take a...
24 to have a program like SEO that prepared me for
25 college and filling the gap that my school failed to

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2 but in a diverse city with a system that advocates
3 for no child left behind, think of how many kids you
4 are leaving behind by choosing not to take action.
5 Thank you.

6 AYANA SMITH: Hello, okay can you... thank
7 you so much...

8 ALEXANDER RODRIGUEZ: You're welcome...

9 AYANA SMITH: Hello, my name is Ayana
10 Smith and I'm a senior at University Heights High
11 School, in the fall I'll be attending Cornell
12 University and I'm a Team Leader at Teens Take
13 Charge. I'm before you all today because our school
14 system fails to reflect the students it serves
15 academically. This year I was fortunate enough to
16 serve as a teaching assistant for my school's AP
17 calculus cohort. I was able to teach class content
18 and offer in class tutoring to a diverse set of
19 students whose GPAs ranged from C to A plus. I
20 remember asking two of my classmates in the beginning
21 of the first semester, do you understand the content,
22 no Ayana its confusing they said. It was confusing
23 not because they weren't smart but because it was
24 challenging. One student was a sophomore who didn't
25 take any algebra two or precalculus courses and the

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2 other student had still been learning English so
3 sometimes he didn't understand what the teacher was
4 saying. Both have... both had been at different levels
5 in terms of GPA and knowledge however both had been
6 motivated to do well. After working with them for
7 another month I wasn't surprised when they finally
8 mastered derivatives. This is too easy they
9 exclaimed. Eventually they were able to help the rest
10 of their classmates furthering the student engagement
11 in the classroom. Due to this experience I was able
12 to help some of my classmates believe that they can
13 understand and pass the APA exam. Additionally, I was
14 able to become better at calculus and better at
15 explaining ideas and socializing. What was most
16 valuable was being able... was being able to witness
17 learning firsthand. Learning is not meeting a numeric
18 criteria and learning is not how high you can rank
19 relative to your peers, learning is being in a space
20 where people are different from you, learning is
21 being in a... being challenged by the course content,
22 learning is being curious, eager and vulnerable.
23 Every student is capable of learning regardless of
24 prior experience and knowledge within a subject and
25 every student should have the opportunity to teach as

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2 a form of learning. We are only truly aware of what
3 we've learned when we explain it to someone else. We
4 never get this opportunity when everyone in our room
5 is at the same level as us. Implementing Teens Take
6 Charge's academic diversity thresholds for high
7 schools where at least 25 percent of all incoming
8 students and no more than 75 percent of all incoming
9 students pass their 7th grade ELA exam is essential
10 to creating academically diverse student bodies where
11 real learning can take place because academically
12 inclusive schools helps everyone.

13 TOBY PAPERNO: My name is Toby Paperno,
14 I'm a sophomore at Beacon High School and on the
15 leadership team at Teens Take Charge. I ask you and
16 everyone listening to support Teens Take Charge's
17 enrollment equity plan to integrate New York City
18 high schools. I've gone through my public-school
19 career in a bubble of privilege in terms of the
20 resources I've access to and the people I encounter.
21 Yet, my dad, a high school teacher at a heavily under
22 resourced and segregated, high poverty school watches
23 as students go through high school in a very
24 different bubble, a bubble of limited resources. My
25 dad comes back from a day of work and complains that

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2 after 16 years of trying to help kids he is tired of
3 his students not getting the support they need at
4 school. Beacon is a school in the middle of Manhattan
5 that is 25 percent low income and 50 percent white.
6 At YCD the school where my teaches 87 percent of
7 students are low income and it is three percent
8 white. My dad's school isn't the only one of its
9 kind, 237,000 students go to schools where at least
10 90 percent of students qualify for free or reduced
11 priced lunch. My school is the one that's out of
12 place in this system, but it is not the only school
13 of its kind. The few dozen other selective screened
14 high schools like mine are also deeply segregated in
15 terms of their student bodies racial makeup and
16 access to resources. In this school system
17 intelligence is defined by your grades, test scores
18 and what school you attend, which more than anything
19 is a measure of privilege. The students that, like
20 me, who attend well-resourced schools with good
21 academic, extracurricular and social supports and
22 opportunities and who come from more affluent white
23 families with social capital... with social capital and
24 systemic savvy receive more help than those who are
25 born without the resources that have allowed me to

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2 succeed. A public-school education system should have
3 the goal of educating everyone to the best of its
4 ability not separating the affluent from the rest and
5 setting the rest up to fail. For all those reasons
6 and more I want to again to ask the City Council to
7 support Teens Take Charge's enrollment equity plan
8 which outlines measures aimed at increasing school
9 integration including eliminating the SHSAT; setting
10 academic diversity thresholds and better supporting
11 eighth graders in their high school admissions
12 process. Thank you.

13 TIFFINI TORRES: My name is Tiffini
14 Torres and I'm a junior at Pace High School and
15 Leader at Teens Take Charge. I'm constantly reminded
16 that I cannot afford to fail in a system that works
17 to sustains failure. A system that teaches low income
18 students of color that they are not enough and that
19 the only way to escape the faded clutches of
20 oppression and poverty, the only way to achieve a
21 better life that at the end of the day isn't promised
22 is working twice as hard. When the time came for me
23 to apply to high school the thought of applying to my
24 zoned schools was discouraged by my school's
25 administration. I was in fact encouraged to leave, to

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2 stray as far as possible from my neighborhood, from
3 my district. I was told that there were better
4 schools, schools with screens that were not
5 accessible to my peers nor to myself. The first
6 choice on my application was a prestigious high
7 school on the upper east side of Manhattan known for
8 its stellar SAT scores, high graduation rate,
9 extensive number of resources, a forever dwindling
10 percentage of students of color and a zone
11 requirement. I live in a neighborhood dubbed the
12 riskiest area in Brooklyn for children to grow up in
13 courtesy of New York Daily News. I was told the
14 schools in my area with graduation rates barely
15 scraping 50 percent lacked the resources I thought I
16 needed to be successful, a serious lack of AP
17 courses, few guidance counselors and college advisors
18 combined with a system that fails to meet all of its
19 promises all contribute to New York City's increasing
20 achievement and opportunity gaps. The schools in my
21 immediate area do not have the tools their students
22 need to achieve their dreams and whose fault is that?
23 I stand before the City Council today urging you all
24 to take action not only to compensate for the
25 experience of my generation and those before me but

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2 for those who come after me and for those who are
3 currently being told that they have to work twice as
4 hard for half as much. The job of the City Council is
5 to represent the people, take action for the students
6 you are leaving behind, use your voice to fight
7 against the injustices that thousands of students are
8 facing each and every day, join us in calling on the
9 Mayor and the DOE to approve our high school
10 integration plan which can be accessed at Teens Take
11 Charge dot com, by the end of this school year. We
12 cannot afford to wait any longer.

13 [applause]

14 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: I, I, I just... I
15 want to say because I know Council Member Lander has,
16 has a... has a question, I just want to say that I want
17 to thank Teens Take Charge and also I thank Integrate
18 NYC as well, the meeting that we had was very
19 powerful and very informative. One of my criticisms
20 of the administration was that... like what... I agree
21 that the one test for specialized schools is
22 problematic but abolishing simply one test by itself
23 is not a game changer for the entire system either
24 and you put forth very comprehensive and detailed,
25 strong, thought out recommendations on integration in

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2 many different forms and if you heard my testimony
3 earlier my opening statement about Merrill High
4 School what I experienced in my school very diverse
5 both in terms of student body and also very diverse,
6 rich curriculum and so when I hear some advocates say
7 why can't all schools be like Brooklyn Tech or Stuy I
8 actually say why can't more schools be like Merrill,
9 a school that I experienced or schools that you've
10 experienced that, that you enjoy so I truly, truly
11 appreciate your leadership and I agree we must act
12 now, we must act now. I will turn it to my colleague
13 Council Member Lander.

14 COUNCIL MEMBER LANDER: Thank you Chair,
15 thank you Teens Take Charge for being here today and
16 for what you've been doing, I, I had the honor of
17 joining you at the Schomburg and Brooklyn Public
18 Library and some of you presented at, at PS 321 and
19 so I'm sold on your high school admissions proposal
20 and, and on the ways in which you are demonstrating
21 what we need to do and what we get out of it and I
22 just... you all spoke really in smart ways. I, I want
23 to draw out a little more the point and I'm, I'm
24 sorry I don't know your name but the young woman who
25 spoke about the kind of tutoring and peer coaching

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2 because I think one thing we haven't quiet been able
3 to get to enough today and is really important is to
4 think about what... and the Chair really got to this
5 was some of the ideas of, of diverse, diversity by
6 achievement, if you have an integrated, a diverse
7 classroom, diverse schools you're going to have
8 classrooms of diverse learners who are, you know
9 doing better and doing worse and a little more
10 advanced at different subjects and I think we have in
11 our heads that if we bring people together that likes
12 holds somebody back and I think the story that you
13 told about... like obviously you first had to master
14 the calculus material to be able to share it with
15 someone so it doesn't sound like it... the approach
16 your school is taking held you back from gaining
17 mastery and then the ability to be that kind of peer
18 mentor or peer coach that both helps you even better
19 master the material but also develop skills of team
20 building and coaching and communication that are
21 really valuable so I, I'd just like to hear, you know
22 I think this is an important part of the vision here
23 is like if we're not just moving bodies around or
24 some kind of zero sum game but imagining what it
25 looks like to educate in more inclusive ways, I'd

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2 just like to hear a little bit more on how you think
3 we balance helping everybody do their best, right
4 like helping people push themselves to, to develop
5 skills they don't have and develop their talents
6 while working across lines that recognize like people
7 have different, different gifts at different times. I
8 was struck by what you said and would just love to
9 hear a little bit more about it.

10 AYANA SMITH: So, I don't really know how
11 to expand, I feel like and part of what I do I asked
12 my teacher last year since I passed the APA exam if I
13 can work as a teaching assistant for this year and he
14 said yeah sure and I guess the experience itself was
15 like really eye opening and it was just fun in
16 general like when you're working with your peers
17 they, they seem more receptive of like feedback and I
18 guess they learn better. I've been told numerous
19 times like we really like appreciate what you do and
20 that... the fact that you stay after hours with us and
21 like we feel like sometimes the teacher doesn't
22 necessarily understand like our questions but since
23 you're a student and you've sat in this room before
24 and you know how the teacher teaches having you as a
25

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2 resource is really valuable so I've been able to do
3 that, yeah.

4 COUNCIL MEMBER LANDER: Alright. I just,
5 you know I... we're better at things you can measure,
6 you know like what goes up on a chart and, and we got
7 a lot of room... work to do on those things but I think
8 trying to figure out how we capture what happens if
9 we get this right that is the adding up of the
10 experience you had and making it something that's
11 much more common in our schools is one really
12 powerful thing that we shouldn't forget and I'm going
13 to take it away from this hearing so thank you so
14 much for sharing it.

15 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: Yes, absolutely and
16 I thank you Council Member Lander for noting about
17 the various forms of enrichment opportunities that
18 should exist in our schools and a more diversified...
19 doing it the right way not, not the Bloomberg or
20 other folks way but I want to know... in my
21 conversations with Diane Ravitch, you know she talked
22 about the impacts of the Bloomberg Administration's
23 approach to create smaller schools which also in, in
24 a way created smaller opportunities and really hurt
25 public schools in many... of course neighborhoods

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2 across the system so there's still damage to undo as
3 we're trying to move forward to make sure that we
4 have a fully integrated accessible school for, for
5 all kids. I, I... again I really, truly appreciate your
6 testimony, I know that this is not the first time
7 that you've spoken on this issue and it's time for
8 folks to act. Thank you, thank... oh, I'm sorry,
9 Councilman King has a quick... yes.

10 COUNCIL MEMBER KING: I have more of a
11 statement, I want to say thank you to each and every
12 one of you, I remember working with you all at a
13 library when I was the library Chair, it's good to
14 see you but for the DOE who's still in here and UFT
15 that's still in the room she made a valid point, I
16 like the point that you made my sister about staying
17 after school and talking with your peers that should
18 be a wakeup call because somewhere along the line in
19 our school classrooms there becomes a communication
20 gap on how adults are talking to children where their
21 peers can educate them better sometimes once they
22 understand it so it's just something that we should
23 be mindful of when we find out why children can say
24 well I've been in the class... well the teacher hates
25 me, it's not... the teacher doesn't hate you it's just

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2 that your... the communication is not working so
3 they're not understanding and an adult will get more
4 frustrated than trying to dumb themselves... scale
5 themselves back to figuring out how to get the
6 communication over to our children and then its
7 reflective in, in a poor grade that they may give to
8 a student so thank you for being a peer leader and
9 hopefully one day you'll be leading a classroom and
10 you'll know how to get it right, congratulations to
11 you all, thank you.

12 [applause]

13 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: Thank you all very
14 much, we truly appreciate it. The next panel I'd like
15 to call up and full disclosure I am a big fan and I
16 enjoy listening to her, watching... seeing her on T.V.
17 and I hope that she runs for office one day as well,
18 Maya Wiley; Hazel Dukes; Diana Noriega and Mathew
19 Gonzales. I think whenever folks are ready, they,
20 they may begin, sure. Please help yourself to water
21 because it's been a long day so far, so understood.
22 Make sure the microphone is on.

23 MAYA WILEY: Speed dating begins. Thank
24 you very much to all Committee members, we are
25 honored to be here. I am Maya Wiley, I am one of the

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2 three Co-Chairs of the School of Diversity Advisory
3 Group, Hazel Dukes is here is one of our Co-Chairs,
4 Jose Calderon could not be with us but can I ask
5 everyone who's here whose part of the School
6 Diversity Advisory Group in the audience to please
7 stand because I think we have a very large
8 representation and I just want folks to..

9 [applause]

10 MAYA WILEY: Thank you, yeah. So, we both
11 are... we're all really, really excited and proud and
12 thankful for this hearing. I also want to acknowledge
13 that we're extremely thankful for the support we've
14 gotten from the Department of Education, they have
15 been amazing at supporting all of our requests for
16 public engagement, we have had over 40 meetings, we
17 have had town halls in every single borough with 800
18 people total and that was all because the Department
19 of Education did not blink when we asked for the
20 resources and support to do this in a way that built
21 a transparent process with the public as a group of
22 45 very diverse stakeholders that we believe
23 represent the city of New York and the building of
24 trust I think was critical to get us to a point where
25 we could made recommendations as a very diverse group

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2 that we can all stand behind and we think that model
3 is something that we need to accomplish what we just
4 heard our students say we need to do and I want to
5 acknowledge the advisory group for that, thank you.
6 So, just very quickly we've asked that our full
7 February report be put into the record so thank you
8 for accepting that into the record. We just want to
9 emphasize some high points of our 73 recommendations
10 that we made for a diverse school system and the
11 first is that we used the framework that you have
12 heard from students today, the five Rs, the schools
13 are here for our students and they have to reflect
14 that but secondly we said admissions should in three
15 years schools should look like their district and in
16 five years they should look like their borough and in
17 ten years they should look like the city, the, the
18 Department of Education's goals need to be more
19 aggressive. But we also recognize there's resources,
20 accountability and metrics, students have to be
21 included in that accountability. We've attached the
22 metrics we were proposing in the testimony; I will
23 stop to honor the time limits of the committee.

24 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: You should feel
25 free to continue, we don't want to cut you off, we're

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2 really grateful for, for you all being here today,
3 we're grateful for the enormous amount of time and
4 energy and expertise and service that every one of
5 the members of this really sterling group has put
6 together. My comments earlier to the Chancellor were
7 in no way a denigration of this group, it was more
8 just an accountability measure that when you come to
9 the City Council you have to answer our questions
10 when you're under oath, you can't say we'll answer
11 those questions to another group so it was in no way
12 a criticism of the incredible work that you all have
13 done and I would love for either you, Maya who is
14 amazing or the other group, my good friend Doctor
15 Hazel Dukes or anyone else whose here if there are
16 other things you want to talk about that you think
17 that we should know about in the context of the
18 conversation, you have plenty of time, don't feel
19 under the gun by the clock.

20 MAYA WILEY: Well I appreciate that and
21 we, we definitely felt under the gun but mostly to
22 honor how many important people there are here to, to
23 offer testimony. The accountability, I would.. I would
24 just say a little bit more; you know we said the
25 goals need to be much more aggressive. We did

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2 recognize in admissions that it really is critically
3 important to take what I think we just heard the UFT
4 speak to an engaged process with community about what
5 will work because not our... all our communities look
6 alike and we really recognize that as an advisory
7 group and so in those first three years really
8 recommended that there be resource supports like we
9 saw thanks to Council Member Lander's leadership in
10 district 15 having a very engaged community process
11 for districts on those first three year goals. Now we
12 have to work also past the first three years and
13 that's why we also talked about resources and
14 accountability, it's really in terms of
15 accountability much too difficult for parents and
16 students to understand how the Department of
17 Education is doing on its goals not because it
18 doesn't have a lot of data, it has and produces and
19 makes public a lot of data it's just very hard to
20 find and to track and to put it all together and so
21 part of our, our metrics are make it accountable by
22 make... putting it all in one place in a simple way for
23 parents and students to find how we're doing in our
24 schools around integration, around educational
25 opportunity, around staffing. We were very happy to

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2 hear the Chancellor say that he was supportive of
3 diversifying the teaching population because that is
4 one of our recommendations, it's one of the five Rs
5 that students have asked for and we endorse that. We
6 also had suggested it be tracked so as Council Member
7 Treyger you mentioned that is also in our
8 recommendations, so we were happy to hear that. And I
9 think, you know the resourcing is critically
10 important as, as everything we've already heard, it
11 is simply not sufficient to say that we're going to
12 look at how this classroom looks without looking at
13 whether all classrooms have the same kind of
14 opportunities for advanced placement classes, for
15 advanced science including in middle schools, for
16 gyms, for sports, for arts, for music all of those
17 are not... and I, I hate the word enrichment personally
18 that's just personal, it's not enrichment, it's
19 central and core to educational opportunity and so
20 too many of our students aren't getting that so it
21 isn't enough just to look at the bodies in the room
22 but what is in the room with those bodies. I'll stop
23 there and I don't know if Hazel you want to add...

24 HAZEL DUKES: First let me say thank you
25 Mr. Speaker and the Chairman and thank you Mr.

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2 Speaker for coming back because I was going to come
3 by your office.

4 SPEAKER JOHNSON: I knew that would
5 happen if I didn't come back.

6 HAZEL DUKES: I want to say that I have
7 given my adult life to education, anyone in this city
8 knows that I have fought hard, I've been in court
9 systems, NAACP in the 60s brought a suit against New
10 York City and I was on the verge of going there, I
11 was surprised that I was asked to be a part of this
12 group since I'm such an activist because I believe in
13 action, I believe in action and I believe as the UFT
14 say in this space we can act with your leadership as
15 the Speaker, with you an educator, you know sometimes
16 we don't have educators in this conversation, you
17 being a... have been a teacher you understand what our
18 children need. I want to point out that when we went
19 through every borough I want to say that Councilman
20 King we had a little spat outside but I want to give
21 Councilman, Councilman King credit, out of all the
22 boroughs I went to he was the only elected official
23 that I saw, he was there in his community, he was
24 there with his teachers and his principals. I think
25 what was said this morning earlier we all have to be

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2 in this game to get it right, but I want to
3 personally thank you Speaker for the leadership that
4 you have let this City Council provide. I wasn't here
5 five years ago Councilman Landers when you all had,
6 that must have been a charade because if I had been
7 here you wouldn't have just talked over integration
8 and segregation in this school system and I want you
9 to know it's nothing about... I want it on the record,
10 this is not a fight against any group this is for all
11 the children in the city of New York, it's not a
12 fight. I don't want my Asian brothers and sisters to
13 think this is a fight, the 110-year organization that
14 I represent the NAACP every time that we've broken
15 down segregation all of us have been better for it.
16 Thank you very much.

17 SPEAKER JOHNSON: Thank you Doctor Dukes,
18 good to see you, thank you.

19 DIANA NORIEGA: So, we're going to speak
20 as our separate organizations even though we're
21 members of the SDAG. So, my name is Diana Noriega,
22 I'm the Chief Program Officer at the Committee for
23 Hispanic Children and Families. We recognize the
24 highly charged nature of the discussion and
25 intentionally enter the space as an advocate for

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2 educational equity reform that impacts and benefits
3 all students. Educational equity is about access,
4 inclusion, quality and opportunity, it must be
5 undergirded by justice. We must ensure that the most
6 historically marginalized communities amongst us have
7 access to the same resources that the top five to
8 percent... five... top five to ten percent of our
9 students do. We want a system that has equitable
10 inputs from birth through post-secondary education
11 and on the path to achieving it we know that there
12 are systemic issues that we have to address. The
13 expansion of gifted and talented, increasing the
14 number of middle school DOE test prep programs as
15 well as keeping the SHSAT exam as the sole indicator
16 of admittance to high, highly selective public
17 schools are not the solution to solve our problem.
18 Currently G and T programs only benefit 2.5 percent
19 of New York City students with vast differences in
20 access and underprivileged communities compared to
21 those who are privileged and well resourced. Black
22 and Latino students make up 70 percent of the New
23 York City population, yet only represent 18 percent
24 of the students in gifted and talented programs
25 across the city, that's atrocious. Zero percent of

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2 the students in the south Bronx, Crotona Park, Bed-
3 Stuy, Brownsville, East New York have seats in G and
4 T programs. We side with research that demonstrates
5 the problematic nature of using a single measure to
6 gauge academic capabilities of any child and
7 certainly take issue with subjecting children to that
8 type of high-stake testing at the age of four years
9 old. if you judge a fish by its ability to climb a
10 tree it will live its whole life believing that it is
11 stupid. We have to find a system that meets the
12 various needs of all of our students. In line with
13 our view that no one indicator can determine the
14 intelligence or academic abilities or aptitude of a
15 child, we believe the SHSAT should be ultimately
16 abolished. We believe that admissions to specialized
17 high schools should be layered and reflect the
18 general practice at highly selective colleges many of
19 whom are actually moving towards a test optional
20 admissions policy. The SHSAT was created in 1970...
21 1971, the law supporting it which we know supported a
22 segregated educational system. And so, we are hoping
23 that the Mayor and the Chancellor take our
24 recommendations that we're making that would benefit
25 the entire system not just the top one... five to ten

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2 percent. Particularly the SHSAT which only works with
3 six percent of New York City public school students.

4 Thank you.

5 SPEAKER JOHNSON: Thank you Diana.

6 MATT GONZALES: Hello, thank you, my name
7 is Matt Gonzales, I am Director of the School
8 Diversity Project for New York Appleseed. As Diana
9 said I'm, I'm speaking as a member of New York
10 Appleseed and... but I'm also a... to disclose myself a
11 member of the School Diversity Advisory Group and so
12 I just want to start off by saying thank you for
13 hosting this conversation. I was at the last hearing
14 a couple of years ago and by this time of the day
15 there are about three members in the actual room and
16 so we really appreciate that many of you really care
17 about this conversation and, and have come to the
18 table to join us in, in fighting for this work. I
19 want to make a few points before we go forward, first
20 as we have these really difficult conversations, I
21 think... I want to urge and challenge all of us not to,
22 to resist the, the kind of... the urge to resort to
23 making policy or making recommendations based on
24 fear, based on the premise of scarcity of resources
25 or based on the... based on an idea that some kids in

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2 communities who have been underserved just need to
3 get what the white kids have, I think those... this
4 system as it exists now is broken, it has always been
5 broken and if we just say we're going to give our
6 poor black and Latin X students what the white kids
7 have we're still playing in, in a game of scarcity
8 and so I, I really want to challenge all of us to
9 think bigger and bolder because the work of
10 integration is not just about getting what the white
11 kids have or what the kids with privilege have, it's
12 about getting every single one of our children in
13 this city, in this country a better educational
14 experience that will lead to a tremendous wealth of
15 life and, and community outcomes and I want us to
16 really shift our work towards meeting that goal of,
17 of making all of our schools better for all of our
18 kids. Appleseed and our student led partner at
19 Integrate NYC have long understood that integration
20 is more than moving bodies, it's about moving
21 resources, it's about moving curriculum and pedagogy,
22 its about moving discipline policies away from
23 disproportionality, it's about moving our recruitment
24 and retainment of teachers and faculty to ensure that
25 our, our, our staff reflect our students and that's

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2 why we align and endorse all 73 of the
3 recommendations outlined in the school diversity
4 advisory group's report. Lastly, I think what... you
5 know most of the conversation over the last few
6 months, maybe the last six months have centered
7 around eight schools and we are really committed to
8 the 99 percent of the schools that serve all of our
9 young people and we really want to ensure that as
10 we're talking about these eight schools that is just
11 the tip of the iceberg and so what we at Appleseed
12 have advocated for is the abolishment and the removal
13 of segregated middle screened admissions because what
14 we know is that 14 of the 15 middle schools who
15 supply half of the students to the specialized high
16 schools are not open or accessible to this city and
17 so what we know is that the, the process of
18 integration is not about busing kids around the city
19 today maybe that's for tomorrow but today it's about
20 removing structural barriers to... barriers to access
21 that were designed to create and facilitate and
22 maintain a segregated system. So, join us in removing
23 barriers to access, screens, gifted and talented
24 programs, other selective and exclusionary admissions
25 methods that only provide access and support for a

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2 select group of students, lets open up access to all
3 of our great resources to all of our young people
4 together. Thanks.

5 SPEAKER JOHNSON: Thank you very much,
6 any questions from any... yes, Brad. Council Member
7 Lander.

8 COUNCIL MEMBER LANDER: Thank you and
9 thank you guys all for being here and for pushing,
10 you know I do want to note the school diversity
11 advisory group has, has overperformed the
12 expectations that we had for it and I want to give
13 you guys credit, you know we did that first hearing
14 five years ago, we were in this... we got this denial
15 from DOE, we did pass two bills out of it, one
16 requiring information, an annual report and the other
17 a resolution Council Member Torres sponsored calling
18 on the DOE to put forward a plan for combating school
19 segregation and it took two and a half years before
20 they in June 2017 came out with the plan that called
21 for the creation of the school diversity advisory
22 group but it was a milk toast plan and some of you up
23 there were joined with us in criticizing the fact
24 that it did not... it was not bold, it was not
25 ambitious, it didn't set ambitious targets

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2 nonetheless you took up the challenge of joining the
3 group, of leading the group, of building the group
4 and the fact that you've been abled on the one hand
5 to work productively with the DOE but on the other
6 hand to put forward 73 pretty ambitious
7 recommendations that we know are independent because
8 they weren't immediately ready to say yes to is a
9 pretty good thing so I want to give you credit here,
10 the work that's organizing, that's getting some
11 support from inside but that is building a big broad
12 coalition to push us is really significant here so I,
13 I want to say I appreciate it. So, I guess my
14 question is this, you heard earlier and, and the
15 Speaker drama... you know underlined some of the
16 challenges like the Chancellor was not ready, I know
17 you've got more coming in June but he could have said
18 yes to those pieces of your... I'm sure you wouldn't
19 have objected if he had said yes to your
20 recommendations you made that he was ready to sign
21 onto but I, I guess I want to ask you it this way,
22 you know if, if the DOE either on what you've already
23 done or on what you... done in June comes out and says
24 yes, we endorse them, I assume you will celebrate and
25 roll up the sleeves to, to get the work done and keep

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2 moving forward, where the DOE says no or can't or
3 wait will you work with us to keep pushing forward to
4 make sure that the recommendations you're making
5 continue to be that north star even if there's more
6 organizing and pushing to do?

7 MAYA WILEY: Well thank you for the easy
8 question, because it's an easy one, yes. This
9 diversity advisory group, you know I want to
10 underscore what a privilege it has been to be a part
11 of because it has worked really hard, it... we have
12 challenged each other, we have not always been in
13 agreement, we've had to work through and understand
14 when we have different positions, our principles and
15 our goals have been the same, let me just say that
16 but the how and the what, you know there's a lot of
17 area for debate and we, we... and I want to say with
18 participation from staff of DOE meaning principals,
19 teachers, people who are doing the equity and
20 inclusion work within DOE have given us information,
21 they've given us honest... their honest take on what
22 some of the challenges are of implementation which is
23 important to understand that's why we did short term
24 versus medium and long term like recognizing what can
25 get done effectively now and what takes more time.

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2 That process was really, really important but it
3 means when we pend that 116 page report there is not
4 one minority report attached to it, that's because we
5 all felt we could all sign our names to that report,
6 whatever DOE says or does doesn't change where the
7 school diversity advisory group is on our
8 recommendations.

9 COUNCIL MEMBER LANDER: Great, thank you
10 and I, I didn't... I want to honor the, the DOE took
11 some risks in establishing the group and giving it
12 independence and providing the data and providing the
13 support, I gave the Chancellor credit, you know I'll
14 give him credit again so... and I, I think there's an
15 opportunity created and we need to use it as a
16 roadmap to keep pushing so thank you.

17 HAZEL DUKES: Thank you.

18 SPEAKER JOHNSON: Council Member King.

19 COUNCIL MEMBER KING: Thank you all again
20 for the long months, hours, years, the conversations
21 and I... and I... my question goes in the state of... I
22 said earlier and, and we'll double back to your
23 conversation as well young man in regards to, it's a
24 system that was designed to make sure there's not... no
25 equity from day one, this is a system that goes back

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2 to the system of America so, Malcolm X says only a
3 fool will let his enemy teach his children so my
4 question is as you come up with all these suggestions
5 if you're finding that you're getting push back from
6 the DOE on your recommendations what would be your
7 course of action because again if the enemy is in the
8 system of oppression of educating our children you
9 may have the right solution but someone in that room
10 might say nah because I can't figure out how to join
11 the party?

12 MAYA WILEY: Well I think what we're
13 hoping for and certainly what we've seen to date is
14 honesty in the part of the Department of Education on
15 what they tell us when they tell us something, right,
16 meaning where they are, what they're struggling with,
17 where they see challenges, where they see
18 opportunity. Our expectation is that when we hear
19 back from the... from the Chancellor about his views on
20 our recommendations which we will hopefully hear very
21 soon if there is... are recommendations they are not
22 going to accept we're... our request is to tell us why.
23 Another words we're not going to just stop with no
24 and our relationship has been such that we don't
25 really... personally I don't... I don't have any fear

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2 that they won't say why they disagree with a
3 recommendation or why they feel they can't implement
4 it or why they might delay it and I think we will at
5 that point be able to be more reflective on what we
6 would do next, I think it would be premature without
7 hearing from them first to say what we would do if
8 there's disagreement because they may raise something
9 we didn't consider, it may be that they're saying we
10 don't think we can do it now but we think we can do
11 this other recommendation more aggressively if we
12 focused on it, you know it depends... it depends on
13 what they say but I think to your point the, the
14 group has very much been rethinking schools. Another
15 words we haven't been sitting around having
16 discussions about tinkering, we have been having a
17 discussion about the vision exactly as you've heard
18 all day long, the vision for a school system that
19 works for every single one of our children no matter
20 what language they speak, no matter how they learn,
21 no matter where they were born, no matter... no matter
22 where... what part of the city they live in that's our
23 vision and if it doesn't work then our
24 recommendations are going to be to change it.

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2 COUNCIL MEMBER KING: I want to thank you
3 for that and if there's any individuals that are
4 getting in the way we can tell them thank you go on
5 your way, whatever it is, alright, well thank you.

6 SPEAKER JOHNSON: Thank you, Council
7 Member Levine.

8 COUNCIL MEMBER LEVINE: Thank you Mr.
9 Speaker and Mr. Chair and thank you to this panel for
10 your incredible work on this issue and having spoken
11 to several of you individually and of course having
12 read the report a recurring theme and, and you just
13 mentioned it Miss Wiley is, is, is the need to
14 improve every school and that requires resources and
15 you've articulated that and when I talk to parents
16 and, and, and schools in my district that's generally
17 the starting point. We have articulated in our City
18 Council budget response as the Speaker very
19 powerfully reiterated earlier in the hearing, a list
20 of ways the city could through targeted investments
21 have more adequate resourcing in schools in ways that
22 I think you care about from school social workers to
23 renovating bathrooms to after school programs and
24 we're very disappointed that the Mayor's Executive
25 Budget did not include any of those priorities and I

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2 would like to hear from you about your priorities for
3 resources, what we should be fighting for in the
4 budget in the next two months so that we, we deliver
5 for the, the, the young people that you are trying to
6 do right by?

7 HAZEL DUKES: During this process
8 Councilman I think you know very well and I think
9 that Maya Wiley said it, we didn't sit around
10 tinkering we know this is an urgent matter now, we
11 are citizens of this city, we vote in this city, we
12 will have some input individually for what we say to
13 our elected officials and where they stand. We have
14 been talking about equity for... and that means
15 resources so as the citizens of this city, as an
16 advocate, whatever it takes for this to begin we will
17 be working individually not just as a member of this
18 advisory group but individually to see that it is an
19 urgent matter and our children need to be saved now,
20 all children.

21 MAYA WILEY: Ditto but I... what I wanted
22 to point to we obviously when we were developing
23 these recommendations and resources is category of
24 recommendation we didn't... it was one of the areas we
25 also wanted to spend some more time with just because

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2 we weren't looking at it from the perspective of the
3 budget, right, we were looking at it from the
4 perspective of what do all our schools need to have
5 but I will say that what... the things we were very
6 explicit about for instances there really is no
7 student in this school system who should not have the
8 opportunity for example for advanced math and science
9 curriculum based on what school they're in. If you're
10 in a middle school in the Bronx and you're able to
11 have... to, to... you're ready for an advanced math or
12 science course you should be able to get that
13 advanced math or science course so that and, and of
14 course we talked about arts and sports and music as
15 critical components of a high quality education that
16 too many of our school children don't have. I would
17 also point to our, our proposed metrics for
18 accountability where we really think it's important
19 also to make more visible, I mean I think one of the
20 challenges is understanding what the resourcing is
21 and how it is getting allocated by school and
22 program. So, in our metrics our proposal to the
23 department was in addition to tracking race, you know
24 socioeconomic status, multilanguage learners,
25 students with disabilities, you know the, the

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2 admissions we're also tracking whether or not... what
3 the resources are funding are by school so that its
4 being broken down by school, the access to advanced
5 coursework by school, the facilities available, the
6 way the budget breaks down on arts or music spending
7 so we've, we've actually suggested that the
8 accountability metrics make much more visible to
9 parents and students what the resource allocations
10 are by school and by program because it, it's another
11 way of assessing whether there's some adjustments
12 that should be made.

13 COUNCIL MEMBER LEVINE: Mr. Chair we
14 haven't talked much about the legislation in the
15 package as part of this hearing but I just want to
16 flag, you and I both have bills in this package that
17 speak to aligning the accountability and the
18 reporting with our goals and we should make sure to
19 work with the folks up here to make sure that that
20 legislation really aligns with the kind of
21 accountability... [cross-talk]

22 DIANA NORIEGA: So... [cross-talk]

23 COUNCIL MEMBER LEVINE: ...that is being
24 talked about by the panelists.

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2 DIANA NORIEGA: To just add to what Maya
3 said I think the reason we also distinguish by
4 program is because you also have different programs
5 within the same school... [cross-talk]

6 COUNCIL MEMBER LEVINE: Right... [cross-
7 talk]

8 DIANA NORIEGA: ...that have access to
9 different resources so... [cross-talk]

10 COUNCIL MEMBER LEVINE: Or, or
11 segregation within... [cross-talk]

12 DIANA NORIEGA: Right... [cross-talk]

13 COUNCIL MEMBER LEVINE: ...a school
14 building where you... [cross-talk]

15 DIANA NORIEGA: Yes, right... [cross-talk]

16 COUNCIL MEMBER LEVINE: ...it looks diverse
17 if you're watching who walks in the front door but
18 then if you go see who's in the G and T class, who's...
19 [cross-talk]

20 DIANA NORIEGA: Right... [cross-talk]

21 COUNCIL MEMBER LEVINE: ...in the ICT class
22 and who's in the gen-ed class you still have
23 segregated classrooms... [cross-talk]

24 DIANA NORIEGA: Exactly... [cross-talk]

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2 COUNCIL MEMBER LEVINE: ...inside which is
3 heartbreaking on its own so all those things will be
4 helpful and, and I'm certainly committed and I know
5 the, the Chair and the Speaker and the other sponsors
6 would want to work with you to make sure we align up
7 accountability and reporting in ways that accord with
8 those goals.

9 DIANA NORIEGA: Thank you.

10 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: Great, thank you
11 all again very much for your leadership and continued
12 work, work on these critical issues. I'm just, just
13 curious to, to note for the record when the Mayor did
14 roll out his plan for the specialized high schools
15 last year, I guess through a press conference did he...
16 did he consult with this diversity advisory group
17 about his event?

18 MAYA WILEY: I... we learned about the
19 proposal and the rollout on Friday and I believe that
20 it was announced on Sunday.

21 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: Right, I guess the
22 question is did... [cross-talk]

23 MAYA WILEY: No... [cross-talk]

24 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: ...they, they didn't...
25 they... [cross-talk]

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2 MAYA WILEY: That... my, my point is we
3 learned about it... [cross-talk]

4 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: Right... [cross-talk]

5 MAYA WILEY: ...after, after it had been,
6 been crafted.

7 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: Correct and, and,
8 and that speaks volumes in more ways than one because
9 this group was put together really to look at as the
10 Chancellor noted systems and structures throughout
11 the DOE that have been... served as barriers and to not
12 consult with this very group is highly problematic in
13 addition to not consulting with a variety of
14 stakeholders including this Council as well because I
15 note that in the list of recommendations there's not...
16 there's not a mention at this time of the special...
17 the specialized schools, I assume that's because
18 folks were not consulted about that proposal, is
19 that... is that correct?

20 MAYA WILEY: Well it... so, let me back up
21 one step, the, the way we have been approaching
22 recommendations as a group is to look at the system
23 holistically... [cross-talk]

24 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: Right... [cross-talk]

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2 MAYA WILEY: ...so it's just not the way
3 we've been working to just pull out a handful of high
4 schools, we've, we've... in fact we have another report
5 coming out in June that... well we hope in June, knock
6 on wood, but we're working very hard to get to June
7 because we have been trying to be very intentional
8 about taking the time to be making sure we're
9 research based, looking at unintended consequences,
10 understanding the data, getting as much data as we
11 can, having an engaged process with the public that
12 we're looking at screens and gifted and talented
13 programs; kindergarten through 12th grade so we will
14 be making some recommendations we hope around screens
15 and gifted and talented programs very shortly..

16 [cross-talk]

17 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: Right... [cross-talk]

18 MAYA WILEY: ...but system wide. So, it... by
19 definition it may touch on the SHSAT and specialized
20 high schools, but we just have been looking at the
21 system as a whole... [cross-talk]

22 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: Right... [cross-talk]

23 MAYA WILEY: ...and not... and, and it would
24 never have been the way we had talked about it to
25 only talk about the specialized high schools.

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2 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: Right and, and I'll
3 close by saying I met recently with another education
4 hero of mine Diane Ravitch who is a... is a fan of.. I
5 know it might not be popular in the Bloomberg,
6 Bloomberg's world large comprehensive schools because
7 they offer a variety of, of rich programs and
8 opportunities for all of our kids and so I'm just
9 curious to know if, if there's any opinion at this
10 time or in the future time on, on the admissions
11 policies that Merrill experienced when I went to
12 Merrill High School class, class of 2000 where Diane
13 Ravitch talked about the, the ed-op program, the ed-
14 op approach but very... a very academic integration
15 which actually touched upon other forms of
16 integration as well in the school, has that been
17 discussed yet or was that, that something that you're
18 looking at within... [cross-talk]

19 MAYA WILEY: Yes, we've asked for data on
20 ed-op schools and we're trying to get as much data as
21 possible to understand all the different
22 opportunities we have to ensure... [cross-talk]

23 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: Right... [cross-talk]

24 MAYA WILEY: ...really high quality..
25 [cross-talk]

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2 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: ...because I would
3 just note that I experienced both a very diverse
4 student body but also a very diverse rich curriculum
5 which I really appreciated which helped shape my
6 teaching career as well and so I just want to get a
7 shout out to, to Merrill and the ed-op approach as
8 well and I... again I thank... I thank the entire panel,
9 thank you...

10 MATT GONZALES: Can I make one, one...
11 [cross-talk]

12 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: Yes... [cross-talk]

13 MATT GONZALES: ...about the ed-op idea and
14 then... I'm speaking for... [cross-talk]

15 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: Yes... [cross-talk]

16 MATT GONZALES: ...I'm Matt Gonzales from
17 Appleseed not for the SDAG, I think one challenge
18 with like really innovative ideas around things that,
19 that focus on educational option models is that when
20 you have a system particularly in high schools of
21 hierarchies where you have the like... the screen, the
22 highly selective screens, less selective screens, ed-
23 op models... [cross-talk]

24 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: Right... [cross-talk]

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2 MATT GONZALES: ...when you have this kind
3 of system of, of hyper competition the, the kind of
4 theory of action behind the ed-op model I think its
5 undermined in a lot of ways and so... [cross-talk]

6 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: Right... [cross-talk]

7 MATT GONZALES: ...I think part of what...
8 you know the conversations we've been trying to have
9 is like what do we... how do we design and, and really
10 vision a, a system of schools that serve every single
11 person's needs that... but that also ensures that
12 we're, we're capturing and, and, and really engaging
13 the full wealth of diversity that, that this city has
14 to offer, offer and so, you know I think... you know we
15 want to definitely engage and, and thinking through
16 where, where do models like ed-op to fit into a large
17 system of high schools but I think as we... as we look
18 at the, the kind of tiered system of high schools we
19 have, you know the reliance on certain models over
20 others I think is going to continue to kind of
21 create this, this, this over competition that I think
22 undermines the, the vision and values of public
23 education.

24 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: Great points,
25 noted, thank you... thank you so much, thank you to, to

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2 the entire panel, truly, truly appreciate it, thank
3 you. Next... I, I know the, the next panel that we're
4 going to call up I think some folks might require
5 some translation services which, which we will
6 provide. I'd like to Chang Qing Zheng; I think the
7 last name is Zheng, Lu De Quan; Chang Qing Zheng; Xu
8 Hui Ni and... thank you.

9 XIU JIANG: [foreign dialogue]

10 [off mic dialogue]

11 XIU JIANG: Yeah, I, I read a statement
12 for a mom who want... has to go back to... so... [foreign
13 dialogue]

14 TRANSLATOR: My name is Xiu Jiang.

15 XIU JIANG: [foreign dialogue]

16 TRANSLATOR: I'm a full-time mom and I'm
17 from the low-income family. But I don't want my child
18 to be low income anymore. I wish they were doing
19 better than me. I want him to be the person who can
20 help the community. So, I think about that education
21 is the most important to my child to helping other
22 people. I spent all my time to my child. I will tell
23 to be... have... most important thing is to be more time
24 to read. I would like him to focus and concentrate in
25 learning the math. I believed special high school is

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2 very important to him. Specialized high school is not
3 very difficult he just needs to be focused and
4 concentrate and they will get it. If all the kids can
5 study hard the New York education will become better.
6 If all the schools are the best school, it doesn't
7 have a specialized high school in New York City. I
8 really don't understand why we need to be separate to
9 say oh, you're the Asian kids, oh, you're the African
10 American kids, we're all American child, children. We
11 all have American dream. We would like to have the
12 better America. Thank you so much.

13 LU DE QUAN: [foreign dialogue]

14 TRANSLATOR: Hello, I have two children
15 and I have a low-income family... I'm from the low-
16 income family. I'm the first-generation immigrant and
17 my English is not that well if not I don't need the
18 translation service. Right now, I give up working
19 today, I come here, I want to represent myself, the,
20 the specialized high school test is very important to
21 our family. And also, the Edison and the broom and
22 straight forward. I think about that you; you cancel
23 the, the PHSAT it's kind of not fair to our Asian
24 population. I think this is... the Mayor is selfish,
25 and he will give up, he, he gives up himself to

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2 represent his... doesn't do very well in his
3 representative in the education in New York City. The
4 test is kept, the people have testing who they are
5 representing is positive. In our community testing
6 everywhere even though we are now using the cell
7 phone we need the testing is work or not. Another
8 simple thing is United States is fair for everyone,
9 it's good for everybody. It's not a communism
10 country. Your skin color it doesn't equal to your
11 education, your skin color is not equal to you're
12 rich or poor. I think about all of the people who
13 it's based on their... the, the face color... the, the
14 skin color is not fair, its unequal. Its racist,
15 yeah. Right now, the Mayor, the discussion, the point
16 is not they really want the children has the best
17 education. They just care about the percentage of
18 the, the skin color. Think about who is on the other
19 side of American. Though the country is step by step
20 to close to the United States because those country
21 is using a very strong testing score to test by
22 their... the children. It's not using something it's
23 for joyful education. For the future of our America
24 we should be... have the highest standard of the
25 testing. New York Times report, in 2014 the Mayor is

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2 given a budget for 140 million dollars to go to
3 change the 94 different schools in New York City. So,
4 he spent those money and the time, it's only three
5 schools has changed. So, to... education changing is so
6 slow maybe our Mayor is for his future to do
7 something not appropriated. I have two children, I
8 only have a public education source, I do not have
9 discovery program, I do not have a private school
10 source, I think they can through the test to change
11 their life. So, after the change of the Mayor to make
12 the decision, how could your 100 percent sure those
13 top seven percent of the children, of the student
14 they are all equal. How to make a decision of the low
15 income, if they are not the seven... the top of the
16 seven percent and they do not have the one, 187 or
17 discovery program what do they do? The Department of
18 Education is supposed to a maintained priority of the
19 education. It's not just like a, a preschool to give
20 candy to the kids, that's not a game of numbers, life
21 is very difficult and challenging just like on the
22 picture around this room. Only working hard then we
23 can be change to our life. Only tests can change our
24 children's future. Thank you.

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2 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: Council Member Koo
3 do you want to... do you want to just clarify.

4 COUNCIL MEMBER KOO: The, the translation
5 is okay, it's not perfect but it's okay, yeah. I...
6 yeah, yeah, it's, it's not 100 percent but, but its
7 close.

8 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: And, and also if
9 there's testimony that they have as he's reading
10 from, we'd like to receive everything as well and
11 we'll make sure it translated 100 percent correctly..

12 LU DE QUAN: [foreign dialogue]

13 COUNCIL MEMBER KOO: [foreign dialogue]

14 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: Thank you, thank...
15 please continue.

16 CHANG QING ZHENG: [foreign dialogue]

17 TRANSLATOR: My name is Chang Qing Zheng,
18 it's horrible for everyone he got a little bit of
19 numbers today so far. All of his family is, is low
20 income and he also currently is in the low income
21 also. He will try to help his... her parent to get
22 asylum, he loves the chance to continue the
23 educations. He loves the chance and, and the moment
24 he applied for a job and looking for a good job to
25 work in that to help her parents. Right now, I have

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2 three kids in my family, they are two kids in sixth
3 grade, and one is first grade. I'm so grateful that
4 all my kids like to start... like to learn in school.
5 My little child has passed gifted and talented, the,
6 the test however I mean the qualify is limited... not
7 sure so far what his state is. I hope the Department
8 of Education can offer more chance even opportunity
9 to give those child... to give all those children...
10 offer all the kids that can... a kind of chance to
11 learn it. It's not to abolish the SHSAT examination,
12 I know I'm a mother and I know that children... that my
13 child needs more support and help then therefore then
14 my child can be useful in society in helping this
15 country to be a better citizen. Thank you.

16 COUNCIL MEMBER KOO: [foreign dialogue]

17 TRANSLATOR: I, I thank you very much for
18 you... oh, okay...

19 COUNCIL MEMBER KOO: It's okay, you
20 translated it.

21 TRANSLATOR: Oh okay.

22 COUNCIL MEMBER KOO: You translated what
23 I said.

24 TRANSLATOR: Oh, okay, okay. I thank you
25 for today that, that you have come here even though

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2 you have taken a day off from your work and we're
3 very grateful that you have come here to speak.

4 COUNCIL MEMBER KOO: I think it's... I think
5 it's important for mentioning Americans who
6 understand new immigrants to situation because if
7 they're... most of them are, are first generation
8 immigrants, they work hard, they're low income
9 families but they want their children to do better
10 that's why they want to keep the test, right, so, so
11 that their children have a chance to go to school and
12 through education to gain... to get a... go to college
13 and then get better jobs and become outstanding
14 citizens of our community.

15 TRANSLATOR: [foreign dialogue]

16 COUNCIL MEMBER KOO: As you can see all
17 them, they don't have privilege, no privilege..

18 TRANSLATOR: [foreign dialogue]

19 COUNCIL MEMBER KOO: They work hard, they
20 work minimum wage jobs, they work in restaurants,
21 laundries..

22 TRANSLATOR: [foreign dialogue]

23 COUNCIL MEMBER KOO: So, if, if their
24 children can do it, I hope the local brown children
25

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2 can learn from them, you know work hard, study hard,
3 have a goal and you will succeed.

4 TRANSLATOR: [foreign dialogue]

5 COUNCIL MEMBER KOO: Thank you.

6 TRANSLATOR: [foreign dialogue]

7 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: Thank you very much
8 and, and again if there's anything that was not
9 translated correctly prior we want to get, get the
10 accurate accounts so if there's anything, written
11 testimony or any follow up conversation I'd be happy
12 to meet with folks just to make sure we get the right
13 information, thank you, thank you Councilman Koo for,
14 for your leadership and support as well.

15 TRANSLATOR: [foreign dialogue]

16 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: Alright, and also,
17 I just want to just give some historical context here
18 as well because again this is like the former history
19 teacher in me but the Chinese speaking community is
20 not a new community in this country...

21 TRANSLATOR: [foreign dialogue]

22 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: The Chinese
23 actually also helped build the United States of
24 America as well.

25 TRANSLATOR: [foreign dialogue]

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2 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: And you know we
3 heard earlier testimony from students which I
4 appreciated the history on it, the, the famous
5 supreme court case Brown versus Board of Education,
6 one of the cases that Brown overturned was actually a
7 case that was decided in 1927 based out of
8 Mississippi, the case was titled I believe Lum versus
9 Rice where Mississippi was systematically
10 intentionally excluding Chinese students from
11 entering public schools and that was one of the cases
12 that Brown also overturned in addition to Plessy,
13 Plessy versus Ferguson and so I just want to just
14 give context that... to be mindful of, of the
15 sensitivities around this issue that... and also that
16 the Chinese speaking community is not new to America,
17 they are... they're a part of the American experience
18 as well.

19 TRANSLATOR: [foreign dialogue]

20 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: Thank you.

21 TRANSLATOR: [foreign dialogue]

22 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: Next we'll hear
23 from Shino Tanikawa; Adam Lubinsky; Maria Bautista;
24 Vanessa Leung and Toni Smith Thompson.
25

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2 SHINO TANIKAWA: Good afternoon, thank
3 you for having me. My name is Shino Tanikawa, I'm a
4 parent, I've been a public school parent for 20
5 something years now, I'm also a... the Co-Chair of the
6 Education Council Consortium which is a group of
7 community education and citywide councils but I am
8 here to speak as a parent of a... kids in public school
9 so it's my opinions or not of the Education Councils
10 Consortium. I, I have to start with this great sense
11 of travesty caused by the Mayor's proposal from last
12 year, it really has pitted us Asians against my black
13 and brown sisters and brothers and I really, I'm
14 quite offended by the approach he took. So, having
15 conversations on these really thorny topics I think
16 is an important way for us all to heal so to that
17 extent creating a body that actually looks at
18 specialized high schools and admissions and other
19 topics I think is a good way to move forward and in
20 doing so I really urge you to think about the
21 marginalized communities, the communities that do not
22 often come out to these places or speak out in public
23 settings and those are the voices we need to be sure
24 that we listen to. So, that is a process point that
25 I'd like to mention and I was a little bit mystified

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2 by all the comments against the DOE, I'm not the best
3 friends with the DOE but since the new Chancellor
4 arrived last April it has been a very different DOE.
5 I have been working closely with the Chancellor and
6 his management staff, top level staff and he feels
7 very different, they are listening and I do genuinely
8 believe the Chancellor wanting to integrate our
9 schools and, and the segregation that has been the
10 trademark of our public education system ever since
11 he started. So, I trust the DOE's willingness to do
12 the right thing. I think from where I'm standing it
13 is the Mayor who's holding things back, this is
14 Mayoral control, the Mayor is accountable, if things
15 are not happening then we have to hold the Mayor
16 accountable, we have to ask him why things are not
17 moving forward. So, that was something I wanted to
18 mention. The other thing I wanted to mention is that
19 we have existing established parent leadership
20 structures like CPAC and the ECOMMITTEE CLERK and the
21 CECs and citywide community education councils, if we
22 are to move forward with establishing these bodies to
23 look at the school diversity advisory groups or any
24 other task force of that sort I urge the City Council
25 to actually consult with those established parent

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2 leadership organizations to recommend people to sit
3 on the task force as well as in drafting the bills.
4 We have a lot to offer, we are the parents on the
5 ground, we see our kids go to school every day, we
6 know what's happening from the parent's perspective
7 so I appreciate that the parents are included in
8 various task force memberships but in selection of
9 the parents I think it would be a good idea to use
10 the established structures. And I support the
11 reporting bills on the demographics wholeheartedly,
12 we need those reports both for teachers and students.
13 Thank you very much.

14 ADAM LUBINSKY: Thank you Chair Treyger
15 and members of the Committee. My name is Adam
16 Lubinsky, I'm Managing Principal at WXY Studio. WXY
17 Studio recently helped facilitate the community led
18 process in district 15, we also performed research
19 for district one a few years back and have worked
20 with Boston public schools. This work has been
21 inspiring and humbling and it is also partly an
22 outgrowth for... of PhD work that I did about ten years
23 ago so we believe strongly in it and we wanted to
24 share four quick observations and then four thoughts
25 going forward on observations. One, through research

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2 that we've done it has become clear that assignment
3 policies that emphasize choice without standards to
4 create racial and socioeconomic diversity tend to
5 create more dissimilar schools. That was certainly
6 the case in our research in district one. Assignment
7 policies that utilize school screens tend to create
8 more dissimilarity between schools. That really was
9 clear in the work in district 15. Changing assignment
10 policies is clearly a very challenging process. I
11 really want to advocate for community based work
12 including the creation of working groups that have a
13 separate ability to set out their own
14 recommendations, I think that the work that was done
15 in district 15 which had a lot of ground work laid by
16 Council Member Lander's office and advocates really
17 made for a much smoother process. And then finally in
18 terms of observations combining community-based
19 processes that look at integration in combination
20 with inclusion efforts really brings more people into
21 the process. So, very quickly, four considerations
22 moving forward. D15 spurred changes to the
23 integration, the policies and in terms of admissions
24 they need to look at how the, the inclusion
25 recommendations are followed up on much more clearly.

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2 Second, we should all assume that school zones aren't
3 static and so there could be a periodic review of
4 school zones. Third, I think we should look at a
5 logical link between the level of schooling;
6 elementary, middle and high school and their
7 geographic context and how community-based processes
8 are run. Elementary linking with neighborhood level,
9 middle schools linking with districts, high schools
10 linking with citywide. And then finally I want to
11 make a point that planning our schools affects the
12 way our cities are planned. This isn't a one way
13 street where housing sets up segregated schools, they
14 both infect each other and so when we think about
15 rezoning our neighborhoods we also have to think
16 about the nature of our schools and that carries over
17 to how we conduct our environmental review process
18 which right now only looks at numbers of seats but
19 should also look at the effect on, on school
20 integration. Thank you.

21 MARIA BAUTISTA: Hi, good afternoon all,
22 thanks for sticking in... sticking in there, right,
23 these are long days. So, my name is Maria Bautista,
24 I'm the Campaigns Director for the Alliance for
25 Quality Education. We're a statewide education

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2 advocacy organization that intentionally centers
3 racial justice as part of our mission and vision and
4 that's what brings us here today. I specifically want
5 to talk about the, the SHSAT and as a city we should
6 be absolutely ashamed that only seven black students
7 got into Stuyvesant and that only ten percent of our
8 black and brown children got into these specialized
9 high schools even though they represent well over 60
10 percent of our public school demographic. It's even
11 more offensive to know that there are campaigns some
12 of them flush with cash who are pushing to renew the
13 current admissions policies while claiming that they
14 are against segregation and systemic inequality.
15 Let's be clear about this, allowing a system to
16 remain the same guarantees that we will continue to
17 uphold systemic racism. The history of the Hecht
18 Calandra legislation, the, the legislation that
19 enshrines the single test admission policy, is no
20 secret. It reveals the original intent and motive of
21 the legislation was to block the growing calls to
22 diversify these schools at the time. The test has
23 served and continues to serve its original purpose,
24 to keep black and brown children out of these
25 schools. This alone should motivate state

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2 legislators, who hold the power to address the
3 original legislation and the Mayor, who can change
4 admissions requirements at five of the schools to
5 take action. What we're seeing today is again the
6 lack of political will to tackle the racist
7 foundations plaguing our school system and complicity
8 with white supremacy. The specialized high school
9 admissions test is only the tip of the iceberg.
10 Systemic racism feeds off the SHSAT and gifted and
11 talented programs and screened schools and
12 segregation itself as tools to hoard resources. Worst
13 of all, wealth and access to resources are confined
14 to white, affluent communities, while the rest of our
15 school system is under resourced and underfunded. New
16 York State still owes New York City public schools
17 1.4 billion dollars, which Governor Cuomo has refused
18 to fund under the court ordered and mandated campaign
19 for fiscal equity. And this year we were also let
20 down by, by our, our democratic counterparts at the
21 state level. This system ensures that our communities
22 are forced to fight for scraps. Black and brown
23 communities are forced to participate in the sick
24 dance for limited resources. Our Asian brothers and
25 sisters have felt that they've been left out of the

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2 process and feel voiceless and this is all wrong. And
3 so is moving forward with a plan that doesn't
4 fundamentally eliminate the test as the sole basis
5 for entry and that doesn't include multiple measures.
6 Imagine pouring all of this energy and money backing
7 the pro-SHSAT campaign into a campaign to ensure that
8 all of our schools are high quality schools. This is
9 where our struggle lies and this is where we are
10 organizationally, thank you.

11 TONI SMITH THOMPSON: Good afternoon,
12 thank you so much to the Council for holding this
13 hearing, I really appreciate the discourse I've heard
14 here. my name is Toni Smith Thompson, I'm a public-
15 school parent and I'll be speaking in my professional
16 capacity as an organizer for the New York Civil
17 Liberties Union. Overall, we support the Council's
18 efforts to address segregation in New York City
19 schools and support most of the proposed measures
20 here. I will say that many of the proposals have
21 distant timelines and seem to have overlapping
22 purposes and we really ask that you avoid creating
23 redundant oversight bodies and ensure that resources
24 are really put toward concrete and targeted actions.
25 A few things, we support resolution 196 in favor of

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2 changing the admissions criteria for specialized high
3 schools. The reliance on high stakes testing for
4 admissions to these schools and other programs does
5 maintain segregation. It is for this reason that we
6 have concerns about resolution 417 with regard to the
7 creation of additional gifted and talented programs.
8 As has been stated earlier we really must ensure that
9 the admissions systems for these programs will
10 promote diversity and desegregation. And finally, we
11 must remember that the goal of segregation is, is not
12 just to maintain physical separation but to isolate
13 people of color from power, opportunity and
14 democratic participation. We continue to see the
15 impact of this. Consider that 60 percent of white
16 students are clustered and just 271 of the DOE's more
17 than 1,800 schools. These schools are
18 disproportionately better resourced than schools
19 serving students of color in racially isolated
20 schools, that is the purpose of segregation. Physical
21 desegregation alone is insufficient to undo this, we
22 must push for action beyond modifying admissions
23 systems in order to undo institutional, cultural and
24 pedagogical bias and discrimination. Immediately we
25 urge the elimination of high stakes tests as the sole

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2 admissions criteria and urge targeted and sustained
3 funding to ensure we can take bold and consistent
4 action to undo segregation. Thank you.

5 VANESSA LEUNG: Thank you Council Member
6 Treyger, thank you Council Member Koo. My name is
7 Vanessa Leung and I'm the Co-Executive Director of
8 CACF, the Coalition for Asian American Children and
9 Families and I'm speaking today not only as the Co-
10 Executive Director of CACF but also as a long-term
11 school reform advocate and proud public-school parent
12 of three elementary school boys. For over 30 years,
13 CACF has been the nation's only pan Asian children
14 and families' advocacy organization and that leads
15 the fight for improved and equitable policies,
16 systems, funding and services to support those in
17 need. We have a responsibility to the APA community
18 to advocate for educational policies that benefit all
19 APA students including and especially those most
20 marginalized. Our community is incredibly diverse and
21 vast consisting of groups from East Asia, South Asia,
22 Southeast Asia, the Indo-Caribbean and Pacific
23 Islands. And contrary to the stereotype of the model
24 minority, too many APA families and children continue
25 to struggle to succeed. APAs have the highest rate of

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2 poverty among all racial ethnic groups. Over 85
3 percent of the community is foreign born, 42 percent
4 of households speak an... a language are linguistically
5 isolated. We often face language barriers and are the
6 first generation in our families to attend American
7 schools and pursue higher education. CACF exists
8 because it is our vision for all children and
9 families including the APA community in New York City
10 are safe, healthy and able to reach their full
11 potential in life. This includes the 216,000 APA kids
12 in our system, including the over 5,000 kids who took
13 the specialized high school test this year and did
14 not make it. We are constantly fighting the harmful
15 impacts of the model minority myth, which prevents
16 our needs from being recognized and understood but
17 also used as a wedge to continue to pit minority
18 groups against each other and justify the inequitable
19 distribution of resources and opportunities across
20 communities. Today we want to be clear that we stand
21 united with our allies from other communities to
22 fight for educational equity. We must continue to
23 fight for equitable funding and resources that
24 support the... both the academic and social emotional
25 growth of our students. As a parent, I understand

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1
2 that all parents want what is best for their
3 children, however, as parents we need to start
4 thinking what is best for our children does not mean
5 simply wanting what is deemed best by others. As a
6 parent, I do not want my children to just be good
7 test takers, I want my children to love learning, be
8 willing to take risks and challenges, learn from
9 their mistakes and know that one's life is never
10 defined solely by their lowest low or their highest
11 highs. Yet, we've created a system that defines our
12 children's ability for accelerated learning at age
13 four and then again at age 13. We are in a system
14 that makes selecting a middle school and a high
15 school so complicated and stressful for all of our
16 families but especially more so for those struggling
17 with language barriers and or those ensuring that our
18 children's health and learning needs are met. We have
19 the most segregated schools; we have an opportunity
20 now to create opportunities for students in... for
21 accelerated learning but not within the structure we
22 have now. The city's specialized high schools are a
23 severe reflection of the segregation and maintaining
24 the single exam perpetuates that segregation. I, I do
25 believe that it's a disservice to all our students

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2 including our APA students and I just want to end
3 with a quote from a Stuyvesant alum and how... and how
4 the high stakes single test and test prep culture has
5 created an unhealthy environment. Many of us came to
6 conflate not only our potential for success, but our
7 worth, on testing. Students who performed well often
8 developed condescending and judgmental ways of
9 relating to those who did not. It was an environment
10 that encouraged individualism and a harmful belief in
11 bootstrap mentality, making us especially vulnerable
12 to depression and anxiety. We obsessed over grades
13 and proving our intelligence, fearful of being on the
14 wrong end of our classmates' condescension. These
15 dynamics continue to harm students long after high
16 school. Again, I want to thank the City Council as
17 well as folks and look forward to working with
18 anybody who wants to build a strong public-school
19 system.

20 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: Thank you, Council
21 Member any questions? Thank you all very much,
22 appreciate the work, thank you. Next, we're going to
23 call up Tasfia Rahman; Amy Hsin; Anna Lu; Nada
24 Alnagar; Jason Wu; Alana Mohamed.

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2 NADA ALNAGAR: Good afternoon, thank you
3 for holding this hearing regarding New York City
4 school segregation and happy APA heritage month. My
5 name is Nada Alnagar, a youth advocate in the Asian
6 American Student Advocacy Project and a current
7 junior at Brooklyn Technical High School. Below is
8 the experience of Edison Zhu, a youth advocate in the
9 Asian American Student Advocacy Project and a current
10 senior at the Bronx High School of Science who could
11 not be present today. I stand as the only student in
12 the 2015 graduating class of PS/MS3 to attend a
13 specialized high school. Do I as a student who passed
14 the SHSAT by mere points, deserve it? Perhaps,
15 perhaps not. But what I know for sure is that the
16 SHSAT failed to evaluate my closest friends as
17 individuals, but rather as what the black ink shows
18 on paper. One was a salutatorian of the graduating
19 class with a big heart and will of steel. Another was
20 my closest friend, also a salutatorian, who constant,
21 constantly exerts himself to discover what his
22 passion may be. He would not confidently say that it
23 is epidemiology, inspired by his internships and
24 professors and driven by his dream to contribute to
25 the greater good. On the other hand, I attended a

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2 middle school where the majority of students were
3 fully aware of specialized high schools since the
4 sixth grade, leading many to prepare early and
5 ultimately get accepted into specialized high
6 schools. It is unfair that in some parts of the city
7 middle schoolers are set on going to specialized high
8 schools since the sixth grade while in other parts
9 middle schools... middle schoolers find out a month
10 before what a specialized high school is. While many
11 students in specialized high schools are capable, the
12 same level of capability could be found in so many
13 students across New York City if the situation of
14 their school was different. Also, a single test does
15 not show character nor passion. Especially when the
16 test's existence wasn't known to the class until
17 September of eighth grade, just a month before we had
18 to take it and when the test materials were beyond
19 our coursework. A single test cannot contextualize a
20 student. A fair test is based on the parameters that
21 all students are given the same educational
22 opportunities and same quality education. The SHSAT
23 is upheld by neither. We need an education, education
24 system that doesn't discriminate against communities
25 of low income and or minorities who are

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2 systematically zoned in New York City. All students
3 should be held to the same standard of quality of
4 education and of accessibility to opportunities. In
5 the long run, we need a system of evaluation that
6 would see past wealth and race and most definitely
7 numbers. Thank you for your time.

8 ANNA LU: Hi, hi, hi. My name is Anna,
9 Anna Lu and I'm a Youth Leader at Asian... at the Asian
10 American Student Advocacy Project. I'm currently a
11 sophomore at Stuyvesant High School and I'm
12 advocating for that... for SHSAT reform and greater
13 diversity and integration in New York City schools
14 because I see the impact of a segregated system in my
15 classrooms every day. Walking through Stuy's halls, I
16 will inevitably hear the N-word thrown around
17 casually by people... by students who probably don't
18 understand what it is that they're actually saying.
19 Because the city's school system is so segregated,
20 most students at Stuyvesant have been educated in
21 environments where they've never had to learn how to
22 be race, race conscious. Stuy, Stuyvesant is another
23 one of those environments. When I was in middle
24 school and planning to take the SHSAT, I remember one
25 of my friends, who is black, and she was adamant

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2 about going to Stuy because of its prestige. The week
3 after the SHSAT, I asked her how she felt about it
4 and I learned that she decided not to pursue her
5 original plans after she discovered that only one
6 percent of Stuyvesant High School students were
7 black. She wasn't optimistic about her chances of
8 fitting in and even less optimistic about her chances
9 of success. I am at Stuy and she is... and she isn't,
10 not because she didn't work hard enough but because
11 she didn't feel that she would be safe and happy at a
12 school where, so few students looked like her. When
13 people support the SHSAT, they're supporting the
14 archaic belief that education should be exclusive and
15 are actively discouraging students that are not part
16 of the group deemed deserving of a quality education
17 from pursuing it because educational spaces continue
18 to be hostile spaces for them. I also want to add
19 that a lot of parents think of the SHSAT as a way for
20 their children to receive a better, better quality
21 education and to succeed in the future but I think
22 the purpose of these reforms that we're advocating
23 for is to expand access to opportunities so that the
24 quality of education that students receive doesn't

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2 depend on this one test that they're taking and so..
3 yeah, thank you for this opportunity to testify.

4 AMY HSIN: Hello, hi. My name is Amy
5 Hsin, I'm an Assistant Professor of Sociology at the
6 City University of New York. I'm also a member of the
7 Executive Committee of SDAG but today I'm speaking to
8 you as a researcher of education, inequality and
9 immigration, I'm also a mother of two, of, of two
10 students in the, the public system and I am speaking
11 on be... as an... as an Asian American. There are two
12 main problems facing the public schools in New York
13 City. The first being that many K through eight
14 schools are not doing its job in preparing students
15 for high school. And the second is that currently
16 within the system now there are many talented
17 students that are denied access to some of the most
18 elite and well-resourced schools in the city because
19 of a flawed admissions policy and too often the
20 problem, problem one is used as an excuse to not
21 address problem two but there are two separate and
22 equally important issues. I support moving away from
23 a system that uses a single, single test to determine
24 admissions into the specialized schools but also
25 recognize the problem inherent in K through eight

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2 schools is more fundamental because specialized
3 schools only serve a fraction, a tiny fraction of
4 students and the SDAG has offered 73 recommendations
5 to address educational equity and many of these
6 recommendations speak directly to how the city can
7 improve K to eight schools. In this heated debate
8 around the SHSAT I think it's really important that
9 we recognize that only 18 percent of APA students
10 will ever attend a specialized school and the vast
11 majority of Asian American students have the same
12 unaddressed educational needs as many other immigrant
13 students and other students of color. They are
14 attending the same overcrowded, under resourced
15 schools as their Latino and black peers, they have
16 unmet English language support needs and so when we
17 prioritize diversity and inclusive classrooms and
18 when we increase investments and efforts to build
19 educational pipelines in K through eight schools we...
20 that benefits the APA community as well as all
21 communities in New York City.

22 ALANA MOHAMED: Okay, hello, good
23 afternoon, thank you for having me today. My name is
24 Alana Mohamed and I am a Brooklyn Tech Alumna, I'm a
25 first generation Asian American, my father worked two

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2 to three jobs to provide for me while my mother quit
3 her job to help me study all throughout school, I
4 didn't have test prep or any of those resources. But
5 I'd like to say that I would support more
6 transparency into how the SHSAT is constructed since
7 right now there's no research that really supports
8 that this is a reliable measure of student ability. I
9 think we need to keep that in mind as we go forward
10 with these conversations. And as an archivist, I'd
11 really like to highlight some historical context that
12 I feel is missing about the deep-seated fight for
13 desegregation that black people primarily have led in
14 this country. Specifically, in New York City in 1972,
15 hundreds of white parents in Canarsie shut down
16 schools for three days because black students were
17 being bussed in from Brownsville. One protester
18 claimed, we are for a quality education and
19 integration, and this is not a racial issue but a
20 later story quoted one parent as saying that white
21 people were quote, "fearful that their kid's
22 education was going to go down the drain if black
23 students attended these schools". In 1973, these same
24 parents won a redistricting battle to keep black,
25 black students out of Canarsie schools and suggested

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2 schools in Brownsville simply be upgraded. And I
3 would be remiss if I didn't... did not mention Hecht
4 Calandra which was established primarily to
5 circumvent a study into whether schools were
6 culturally biased against black and Puerto Rican
7 students. I understand that now we need to address
8 charges of anti-Asian discrimination but as an Indo-
9 Caribbean alumna I hope that we can keep in mind the
10 diversity of Asian Americans and not just consider
11 the loudest or best funded voices. More research into
12 the ethnic and socioeconomic diversity within our
13 communities is needed to better understand our
14 concerns. And I'd just like to say that for more
15 context black students are more likely to be severely
16 punished for minor infractions in schools, black and
17 Latino students are less likely to be referred to
18 gifted and talented programs despite high test
19 scores, nonblack teachers have lower expectations for
20 their black students, we do not all face the same
21 challenges in education as people of color and so
22 expanded G and T programs and lofty goal of fixing K
23 through eight have merit but cannot alone solve the
24 deep seated segregation we face. Thank you.

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2 JASON WU: Good afternoon, my name is
3 Jason Wu, I am a graduate of Brooklyn Technical High
4 School, class of 2003. I am submitting this testimony
5 in support of admissions reform of the specialized
6 high schools and fixing K through 12 across New York
7 City. This is not an either-or choice; we can do
8 both. I was born and raised in New York City and I am
9 proudly a product of New York City's public-school
10 system. My parents were working class immigrants from
11 China, who came to this country in pursuit of the
12 American dream. I understand what the specialized
13 high schools mean for the Chinese American community,
14 community in New York City, I understand the, the
15 changes to the admissions process brings up
16 complicated feelings of discrimination, bias, and
17 scapegoating. The Department of Education could have
18 rolled this... rolled out the, the proposal and changes
19 better. These are valid criticisms. However, this is
20 not sufficient reason to maintain the status quo.
21 Just as critics of SHSAT reform have repeatedly
22 stated that tweaking admissions to the specialized
23 high schools will not fix K through eight, similarly
24 keeping the status quo will not fix K through 12. It
25 is shortsighted and divisive. There are a couple

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2 myths that I... I'd like to address. One, Asian
3 students are being penalized by admissions reform,
4 this is discrimination and unfair. The current
5 admissions policy already unfairly excludes
6 disproportionately black and Latinx students in New
7 York City. So, the question is who bears the burden
8 of, of the... of the, the... of exclusion from these
9 schools. Number two, SHSAT objectively measures
10 merit. Move, moving away from the SHSAT introduces
11 bias. The issue is the SHSAT is screening out lower
12 income students and underrepresented students of
13 color who already... who also possess merit and
14 potential. The current admissions policy is already
15 biased. Number three, admissions reform will result
16 in, in admitting less qualified students. The notion
17 that students who are admitted through the expanded
18 discovery program or, or holistic admissions criteria
19 will somehow be low performing students is just
20 wrong. Number four, the specialized high schools are
21 special. The specialized high schools, like many
22 public schools have many problems. Admissions reform
23 is the right thing to do but it does not go far
24 enough to address racial and economic inequities in
25 our education system. All of our young people

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2 deserve better than the very limited opportunities
3 that exist at the specialized high schools which are
4 overcrowded, which have limited spots in advanced
5 placement courses. There's a range of issues that
6 exist even at the specialized high schools. Number
7 five, promoting diversity hurts Asian Americans.
8 Diversity benefits all students and it promotes a
9 vibrant learning environment. This benefits all
10 students. To conclude I'd like to also just address
11 the SHSAT lawsuit that is being brought by the
12 Pacific Legal Foundation. I believe that PLF, an
13 organization based in Sacramento, California is
14 attempting to dismantle diversity integration here in
15 New York City under a guise of color-blind civil
16 rights rhetoric. This is the same organization that
17 brought the Supreme Court case Parents Involved in
18 2007 which struck down desegregation and integration
19 efforts in Seattle, Washington and Louisville,
20 Kentucky. I am dismayed to see Asian Americans being
21 employed as a racial wedge by PLF and others. These
22 same groups and its members are also actively
23 attacking voting rights and they have come to our
24 city to promote their anti-civil rights agenda. As a
25 New Yorker and as an Asian American, I say not in my

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2 name. As an advocate for racial and economic justice
3 and as an Asian American, we must resist how our
4 identity and experiences are being used here. We must
5 acknowledge and address the many struggles in Asian
6 American community, including poverty and immigrant
7 rights but attacking measures to promote diversity in
8 our public schools is misguided. We must address
9 educational equity by addressing the root causes and
10 we must do this in solidarity with all marginalized
11 communities and communities of color.

12 TASFIA RAHMAN: Good afternoon, my name
13 is Tasfia Rahman and I'll be speaking as a Policy
14 Coordinator of CACF and as an alum of Brooklyn Tech.
15 As an Asian Bangladeshi American raised in Bed-Stuy
16 in the 90s and 2000s, I grew up in a diverse
17 neighborhood with families and friends of different
18 racial, ethnic and religious backgrounds. I went to
19 an elementary school where even though standardized
20 test scores were low, we learned about the civil
21 rights movement, celebrated annual multicultural
22 potlucks, and wrote fun essays about our cultural
23 heritage. At the same time, faced with limited
24 English proficiency, my parents were unable to
25 navigate the school system and were too embarrassed

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2 to even speak with my teachers let alone advocate for
3 themselves and their children. So, when I scored low
4 on my standardized test, they resorted to tutoring
5 which continued up until the SHSAT. The pressure was
6 intense. I was told that my future depended on a
7 single test and I had one chance to prove my value,
8 my worth. That's what a single high stakes and
9 pressure ridden test does to a child, it creates a
10 sense of impending failure and disappointment at a
11 young and impressionable age. When you allow a single
12 test to be the only standard of intelligence, you
13 breed a toxic learning environment with students
14 cheating, bragging about loss of sleep, and competing
15 with each other even bullying each... with each other
16 based on differences. As a Muslim, I heard many
17 Islamophobic comments being casually thrown around.
18 But I'm also disgusted to look back at how, during
19 college admissions time, I stood by and witnessed
20 many of my white and Asian Pacific American peers
21 accuse our black and Latinx identifying peers of
22 getting into prestigious colleges based solely on
23 their race. Equity and elitism does not go hand in
24 hand. In a society stratified by race, elitism
25 strengthens racism. As elite schools, the specialized

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2 high schools are not an exception to the entrenched
3 racism that plagues the system. In fact, they embody
4 it. The SHSAT, an exam that is rooted in anti-
5 desegregation history, perpetuates segregation both
6 outside and inside these schools. A multiple measure
7 admissions process is the first step in creating more
8 diverse, inclusive school environments that welcome
9 the multitude of backgrounds and experiences of our
10 students and nurture their unique, individual
11 abilities and talents that go side... go outside of
12 being good test takers. Instead of advocating for
13 more specialized high schools or gifted and talented
14 programs that perpetuate elitism, we must advocate
15 for building more and better quality schools in
16 general; we must fight for funds owed to our public
17 schools and better pay for our early childhood
18 educators; we must invest in improving the social and
19 emotional growth of our students, instituting
20 culturally responsive education, and supporting
21 students' mental health needs. Thank you so much for
22 the opportunity to testify.

23 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: Thank you, thank
24 you very much. I just have a... appreciate it, very
25 powerful testimony. Just a quick question of

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2 Professor of Education as I hear it correctly, thank
3 you...

4 [off mic dialogue]

5 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: ...well sociology,
6 thank you, thank you so much for, for your service.
7 Just a quick question because one of the things that...
8 and I appreciated Maya Wiley's... you know her words
9 that she's not fond of the words enrichment but
10 central core services which I, I support and actually
11 I, I appreciate that kind of, I think it's a better
12 terminology... vocabulary to use. The question I have
13 is, as a former teacher I was trained and I was told
14 by my teaching training that we have to differentiate
15 instruction to meet the diverse learning needs of our
16 students, a lot of the staff developments or teacher
17 development training that I received focused on
18 students that were struggling, not at level and how
19 to get them to level, what should instruction look
20 like for example those students who are at or above
21 the... above level who sometimes complain that
22 classrooms might be going too slow or, or not
23 challenging enough, like what should that look like
24 effectively, just curious to hear your thoughts?

25

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2 ALANA MOHAMED: Well I think it depends
3 on what, what grade we're talking about. In, in...
4 [cross-talk]

5 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: Right... [cross-talk]

6 ALANA MOHAMED: ...elementary school, in
7 kindergarten, first grade, third grade we have
8 effective pedagogy that teach... that, that effectively
9 teaches to a wide range of, of ability levels...
10 [cross-talk]

11 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: Right... [cross-talk]

12 ALANA MOHAMED: ...right, so segregating
13 children at the age of five into, into gift... into
14 track, tracking them into, into schools and programs
15 is, is, is very unusual nationally, we don't have
16 programs like that, and we have curriculum that can
17 teach to heterogeneous classrooms. As children get
18 older there's specialization, there's greater
19 differentiation and I think that there... you know we
20 also need to recognize that someone who is
21 particularly excelling in say... in math may not be
22 excelling in civics and vice versa and so sure...
23 [cross-talk]

24 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: I had the vice
25 versa.

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2 ALANA MOHAMED: Yeah, vice versa... [cross-
3 talk]

4 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: Right... [cross-talk]

5 ALANA MOHAMED: ...or... you know and so I
6 think that... and a test isn't going to be the way in
7 which we can capture all the dimensions of giftedness
8 or talent.

9 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: Right...

10 ALANA MOHAMED: And so, I think that we
11 need to, you know strict tracking whether within
12 schools or across schools creates... does not always
13 serve educational purposes.

14 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: Right.

15 ALANA MOHAMED: Yeah...

16 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: Right, because one
17 of the things we've heard consistently from, from
18 folks who are, are advocating for abolishing a sole
19 measure is the use of multiple measures. I'm just
20 curious if... I guess through the advisory groups and
21 other stakeholders to hear what exactly those
22 measures are and making sure that they're also
23 supported by evidence and research, is that right?

24 ALANA MOHAMED: Yeah, I mean I think that
25 no single metric is perfect...

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2 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: Right...

3 ALANA MOHAMED: ...standardized testing has
4 some... is, is valid I think in my opinion as an
5 educational researcher, it does... its predictive of
6 certain things but grades are as well. In fact,
7 grades are the single most... or the single most valid
8 predictor of later college success, right and so if
9 you're going to design a mechanism to identify
10 academic success very narrowly defined what we know
11 is that using multiple valid metrics that uses a
12 combination of tests, standardized tests and grades
13 allow... is more valid, is more predictive of later
14 outcomes than using any one single metric.

15 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: Thank you very
16 informative, thank you, thank you very much for that.
17 Okay, I'm going to call up the, the next panel Wai
18 Wah Chin; Kevork Khrimian, Krimian sorry; Charles
19 Vavruska; Wilton Ceden; Doctor Ivan Khan and Mr.
20 Jonathan Roberts. Folks if it's okay we'll take a
21 quick two minute... two-minute recess, be right back,
22 two minutes.

23 [off mic dialogue]

24 UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE: Sharon Just to the
25 Sergeant at Arm's table.

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2 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: Alright folks, we,
3 we will start again, but before we start again I just
4 want to kind of just first quickly, publicly
5 apologize for incorrectly citing a court case, I said
6 it earlier, Lum versus Rice case, I, I cited it in
7 reference to the problematic decision that came out
8 of the case that doubled down on segregation in our...
9 in our society.. in our country but the background of
10 the case is highly problematic as well so I just want
11 to publicly apologize for incorrectly citing that and
12 I thank you... the educators for flagging that for me
13 as well and with that I, I will now turn to the
14 panel.

15 CHARLES VAVRUSKA: Hi, my name is Charlie
16 Vavruska, I want to thank the Education Committee for
17 giving me this chance to talk. The specialized high
18 school have been beacons of opportunity for
19 generations, they provided opportunities for poor
20 children, for immigrant children, for working class
21 children, for middle class children. They know if
22 they work hard and use their god given ability, they
23 have the opportunity to go to some of the best
24 schools in this country. The SHSAT is objective and
25 merit based, it doesn't ask you what your race is,

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2 where you're from or more importantly who you know.

3 Now we talked to many alum of specialized high
4 schools and many of them create a... said there was a

5 pipeline that got them in before, these were gifted

6 and talented programs, these were advanced classes,

7 these were SP classes, these were honors programs,

8 many of these programs have gone away. That's why I

9 urge the council to vote for Resolution 417-A and

10 expand gifted and talented. But we have to ask

11 ourselves, why does Mayor De Blasio want to get rid

12 of the SHSAT and today Deroy Murdock has exposed a

13 math gate scandal, it's a huge grade fraud scandal

14 which is being pulled on our parents and our children

15 and I request that this Council investigate this

16 scandal because if our parents don't know that

17 they're children aren't learning because they're

18 getting high grades when they're not being taught

19 math that's a huge problem, maybe worse than the lead

20 scandal in our public housing. And why does Mayor De

21 Blasio want to get rid of the SHSAT allows them to

22 cover up that scandal and continue grade fraud and

23 continue scamming our parents and children. So, I

24 tell the Council please keep the SHSAT in place, do

25 not recommend Hecht Calandra to be repealed and

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2 please investigate this mass grade scandal that Mayor
3 De Blasio and Chancellor Carranza are imposing on our
4 children. Thank you.

5 KEVORK KHRIMIAN: Hello, my name is
6 Kevork Khrimian, I'm a... thank you for having me, I'm
7 the parent of two SHSAT students, my first daughter
8 graduated from Stuyvesant two years ago and my other
9 daughter is graduating as we speak from Bronx
10 Science. I've been in and out of, as a volunteer
11 parent in these schools for six years, I'm as
12 appalled by the lack of diversity as everyone else
13 but the SHSAT is not the problem. We had a kid here
14 earlier from selective schools like Townsend Harris,
15 Bard, Beacon, these are not SHSAT schools and the
16 lack of diversity there is not that much different
17 than the SHSAT schools. I think the problem is the
18 breadth of the pipeline, the lack, lack of
19 opportunity for every kid to know about these
20 programs, to know about the G and T program that
21 sieves into SHSAT. My, my wife as a stay at home mom
22 made it a full time job to figure out the G and T
23 program in our district, we were in... we are... we were
24 zoned for PS 49, the test was in PS 87 and the
25 program was in PS 153, sounds simple now, it took

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2 months to figure it out and we were parents who
3 located in New York after our service overseas for
4 the G and T and the SHSAT programs. So, its lack of
5 information not the actual process of getting into
6 these schools. These schools are not that bad, they
7 have produced 12 Nobel prize winners in physics and
8 chemistry, that's like five percent of all Nobel
9 prize winners in chemistry and physics, that's a
10 statistical anomaly, that's like batting 300 for 30
11 years in a row. It is something special and we got to
12 be careful of the unintended consequences of fiddling
13 with this, it may not seem related, but I'm reminded
14 of how we lost Amazon in Queens. That was terrible,
15 that was weak thinking and I've been all over the
16 world serving this country and I know our advisories
17 and they're not looking at this as a democratic
18 process they're looking at this as soft Americans
19 shooting themselves in the foot, they're not
20 undermining their schools that produce Nobel prize
21 winners, if anything they're treating them a lot
22 better than we are. Thank you.

23 [applause]

24 IVAN KHAN: Good afternoon everyone, my
25 name is Doctor Ivan Khan, I'm a proud Bangladeshi New

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2 Yorker and a product of a New York City... sure. Good
3 afternoon everyone, my name is Doctor Ivan Khan, I'm
4 a Bangladeshi New Yorker and a proud product of New
5 York City public schools since the first grade.
6 During the week I do serve as the CEO of Khan's
7 Tutorial, it's a mental education program serving low
8 income families and around... and the outer boroughs;
9 one in Brooklyn, eight in Queens and two in the Bronx
10 that last month nearly helped 40 black and Hispanic
11 students receive offers through our scholarships and
12 partnerships and I'm here to share some of those best
13 practices. This includes four out of seven black
14 children who, who attended Stuyvesant High... who got
15 into Stuyvesant High School, four out of the Hispanic
16 children who got into Stuyvesant, Stuyvesant High
17 School and one of our Hispanic students, Allen Arias
18 wrote a beautiful op-ed in AM New York which you may
19 have read about a partnership that he was a part of.
20 The biggest factor helping these kids was not our
21 SHSAT program Councilman, Council Members, it was
22 their early grade level proficiency. Right now only
23 25 percent of black and brown children are not
24 receiving the proper DOE support to be fully grade
25 level proficient so if you take that one fourth of

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2 passing black and brown kids and you multiply it by
3 the four tenths of the students that are actually
4 sitting to enter the specialized high schools one
5 fourth times four tenths equals one tenth which is
6 ten percent which is exactly the result that we're at
7 right now. My family and I arrived in 1987 as
8 immigrants from Bangladesh so one stop away from the
9 Shea Stadium. My dad was a high school teacher in
10 Sheepshead Bay, Canarsie in Wingate High School and
11 he ended his career as AP in Wadleigh High School.
12 So, growing up in the house I understood the
13 disparities that existed not only as a kid serving
14 the... being a product of a special... of the public-
15 school system but hearing from my dad what was going
16 on in other areas. He realized to move us out and
17 even though we had the IGC and SP programs that were
18 non testing based I commend you Council Member
19 Treyger for recognizing and remembering those
20 teacher-based recommendations for advanced classes
21 for K through eight learners. Over time he did get
22 sick by 2002 while I was a medical student at
23 downstate and after graduating, I chose to leave my
24 promising medical career to serve my community to
25 ensure that objective merit-based entrance criteria

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2 do exist for all immigrant New Yorkers. Right now,
3 we're doing programs in Harlem, STEM and with
4 Brooklyn Tech and we have our own scholarships that
5 we've had for five years. Council Members I've given
6 links to schools in North Brooklyn, entire borough of
7 the Bronx to DOE schools and in Harlem and quite
8 often times my director says the guidance counselors
9 simply don't forward the free links and unfortunately
10 charter school networks are taking up our
11 scholarships even though that's not our intention, we
12 really want public school kids to know and our
13 scholarships still out there so I'm here not to talk
14 about our company but to share how much we value
15 diversity as a community of Bangladesh New Yorkers
16 and even though, you know we... I lost my dad and he
17 got to see a lot of the Bangladeshi community do well
18 for himself its, it's my legacy to ensure the same
19 success happens for black and brown children, blacks
20 and Latinos and I want to ensure that... remind
21 everyone that the SHSAT was validated through an
22 article in the New York Times that was released this
23 past summer so we can't blame the messenger for it,
24 let's fix the pipeline and we can't miss this

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2 opportunity to fix our grade level proficiency once
3 and for all. Thank you so much.

4 [applause]

5 WAI WAH CHIN: Thank you, I'm Wai Wah
6 Chin, the President of the Chinese American Citizens
7 Alliance of greater New York. I want to make this
8 clear, we're for unity not division, we're here for
9 inclusion and there are people who are attributing
10 all sorts of opinions to us that I find really
11 offensive because we never even thought them, we
12 never said them, maybe there are one or two but you'd
13 find that in any group but it is not fair to
14 attribute to an Asian saying that we own these
15 schools, that is not true. No one owns these schools,
16 we pass through them, we learn from them, we grow
17 from them and we thank our teachers for what they
18 give to us. Thank you also Chairman Treyger for some
19 history because I really appreciate it, I have this
20 included here too because three days and 150 years
21 ago in harsh environments, in harsh conditions. The,
22 the Chinese completed ten miles of railroad tracks in
23 12 hours, that is an amazing feat that has not been
24 surpassed to this day even with modern equipment.
25 Days later, the transcontinental railroad was

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2 completed as you said and in those celebrations the
3 Chinese were excluded. To add to that because we
4 worked so well, the Chinese exclusion act was passed
5 and that was the only act ever in America to exclude
6 a people and to deny them civil rights because of
7 their ethnicity. Now today, 150 years later, we are
8 again being excluded because of exemplary
9 performance, because of race. Feel our sense of
10 injustice, no one should be excluded because of race.
11 The SHSAT is a biased academic measure that ignores
12 race, wealth, ethnicity, power or privilege. For
13 years the schools were mostly Jewish, for 20 years
14 the majority of tech was black and Hispanic now the
15 schools are mostly Asian because of the changing
16 city. The schools are great, the meta study
17 commissioned by the DOE validated the test, the test
18 works, what doesn't work is K to eight. The proposed
19 admission changes cover up the failing K to eight, we
20 want to bring back gifted and talented with changes
21 not necessarily with one test but with a number of
22 different entry points in fact as children grow and
23 those were the pipelines to the specialized high
24 schools. We should not exclude one poor group of
25 children for another, they are all our children, we

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2 don't exclude and divide instead let's include and
3 educate. Please oppose Reso 196 and support Reso 417,
4 thank you sir.

5 [applause]

6 JONATHAN ROBERTS: Hi, my name is
7 Jonathan Roberts. You've, you've got a budget coming
8 up, I have... I have three, three programs that I urge
9 the City Council to take all steps within its power
10 to implement the following three programs. The first
11 would be to hire enough additional teachers in
12 underperforming elementary and middle schools in
13 order to reduce class sizes by 25 percent. The second
14 one, recruit 1,000 new math and science teachers for
15 low achieving elementary and middle schools, offer
16 enough compensation because teachers are underpaid to
17 attract and retain highly qualified and talented
18 teachers for, for the... for these schools. Third,
19 restore rigorous math and science enrichment and
20 advancement programs in underserved communities for
21 all students who want this challenge, that's for your
22 budget. So, please these, these are solutions. I'll
23 skip that. Test, test results can be extremely
24 disturbing to see but papering over the diagnosis
25 condemns future generations of black and Latino youth

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2 to lives of unfulfilled potential. So, I urge the
3 City Council to support a massive investment in our
4 crumbling educational infrastructure by reducing
5 class sizes, recruiting math and science experts and
6 restoring enrichment and acceleration programs in
7 underserved communities. Thank you.

8 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: Any questions from
9 my colleagues, I... [cross-talk]

10 [off mic dialogue]

11 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: Is your microphone...

12 COUNCIL MEMBER KOO: I want to thank all
13 of you coming today and spending the whole day here
14 and I concur with all of your suggestions, yeah, I
15 hope the Chairman does that too..

16 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: I, I just want to
17 note, you know we heard a lot today and some members
18 are aggressively pushing, you know for expansion of
19 the G and T programs, pipelines, I think you've heard
20 my concerns with the current definition of G and T
21 that it really... I mean does anyone here believe that
22 it's developmentally appropriate to be testing four-
23 year olds on a single measure?

24 KEVORK KHRIMIAN: Yeah, on the... on the...
25 [cross-talk]

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2 IVAN KHAN: I... [cross-talk]

3 KEVORK KHRIMIAN: ...on the G and T...

4 [cross-talk]

5 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: One, one, one
6 person at a time... [cross-talk]

7 IVAN KHAN: Is it okay if I take this
8 one, I have a six-year-old and a four-year-old and I
9 run a test prep company and I'm not for G and T
10 testing at all. I think it should absolutely be
11 expanded and available in every single school like
12 the way it was when we were kids, we were... we're in
13 our late 30s I think, one year older than you are so
14 back then it was just a... the, the students were just
15 doing well in the class because the teacher saw
16 potential, home support and the student was driven to
17 work hard those kids... we all got somehow placed in
18 one dash two or two dash one and those classes were
19 predominately black and Hispanic it just mattered of
20 where you lived and granted even then it wasn't equal
21 because by the time I got to eastern Queens you saw
22 like the, the inequity in funding so I absolutely do
23 not support G and T testing for a four year old...

24 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: Right, there...
25 because one of the items that... you know that I think

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2 is worth also raising at a hearing like this is that
3 we are in a hyper testing culture and there is an
4 impact that this has on students in more ways than
5 one, there is something also called trauma that's
6 related to, to excessive testing on our... on our kids
7 and I, I would just ask have any of you have seen
8 recent questions on the specialized high school exam
9 and if you can just comment on them very briefly just
10 one person?

11 IVAN KHAN: Well I... you know the, the
12 material that we have that's provided by the
13 handbook, the DOE gives a handbook out and it's
14 supposed to be given to every single sixth and
15 seventh grader, too often my black and Hispanic kids
16 in my centers are finding out about the handbook one
17 month before the exam or one week after the
18 registration deadline and it kills me to see the
19 black and Hispanic children are being kept from these
20 resources. As far as what you're asking as far as the
21 alignment of the material of the exam to the... to the
22 school standards, the exam has been shifted to
23 remove... to change verbal to ELA, to remove scrambled
24 paragraphs and logical reasoning which were never
25 traditionally taught in schools and I support that.

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2 It's been replaced by editing and revisions. At the
3 same time, no 14 year old's future should be
4 determined by one single administration of one exam,
5 I feel there are ways to improve the process to make...
6 open up the access to have every single child
7 available to take it and they, they can choose to opt
8 out, you can have more than one administration of the
9 exam just like the SAT, you don't need to have
10 everything riding on one sit down of one test.
11 Additionally, the subject of criteria in the college
12 admissions stuff totally, totally is not good for new
13 immigrants because our parents don't know how to
14 navigate the system, we don't know how to navigate...
15 we, we don't... we're not brave enough to even face our
16 teachers... our, our kid's teachers at school because
17 of our, you know anxiety around... you know speaking to
18 someone of authority so these are deep rooted trauma
19 aspects that new immigrants have, have dealt with not
20 only, you know south Asians and Asians now but many
21 other ethnic groups before us.

22 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: Right and, and so
23 when folks have said, you know just expand G and T, I
24 think you heard my issues with that and when folks
25 just say well fix K to eight, you know I used to

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2 teach high school history and, and I taught a regents
3 course... [cross-talk]

4 IVAN KHAN: Yeah... [cross-talk]

5 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: ...I would be very
6 upset if the exam had questions on topics that were
7 never covered or, or discussed or taught in my
8 classroom, the fact... even if you completely, you know
9 revolutionized K to eight education there is a
10 fundamental problem with testing in my view, my, my
11 opinion testing students on topics that they've never
12 even discussed in K, K through eight and, and so I, I
13 think we need to think deeper about not just the,
14 the, the... this specialized exam but really testing in
15 general, there's too much of it, quite frankly I'm,
16 I'm a proponent of project based learning. I, I, I
17 support consortium schools that I don't think get
18 enough attention in New York City, need a lot more
19 credit for the work that they're doing with project
20 based learning and supports but I, I, I think that
21 we, we need to have in my opinion constructive
22 dialogue including the specialized schools about how
23 to make improvements that are really for the best
24 needs of our kids and also just to, to say again that
25 meaningful integration... [cross-talk]

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2 IVAN KHAN: Uh-huh... [cross-talk]

3 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: ...meaningful
4 integration does not weaken our schools, it actually
5 will strengthen all of them and I'll, I'll, I'll
6 close it there with this panel and I again thank you
7 for your time.

8 KEVORK KHRIMIAN: You know just for the
9 record I have no problem with testing four year olds
10 because the playing field is more level then, by the
11 time you get to eighth grade I think a lot of the die
12 is already cast and you know there are problems by
13 then so... but when you're dealing with little kids,
14 yeah we can... it, it... the, the separation hasn't
15 occurred as deeply, its fairer time to test.

16 CHARLES VAVRUSKA: What we need is two,
17 two ways of G and T, one the tested and one the non-
18 tested, we have... both have traditionally been very
19 successful in the city, I mean the tested programs
20 work but we also need a top class in every school, an
21 IGC class and we need honors and SP programs in every
22 middle school and plus a tested gifted and talented
23 in each district, if we have both we can do both and
24 there's no reason we can't do both because they both
25 work.

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2

CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: Right, just I'm

3

speaking as, as a... as a former licensed educator...

4

licensed teacher and someone that actually went on to

5

receive his license in, in school administration...

6

[cross-talk]

7

IVAN KHAN: Yeah... [cross-talk]

8

CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: ...I, I don't believe

9

it's appropriate to be testing four-year olds, I

10

don't believe you're testing for intellectual

11

capacity, I think... [cross-talk]

12

CHARLES VAVRUSKA: Well my daughter was

13

tested into a gifted and talented program, 25 kids in

14

kindergarten... [cross-talk]

15

CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: Right... [cross-talk]

16

CHARLES VAVRUSKA: ...three of those kids

17

were accepted to MIT... [cross-talk]

18

CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: Well... [cross-talk]

19

CHARLES VAVRUSKA: ...so I mean the system...

20

it works so why not do what works, if that works keep

21

it and we put the other way that works too, let's

22

have both, we can do both.

23

CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: I, I just

24

respectfully believe that that is only really testing

25

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2 privilege and whether kids are having good or bad
3 days... [cross-talk]

4 IVAN KHAN: Yep... [cross-talk]

5 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: ...at, at four years
6 old I think our students deserve to... [cross-talk]

7 CHARLES VAVRUSKA: But you take 25 kids
8 three get into MIT that was just random then.

9 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: I... no, I, I...
10 [cross-talk]

11 CHARLES VAVRUSKA: I mean it, it works.

12 IVAN KHAN: I, I agree with you Council
13 Member Treyger and I would love to see that money
14 reinvested into smaller class sizes and culturally
15 relevant education and integration from kindergarten
16 at a very, very early age.

17 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: I, I, I appreciate
18 that, and I thank the panel for, for its time.

19 IVAN KHAN: Thank you.

20 [applause]

21 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: Maud Maron; Lynne
22 Andrews; Jenny Veloz; Abraham Velazquez; Liliana
23 Zaragoza; Andrea Ortiz; Juan Cartagena and David
24 Kirkland and Maya Wiley, is Maya still here?

25 [off mic dialogue]

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2 MAUD MARON: Good afternoon, as a public-
3 school parent of four children in district two
4 elementary and middle school the availability of..
5 [cross-talk]

6 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: I'm sorry could you
7 say your name, name for the record.

8 MAUD MARON: Oh, I'm sorry.. [cross-talk]

9 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: ...just so we have..
10 [cross-talk]

11 MAUD MARON: My name is Maud Maron.

12 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: Thank you.

13 MAUD MARON: And as I said as I'm a
14 public-school parent of four children in district two
15 in elementary and middle schools the availability of
16 college preparatory high schools is of great concern
17 to me. I'm also the Vice President of the Community
18 Education Council for district two which is the
19 largest school district of our city and in that
20 capacity I have heard from hundreds of other parents
21 over the last six months about how the Mayor's plan
22 to replace the SHSAT with a seven percent quota
23 system for specialized high school admissions will
24 negatively impact their children and their children's
25 ability to access the education they need and

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2 deserve. All children deserve access to an education
3 that honors their interests, their aptitude and their
4 willingness to work towards their goals. This plan
5 does absolutely nothing to increase the number of
6 seats at STEM focused high schools which over 30,000
7 New York City students attempt to access every year
8 via the SHSAT. In district two, approximately 19
9 percent of students attend specialized high schools
10 each year. A drop to seven percent would drastically
11 reduce the number of seats available to district two
12 students while not creating any other comparable
13 education elsewhere and that's unacceptable. I also
14 ask this Council to consider that specialized high
15 schools are among some of the most gender balanced
16 high schools of New York City's academically
17 accelerated schools; they're 54 to 56 percent boys in
18 a system that's 52 percent boys. The Mayor's plan is
19 a disaster for bright boys who fare much worse under
20 the subjective grading standards used in multiple
21 measures admissions schemes. I ask this Council to
22 support parents in rejecting this flawed proposal and
23 to join us in demanding more specialized high
24 schools. I'd also like to just make a quick point, a
25 comment to something that I heard earlier from Maya

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2 Wiley of the School Diversity Advisory Group, she
3 said many smart things and I commend her for the
4 amount of work that she's done but she said that and
5 I'll quote, our principles and goals are the same
6 referring to the group that was together and she also
7 said and I'll quote, not one minority report was
8 attached to it. I don't agree with her that that is
9 such a great thing because the lack of diversity of
10 thought and opinion in a group creates an echo
11 chamber that doesn't do anything to help bring our
12 polarized communities together and I think that that
13 group and other groups that are working on diversity
14 would do tremendously well to listen to the
15 communities that feel so excluded by these plans
16 because the desire for more diversity in our schools
17 I think is shared by communities that both want to
18 get rid of the SHSAT and that want to keep it and I
19 think its deeply unfortunate that our Chancellor has
20 been setting us up in a situation where the goals for
21 diversity and the goals for excellent schools are
22 seen in contradiction to each other because they
23 shouldn't be. We New Yorkers deserve both, we deserve
24 integrated schools where children of all different
25 colors and all different abilities and all different

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2 ethnicities can go to school together but where we
3 can also have excellent schools that are helping our
4 students prepare at the highest levels that their
5 abilities can help them reach and I... and I think that
6 parents who disagree with our Chancellor should not
7 have to be called racist all the time because it sets
8 up a dialogue in this city that's deeply unfortunate
9 and I think that we need to recognize that our shared
10 goals can be meet... can be met if we listen to each
11 other with a more respectful tone.

12 [applause]

13 LYNNE ANDREWS: In advance I'd like to...

14 [cross-talk]

15 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: Oh, just make sure
16 your microphone is on and... [cross-talk]

17 LYNNE ANDREWS: Sorry...

18 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: It's okay.

19 LYNNE ANDREWS: In advance I'd like to
20 thank you for listening to my statement. My name is
21 Lynne Andrews, I'm a mom of three New York City
22 school children; one in elementary, two in middle.
23 Advanced equity is Chancellor Carranza's message and
24 I agree. We need more diversity in our schools,
25 absolutely. The definition of equity, the quality of

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2 being fair and impartial. If only grades were
3 impartial, unfortunately that is not the case, grades
4 are subjective and also leave kids behind, factual.
5 Grades from seventh grade are just as high stakes.
6 Only one percent of New York City high schools are
7 basing admission on one test, the remaining 99
8 percent use multiple measures. There are children who
9 are much better test takers than their grades
10 reflect, we all learn differently. Some say that
11 SHSAT is not equitable, that is logically given the
12 lack of diversity in the specialized high schools, it
13 is currently the only measure that is transparent and
14 non-biased. All children have or should have access
15 on how to prepare. One day, one test is tough, I
16 agree, I'm a horrible test taker. So, why not allow
17 the children to take it twice and then take their top
18 score? Should a student have to take the MCAT to get...
19 gain entry into med school? Should a law student have
20 to pass the bar to practice law? These are
21 specialized high schools and have a much more
22 rigorous specialized curriculum and should be
23 inclusive. The Chancellor and the Mayor are concerned
24 about the specialized high schools being diverse,
25 race, class. What about children with special needs,

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2 learning disabilities, this bill is integration but
3 doesn't seem inclusive to me? What accommodations
4 will be preserved or eliminated? I asked the question
5 at a CDC meeting last fall about kids with IEPs and
6 how will the new plan include these children, the
7 answer from Mr. Wallack, Josh Wallack, there will be
8 many more seats for kids with IEPs under the new plan
9 and he said he would like to discuss this with me
10 further offline. Fine, I followed up, I emailed Mr.
11 Wallack, Wallack and he quoted this, we do not expect
12 to see a substantial change in number of students
13 with disabilities getting an offer to a specialized
14 high school under this proposal, that's coming from
15 Mr. Wallack. Well 19 percent of New York City's
16 school system is made up of children with special
17 needs, how is one percent in this current specialized
18 high school system okay? I have two boys with
19 dyslexia, and both have IEPs, my oldest son is in
20 eighth grade and is not and will never be in the top
21 seven percent, it gives him zero chance to attend a
22 specialized high school given his stakes. His
23 learning disability does hold him back, he is a... he
24 was allowed to take and prepare for the specialized
25 test this year and he succeeded. Both my sons and

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2 other children with IEPs have been excluded from the
3 conversation regarding specialized high schools and
4 inclusion. This bill has unintended consequences and
5 is not inclusive. I'm asking you to reform, a reform
6 to be done and done right before passing this bill.
7 Thank you.

8 [applause]

9 LYNNE ANDREWS: I also... my cohort had to
10 leave and I'm speaking on behalf of Lab Middle
11 School. I'm here today to represent the children and
12 families of the New York City Lab Middle School. We
13 are a district two screened school located in Chelsea
14 and our student body is 38 percent in economic need.
15 I'm proud to say that 77 percent of this year's
16 eighth grade class received an offer to a specialized
17 high school, that is 142 children out of 186. If the
18 Barron bill, Assembly bill A-10427A passes only 13
19 children will be eligible to attend a specialized
20 high school. I would like to know the DOE's plan for
21 the remaining 129 high functioning lab students that
22 have worked so hard and come from so little. It
23 saddens me to think there has been no thought, no
24 communication on what this does to the lab middle
25 school children and their future. We have asked at

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2 various community forums and no one has an answer.
3 There has been no transparency and no proper data to
4 support this bill. We do not feel it is fair to pass
5 a bill that has serious implications for New York
6 City children of all ethnic and socioeconomic
7 backgrounds. We have written to the Mayor, the
8 Chancellor and Corey Johnson's office requesting
9 meetings to discuss this issue for our children, and
10 we would like to provide ideas on how to improve
11 diversity. We have zero response and we want more
12 diversity too. Thank you.

13 [applause]

14 LILIANA ZARAGOZA: Good afternoon and
15 thank you Speaker Treyger for staying this late in
16 the evening. My name is Liliana Zaragoza and I am
17 Assistant Counsel with the NAACP Legal Defense and
18 Educational Fund. LDF as, as you know was founded in
19 1940 by Thurgood Marshall and LDF is the premier
20 civil rights organization that litigated the very
21 case that we've talked about many times today, Brown
22 versus Board of Education. Yet, today 65 years later
23 LDF continues to fight to ensure racial equity in
24 education for black students and all students to
25 fulfill the promise of desegregating our schools. For

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2 these reasons LDF applauds the important first but
3 modest steps under consideration today to address not
4 only segregation in K through eight but also to push
5 for alternatives to the SHSAT. The urgency of
6 addressing and remedying the stark racial disparities
7 and racial, racial isolation in New York City's
8 public schools is more apparent today than ever
9 before. Indeed, our city and the conversation around
10 the specialized high schools has become a central
11 part of the national conversation regarding the
12 meaning of merit, race, power and the harms of
13 segregation and the discrimination in school
14 admissions at every level of education not just K
15 through 12. By making access to the specialized high
16 schools more equitable, New York has an opportunity
17 to begin to reverse the trends that infect the
18 public-school system overall and that make it one of
19 the most segregated in the country. Recently LDF
20 together with co-counsel moved to intervene on behalf
21 of some students and families and organizations who
22 we heard from earlier today including Teens Take
23 Charge and the Coalition for Asian American Children
24 and Families all of whom were incredibly
25 inspirational and who make clear the needs of the

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2 students who are currently in our schools today. The
3 current admissions policy although it is true that
4 perhaps more could be done than looking simply at
5 grades locks too many academically strong New York
6 City students out of an important pipeline to
7 opportunity, a pipeline that is meant to be a public
8 one and it... not only is this unfair to individual
9 students, it tells a false story about the
10 intelligence and promise of those black, Latinx and
11 underrepresented APA and Indo-Caribbean students who
12 have persevered and pursued excellence despite
13 difficult circumstances in unequal elemental and
14 middle schools. While opposition groups and
15 individuals have argued for addressing the pervasive
16 inequality in New York City's elementary and middle
17 schools in lieu of eliminating the SHSAT these steps
18 are not mutually exclusive. The city can and should
19 do both, address the unacceptable segregation and
20 inequality in the city's public schools while also
21 adopting a plan that isn't tethered only to the
22 SHSAT.

23 ABRAHAM VELAZQUEZ: Good afternoon
24 Councilman Chair. My name is Abraham Velazquez and
25 I'm giving testimony on behalf of Doctor Marsha Jean-

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2 Charles and the Brotherhood/Sister Sol. The
3 Brotherhood/Sister Sol was founded in 1995 and
4 provides comprehensive, holistic and long-term
5 support services to youth who range from the ages of
6 eight to 22. Our theory of change is to provide multi
7 layered support, guidance, education and love to our
8 membership, to teach them to have self-discipline and
9 form order in their lives and to offer opportunities
10 and access so they may develop agency and to better
11 be... to be better agents in their own lives, our young
12 folks need more student support staff in their
13 schools. This hearing, although specifically about
14 diversity and segregation is also about funding and
15 discriminatory practices in our school. It's not lost
16 on the Brotherhood/Sister Sol that the elite schools
17 to which many seek admission are not over policed,
18 under resourced, under invested and without proper
19 teaching and support staff. The majority of the
20 schools our black and Latinx youth are seeking in New
21 York City are lacking these supports but they're not...
22 there's always seeming to be an abundance of funding
23 for school police and divestment from student success
24 is a civil and human rights issue. In 2018, there
25 were 2,800 counselors and 1,200 social workers

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2 serving our 1.1 million students. In 2016, there were
3 on the contrary 5,500 NYPD personnel in NYC public
4 schools, 190 of who were armed. These statistics are
5 deplorable and indicative of our growing inability to
6 support the needs of our young people especially the
7 marginalized. One in ten students in NYC are homeless
8 and 74 percent of our public-school youth are
9 economically disadvantaged. Moreover, 96 percent of
10 teens surveyed indicated that anxiety and depression
11 are of the top problems that they and their peers
12 face. Given these realities, having more NYPD staff
13 than student support staff is a major injustice.

14 Crafting poetry to express their hopes, they write
15 that guidance counselors can help me feel that I'm
16 heard at school, can help students feel that they
17 have bright futures. College counselors can help
18 students finish what they've begun and can let me
19 know asking for help is okay, they can help me get
20 through eight hours of school without bugging out.

21 Before fall 2020, our city and state officials should
22 increase by 20 percent the budget for NYC public
23 schools and earmark this investment to the Department
24 of Education for the hiring of student support staff
25 but not limited to social workers, guidance

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2 counselors, therapists, college counselors, career
3 counselors and title IX coordinators with nurses and
4 more. Our youth members at Brotherhood/Sister Sol are
5 hosting an interactive exhibit about their
6 experiences in schools and then demand for student
7 support staff before the fall. I invite you Council
8 and all present to please see their experiences and
9 their exhibit before it closes on May 12th. Thank
10 you.

11 ANDREA ORTIZ: Good afternoon and thank
12 you Chair Treyger. My name is Andrea Ortiz and I'm
13 here on behalf of the New York Immigration Coalition
14 which serves over 200 immigrant organizations and I'm
15 here to talk to you about the inadequate number of
16 quality seats that serve older, newcomer immigrant
17 students or even allow them to enroll. We should be
18 disturbed by the fact that more than one in four
19 multilingual, multilingual learners drop out of
20 school and only one third graduate on time compared
21 to three quarters of their peers. But much of the
22 debate around segregation has missed the major
23 exclusionary challenge affecting most of our, our
24 most vulnerable learners namely that across the
25 system they're not enough good seats for older MLLs.

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2 Year after year, education collaborative members
3 confront this issue, YABCs and many transfer schools
4 do not serve, serve older MLLs even though
5 traditional night school programs in Queens in
6 Brooklyn were abruptly closed while small schools
7 without E and L supports were propagated under the
8 Bloomberg, Bloomberg tenure. We have been working to
9 train family welcome center staff to adequately
10 support immigrant youth and enrollment staff also
11 recognized the greater problem, problem, there are no
12 schools that they can offer in high need areas with
13 programs that can serve newcomer immigrant students.
14 Moreover, central guidance on what constitutes a
15 quality program for older MLLs and comprehensive,
16 comprehensive lists of MLL specific programs are
17 needed so they can easily identify and offer already
18 available quality spots. Strategically expanding
19 access to quality programs and optimizing the
20 enrollment system is crucial especially as older
21 newcomer youth and particularly SIFE students need
22 robust programs to develop their language and content
23 knowledge in a short amount of time before they age
24 out of schools. without counselors, social workers
25 and dedicated teachers who are culturally responsive

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2 and ready to infuse all subjects with language
3 acquisition these youth... these youth will struggle to
4 graduate. We are grateful that we've been able to
5 work with Mirza Sanchez Medina who oversees the
6 division of MLLs to address how the system
7 effectively excludes and isolates older MLLs and it
8 is our sincere hope that as we are questioning how to
9 dismantle systemic segregation the City Council and
10 the DOE feels the gravity of the problem and works to
11 begin immediately to reduce the MLL dropout rate by
12 creating high quality programs for older MLLs in
13 communities with large immigrant populations
14 prioritizing new programs in Brooklyn and Beacon
15 Queens in areas where schools cannot meaningfully
16 serve our most vulnerable populations. We must ensure
17 youth and families are given meaningful choices to
18 guarantee MLL students are placed at schools equipped
19 to support their success from the very beginning so
20 that they don't lose time that they don't have. Thank
21 you.

22 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: Thank you so much I
23 just want to add one more person to the... to the panel
24 because I know they have to leave, Jeannine Kiely,
25 yes.

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2 JEANNINE KIELY: Hi, good evening..

3 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: Make sure the mic
4 is on.

5 JEANNINE KIELY: Hi, good evening. My
6 name is Jeannine Kiely and I Chair the Schools and
7 Education Committee for Manhattan Community Board
8 two. This January CB two passed a resolution in
9 support of revised proposals to increase diversity at
10 specialized high schools and other public schools and
11 the disclosure of data relating to all proposed
12 changes to the specialized high school admissions, it
13 was passed 37 to zero with two abstentions, so fairly
14 unanimous. I just want to share our recommendations.
15 CB two is deeply concerned about the inadequacy and
16 inequality of education in, in public schools
17 throughout New York City and supports the following;
18 community board two recommends that the Mayor make
19 revisions to the current proposal to change the
20 admission process for specialized high schools
21 because we are unable to support the proposal as it
22 is currently written, but we are eager to see a
23 revised proposal to increase diversity and
24 achievement among the students of New York City. CB
25 two objects to the revised discovery program

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2 requirement that eligible applicants must attend a
3 school with an economic need index of at least 60
4 percent because this will reduce the number of low-
5 income students eligible to participate. And before
6 New York State and New York City change specialized
7 school admissions, CB two requests public access to
8 DOE data that would be relevant to understanding this
9 process and the impact on schools throughout the city
10 and in our community and there's more details in our
11 resolution. CB two also urges the Department of Ed to
12 pursue additional initiatives to increase diversity
13 in New York City public schools such as; starting
14 early and expanding city and state education funding
15 for high poverty schools to provide more resources
16 for 3-K, Pre-K, elementary and middle schools
17 including funding smaller class sizes and expanding
18 special education programs; offering the gifted and
19 talented test to all Pre-K students and expanding G
20 and T programs that start in third grade and
21 reevaluating the 2006t decision to base admissions on
22 a single test that has resulted in the percentage of
23 minority children in these programs to plummet;
24 improving instruction in middle school and increasing
25 opportunities for students of color, of low income,

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2 income and of immigrant parents; and providing
3 effective outreach for parents... for students applying
4 to high school beyond distributing a 400 page high
5 school directory and requiring attendance at high
6 school fairs, including language accessible and
7 culturally appropriate outreach to help ensure that
8 families are not only informed about their high
9 school options but they also feel secure about the
10 options that best meet the needs of their children
11 given that there are more than 700 public high school
12 programs in New York City and 70 in district two
13 alone. Thank you.

14 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: Thank, thank you
15 very much and I just want to note earlier that we
16 heard calls for additional social workers and
17 counselors in schools which we wholeheartedly support
18 and endorse, it's a part of our budget response and
19 just to note that the DOE currently has a freeze on
20 hiring social workers and counselors and that impacts
21 our immigrant communities as well because they can't
22 hire bilingual...

23 ANDREA ORTIZ: We should get bilinguals
24 social workers... [cross-talk]

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2 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: Of... we, we
3 desperately need bilingual counselors and social
4 workers in our school system, so I truly appreciate..
5 [cross-talk]

6 ANDREA ORTIZ: And across all the
7 languages.

8 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: Of... 100 percent,
9 100 percent and I truly appreciate your advocacy on
10 that point, thank the panel very much, thank you.
11 Okay, Bei Ziang; Mark Crain; Phil Wong; Dao Yin;
12 Chien Kwok and Yiatin Chu. You may begin whoever.

13 YIATIN CHU: Sure. Good evening
14 Councilman. I guess the benefit of speaking so late
15 is I get to hear the entire full day, thank you very
16 much. My name is Yaitin Chu, I'm a mother of two kids
17 in New York City public schools. I come as a parent
18 and hopeful that we'll do the right things for our
19 students. In recent years every March, public
20 officials and the media complain about the lack of
21 black students that receive offers to specialized
22 high schools. What once used to be majority black and
23 Latino specialized high schools are now admitting
24 just ten percent. The fix proposed by some people is
25 to get rid of the admissions test, the SHSAT. They

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2 deliberately ignore the inconvenient fact that the
3 test hasn't changed, it does not discriminate on the
4 color of your skin. What has changed is the quality
5 of our education and the academic support systems
6 especially in the critical formative years namely K
7 through eight. That is where we must focus our
8 efforts if we want to reverse the decline of our
9 public schools. For the past decade and certainly for
10 the past six years under Mayor De Blasio state test
11 results have remained at a mere 25 percent passing
12 rate for black and Latino students. But there's
13 little outrage compared to that of the specialized
14 high schools because De Blasio administration and the
15 SHSAT opponents have scapegoated the test. They cry,
16 kill the test as if that will magically fix the
17 terrible education that our kids are getting in K to
18 eight. New Yorkers come from very diverse backgrounds
19 and we're all... we all hope that our children will
20 have a chance at a better life, more opportunities
21 and for that we need to give them a good education,
22 one that inspires them and challenges them to reach
23 their fullest potential. Although diversity has great
24 advantages, it also means that our education system
25 must meet the needs of a diverse student body so that

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2 the students can thrive. The Mayor's plan for
3 specialized high schools will benefit 2,000 kids at
4 the expense of 2,000 other kids on the basis of skin
5 color. He claims that this is equity, but all 4,000
6 students are economically disadvantaged, so the
7 Mayor's plan is in reality racist and discriminatory.
8 Worst still he is willfully neglecting the other
9 55,000 kids in eighth grade who will continue to fail
10 at unacceptably high rates. I say his plan is leave
11 almost every child behind. True equity is giving all
12 kids a good education in all of our 1,800 schools. I
13 ask you we should keep SHSAT and work hard to develop
14 a school system that will span past a political term
15 and leave everlasting benefit, thank you.

16 [applause]

17 YIATIN CHU: So, since I've listened to
18 the entire day would you give me two minutes to speak
19 to some other issues that I've heard that I think is
20 also related to this and you know we're all advocates
21 of diversity, I want equal opportunity for all the
22 students of New York City, I come from district one
23 where we have implemented a priority system for those
24 identified as disadvantaged, that's a great thing.
25 However, I implore you to look at the maybe unplanned

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2 and unforeseen consequences of what that has done to
3 my school, we're 60 percent prior... priority is given
4 to 60 percent of the seats of students that meet low
5 income, temporary housing and I think learning
6 disability which is great however if those families
7 don't choose our school and we don't fill those seats
8 we cannot notify other parents who do not meet those
9 criteria and want to come to our school until the
10 fall of the year that their students are starting. No
11 parent of a five-year-old wants to move them a month
12 after, you know getting them acclimated to their
13 kindergarten and having to transfer. Now this is what
14 has happened in two years, funding was pulled from
15 our school because we weren't up to capacity and it's
16 going to continue to go that way until, you know the
17 school fails so I'd like to understand like what is
18 the solve for that because, you know we're getting...
19 we're already an under resourced school and by
20 implementing these aspirational and great
21 diversification policies it has hurt our schools
22 tremendously and we know that if we don't have the
23 correct resources for kids that are already in the
24 school we're looking at a downward vicious cycle that
25 will start for this school to not be performing at

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2 par and therefore other parents won't choose to come
3 to the school so I want you to take that into
4 consideration when you think about all of these
5 policies is not just how it looks the first year but
6 what it looks like two years, three years, and five
7 years and ten years down the road. Thank you very
8 much.

9 DAO YIN: Good afternoon. My name is Dao
10 Yin, I'm the Executive VP of Queens residents and
11 Voters Coalition. Thank you, Council Members, thank
12 you everybody for listening. I think many of you are
13 tired it's so long. I just have a quick question, you
14 know team USA was not qualified for the 2018 FIFA
15 soccer game, how do we do that? Can we make FIFA
16 change the rules to use the hands because I know
17 Americans are very good at it the ball games that use
18 hands, and talking about the NFL, is the National
19 Football League unless you can allocate seven percent
20 of a group of people say Asian American to the
21 National Football League, unless you can allocate
22 seven percent to the Hollywood a list we will not
23 agree with your plan to change the particular SHSAT,
24 that's the reasoning. Good politics not just a chance
25 something from right to the left, good politics are

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2 improved, continuous improvements. I'm... I don't know
3 even everybody here is curious about the Chancellor's
4 salary, New York City pays big, big salary to hire
5 the Chancellor, the Mayor appointed the Chancellor
6 for what? It's not for fighting with one, two
7 communities here, he came from Houston, we want you
8 to improve the largest public school systems in the
9 nation, as I say the largest, if I say New York City
10 public school system is the greatest I think a few
11 people would agree with me that's why a lot of a
12 problem, a lot of a problems here, we need to
13 fundamentally improve the public system not be
14 focused on the particular SHSAT, that's why the true
15 specialist state SHSAT is only a small portion of the
16 game. That's all from me, thank you.

17 PHIL WONG: Okay, okay. Thank you, thank
18 you Councilman Treyger and the... this Committee for
19 allowing me to speak again it is relatively late, but
20 I would like to spend about ten, 15 seconds to
21 correct a, a statement made by Assemblyman Charles
22 Barron previously earlier today..

23 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: Just state your
24 name for the record?
25

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2 PHIL WONG: Oh, I'm sorry, my name is
3 Phil Wong, P h i l w o n g, I am a member of the CEC
4 24 and I'm speaking here representing my school
5 district and I will spend 15 seconds... Assemblyman
6 Charles Barron said today that specialized high
7 schools are open for all, that is not true because
8 under his bill it was passed by Albany, only the top
9 seven percent of each school will be even considered
10 for a specialized high school. So, if we have
11 students at 92.7 percentile or 90, 92 and a half
12 percentile they won't even be considered or be given
13 an offer for the specialized high school so that... no,
14 not under his bill, not... it, it's not open to
15 everybody. In the... in the present system, the Hecht
16 Calandra system anybody can go to the guidance office
17 and say I would like to sign up and take the test no
18 matter what your grade is, that system is open to
19 all. So, let, let... I want to correct that, thanks.
20 Alright, let me begin, I wanted to start by quoting
21 Bronx Borough President Ruben Diaz, he made an
22 editorial a few days ago at a Caribbean News website,
23 he said he's a proud graduate of PS 13 of the South
24 Bronx district... school district seven and he
25 graduated with honors, a G and T program back then

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2 it's called SP and its... he found it very disturbing
3 to see that today there are zero... not only his school
4 no longer has a G and T program the entire school
5 district has no G and T program, you can just google
6 Ruben Diaz G and T program. So, we, we have to ask at
7 least... this was never brought up, what happened, why
8 were they eliminated and where was the outrage? Just
9 like, we didn't hear a thing, we maybe heard
10 crickets, alright. Now compared to my district,
11 district 24 right now we are five schools with, with
12 a very strong curriculum G and T programs with five
13 schools and unsurprisingly these five schools produce
14 a lot of students, they feed a lot of students to the
15 specialized high schools, right. So, this is.. this is
16 inequality as I see it, right, this is what the
17 Chancellor previously.. he said implicit bias, what
18 happened? Right, it is complicated, it is.. it is
19 complicated why entire districts got.. their funding
20 got removed or the program got cancelled but this is
21 the reason why we have schools that produces better
22 students and feeds to the specialized high schools
23 and we have schools that just unprepared. One more
24 example, okay, in my own district, district 24, we
25 have schools that offer zero regents' classes to

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2 eighth graders. Three blocks away we have another
3 school that offers one regents class and then we have
4 the better schools that offer three regents classes
5 so obviously they produce very different quality
6 students, right and, and this is a problem we need to
7 address, we need to address because the top seven
8 percent of this school over here is not the same as
9 the seven percent of the school down there and
10 obviously they're not going to do well in these
11 specialized high schools, they simply did not
12 prepare, okay. I'll, I'll end.. I'll end this right
13 here because my, my time is up but this is a
14 fundamental issue and we each get to restore this
15 pipeline, restore the G and T program with, with
16 whatever admissions standard.. requirements to be
17 determined but we need the G and T programs to
18 produce the best students to feed the best schools.
19 Thank you.

20 [applause]

21 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: I, I, I thank the
22 panel just, you know I'm, I'm careful with the
23 language about referring to certain schools as the
24 best schools or not. As I mentioned in my opening
25 testimony this hearing is much more than just eight

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2 or nine schools in New York City and I again repeat
3 one more time that I'm a proud graduate of Merrill
4 High School, a non-specialized school but gave me a
5 very special education and gifted education in many
6 ways. I just want to note again that I read the, the
7 Borough President's comments and also the Brooklyn
8 Borough President's comments as well about G and T. G
9 and T in its current form is highly problematic. The
10 issue is more than just whether it's a pipeline or
11 not, the pipeline is problematic, whether... you know
12 I, I think we've heard over and over from research
13 and, and, and advocates and, and it's accurate that
14 these types of programs actually exacerbate
15 segregation in our system and its really important to
16 note that again, look, look at how they... they're
17 determined at such a young age, at, at four years old
18 which means that we're, we're, we're hearing cases of
19 two year olds, two year olds already going through
20 test prep, two year olds. When I met with Diane
21 Ravitch who is... who is an education historian and I,
22 I think a champion on education she, she noted for
23 example that in, in Finland I think in schools that
24 children go to school at seven years old because they
25 want children to be children below seven and it just...

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2 I, I... we have to look at this, I, I agree
3 systemically as a whole, specialized schools are, are
4 a part of this conversation but I will respectfully
5 push back on language that folks refer to these
6 schools as the best schools because I think we have
7 to make sure that, that every neighborhood and every
8 school in our neighborhoods have great programs,
9 great opportunities and so I, I think we just have to
10 be very mindful of, of that language. I completely
11 appreciate... you know I, I, I heard comments today
12 about we, we support diversity but we're going to
13 have to get to concrete proposals on how do we
14 actually make that happen and that includes our
15 entire school system, yes, K to eight but also our
16 high schools as well and I think one of the, the
17 mistakes that the Mayor made initially was, you know
18 you can't start a conversation on exclusion by
19 excluding folks and I think that has been well noted
20 but moving forward we, we do need to have an
21 inclusive dialogue, constructive dialogue and that's
22 why I do appreciate, you know Maya Wiley's comments
23 and, and her leadership and others on, on the
24 diversity advisory group that I think is more
25 reflective of, of the city of New York about the

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2

important work of looking at this systemically across

3

the board so I, I thank you for, for your time and I

4

again appreciate that... [cross-talk]

5

YIATIN CHU: Can I speak to that

6

regarding... [cross-talk]

7

CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: Just very briefly

8

because I want to hear from the next... [cross-talk]

9

YIATIN CHU: Sure... [cross-talk]

10

CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: Yeah, yeah... [cross-

11

talk]

12

YIATIN CHU: Sure, yeah, I think the word

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G and T... I mean as a parent the, the school

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selections and the school quality is so poor that

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I'm not really looking at G and T as really gifted

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and talented, I'm just looking at those schools and

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those programs as well performing schools that's

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really it, I mean I think it's really sad that our

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schools are so bad that we're really looking for

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these little nuggets of G and T to get just a good

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education in New York. So, I agree, I mean look, if

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all schools were great we don't need them, we don't

23

but it's going to take many years, possibly decades

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for us to lift up our schools and if you dismantle or

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change the G and T you're basically telling parents

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2 that want a good education for their kids is to look
3 elsewhere because we're not providing in New York
4 City.

5 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: Right and, and...
6 what I'm saying is that and I mentioned this earlier
7 in my remarks about what I experienced in Merrill as,
8 as far as opportunities for advanced courses based on
9 certain strengths and interests that I had in history
10 for example where I seemed to excel better than in
11 math, in math I needed more support, my classes were
12 very diverse, my experience was very diverse, Merrill
13 is very diverse and I benefited from that entire
14 experience, education is, is an experience, it's,
15 it's... I was trained to make sure our students go to
16 become, you know independent critical thinkers and,
17 and so I experienced... I benefited from, from that
18 Merrill High School experience. The, the current
19 format of G and T from my professional standpoint and
20 I certainly I appreciate, you know your opinion, is
21 that testing kids at four does not really test them
22 on intellectual capacity so to speak, to me it's just
23 about matters of circumstance at times or, or
24 privilege or whether kids are having good or bad
25 days, I mean a lot of research goes behind this about

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2 the different factors so I think that to simply say
3 that we just need, need more G and T, I, I think that
4 is not a part of the whole picture. Also this
5 conversation around bad schools, great schools, I
6 want to note for the record that I actually supported
7 the, the approach behind the renewal school program
8 to invest in public schools, it's never a mistake to
9 invest in a public school, the issue was the
10 perception of these school which I... in many cases is
11 false. We have to fight back against that, I have a
12 high school in my district, John Dewey High School
13 that was really... took a lot of hits during the, the
14 Bloomberg Administration, fed bad negative
15 perceptions and enrollment dropped because there were
16 perceptions it was not safe or not doing well, well I
17 want to tell you that, you know with... there was a
18 change in leadership and some investments in
19 resources and support at least from this Council
20 Member, John Dewey is turning around and... but we had
21 to fight back against these false perceptions that
22 the school was bad, it's not a bad school... [cross-
23 talk]

24 YIATIN CHU: It takes many years to do
25 that.

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2 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: Right, right so I,
3 I just... I just want to just say that to me are there
4 schools that are under resourced, yes, what does that
5 mean as far as opportunities, everything because when
6 I visit schools as Chair of this Committee in
7 different neighborhoods when I'm asking school
8 leaders what could you do with additional resources
9 let me tell you what, what they shared with me; they,
10 they want to... they want to hire a full time school
11 psychologist or hire a, a, a full time social worker
12 not share them, that makes a difference because when
13 I have visited schools that were under the, the
14 renewal school program... one of the schools I visited
15 in Queens for example when they hired a bilingual
16 social worker that made a tremendous difference in
17 terms of addressing their socio emotional needs which
18 led to better academic outcomes and the school is now
19 off the renewal school list and now it's called a
20 Rise school which is whole other name issue which,
21 which the Mayor created but... so, my point is that
22 when, when we address socio emotional needs, needs of
23 all of our kids there are better academic outcomes
24 but you can't do that if, if the schools are under
25 resourced and the last thing I'll say is that in the

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specialized schools one of the things I, I, I speak
with former... current student I, I've actually visited
Brooklyn Tech recently to visit, I met with students
there and I met with staff as well, one of the
things... feedback that, that I received was that it's
also... some of these schools have greater access to
more resources and more than other schools and that's
also a problem because all of our schools should be
equipped with resources and opportunities for, for
all of our children. So, I, I just want to just... as...
I just want to note that as I... as I asked the
Chancellor to also sometimes just... you know and
actually he agrees that all of our schools should be
good schools and not just... just be mindful of the
language that there are schools... when folks say that
there are schools that are the best and schools that
are not the best because we, we create this, this,
this feeling and, and this real perception amongst
our students that they're somehow inferior and
they're not, they have been deprived of certain
opportunities that have held them back and so I, I, I
don't see schools as bad, I see them as under
resourced, as under staffed, as marginalized, as not
providing the types of opportunities and services

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2 that our children are entitled to and, and if they
3 did have those opportunities all of our children
4 should be... should be excelling so... [cross-talk]

5 YIATIN CHU: Well since you brought up
6 the renewal program and it was resourced and the RAND
7 research that came out a few weeks ago show that
8 there was very little impact in terms of improving
9 academic outcomes so I'm not really sure putting more
10 funding in some of these schools really led to
11 anything that is beneficial... [cross-talk]

12 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: Well... [cross-talk]

13 YIATIN CHU: ...I mean aside from
14 attendance marginally going up there was no other
15 positive academic outcome that came out of nearly 800
16 million dollars of our New York City taxpayer
17 dollars...

18 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: Right, respectfully
19 these schools did not struggle overnight and no one's
20 going to fix things overnight either. The Mayor's and
21 the Chancellor's own documents stated that you need
22 at least five years for the program to really full...
23 to fully take shape but the state ordered reviews
24 after one year or two years and the Mayor began to
25 hold them accountable after three... [cross-talk]

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2 YIATIN CHU: Uh-huh... [cross-talk]

3 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: ...which I thought
4 was also not fair, secondly, when you don't explain
5 to the public adequately and sufficiently what a
6 renewal school means you create a perception problem
7 and what we saw in many of those schools... I visited a
8 number of them, what we saw in those schools is that
9 many communities were confused about what that meant
10 and staff in those schools began to look for
11 transfers out because they thought that school might
12 close. Educators want to work in a stable
13 environment, they're afraid of losing their jobs so
14 they look... they... so quality educators transferred out
15 of them, parents began to get, get concerned about
16 sending their kids to a renewal school because they
17 felt it was a label and enrollment dropped in some of
18 them so some of them... some of these issues that you
19 highlighted became self, self-fulfilling prophecies..
20 [cross-talk]

21 YIATIN CHU: Yes... [cross-talk]

22 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: ...because the Mayor
23 without any mandate chose to label them in such a
24 way, I support community school approaches where we
25 provide wrap around services, integrated services to,

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2 to meet... address socio emotional needs so it... to me
3 it was not just the issue of... we need actually quite
4 frankly more resources in our schools but I'll end
5 there mindful of time, I thank the panel and I'll
6 call the next panel... [cross-talk]

7 YIATIN CHU: Thank you...

8 DAO YIN: Thank you...

9 PHIL WONG: Thank you.

10 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: Okay, next we'll
11 hear from Reverend Adriene Thorne; Luke Davenport;
12 Anna Minsky; Ramin Raihan; Brandy Carbone; Sharmilee
13 Ramudit and Yu Fang Chen. Sure, can folks just state
14 their name very quickly just to make sure that we
15 called every, everybody up and we have everyone here?

16 ADRIENE THORNE: Yes, I'm Reverend
17 Adriene Thorne.

18 LUKE DAVENPORT: Luke Davenport.

19 ANNA LU MINSKY: Anna Minsky.

20 SHARMILEE RAMUDIT: Sharmilee Ramudit.

21 YI FANG CHEN: Yi Fan Chen.

22 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: We'll call up two
23 more, I think its Debbie Meyer.

24 SHARMILEE RAMUDIT: Debbie Meyer.
25

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2 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: Oh, Debbie Meyer,
3 forgive me, Debbie Meyer and David Rem. I guess
4 whenever folks are ready, they may begin.

5 ADRIENE THORNE: Good afternoon or good
6 evening I guess now. Hi, my name is Reverend Adriene
7 Thorne and I'm a member of the Alliance for School
8 Integration and Desegregation. I'm here to speak to
9 the resolution to create a school diversity monitor
10 in the human rights commission. As we all know New
11 York City has the most segregated schools in our
12 nation yet research shows that... research over many
13 years shows that all of our children benefit from
14 integration, they benefit cognitively, academically
15 and socially but the public school that my child
16 attends has the highest percentage of white students
17 in our district so white students make up 15 percent
18 of the DOE but the school that we attend has 60
19 percent white students and in first grade my daughter
20 was the only African American girl in her... in her
21 classroom. So, I think it's time for our school
22 system here in New York to catch up with what the
23 research says which is that all of our students
24 regardless of socioeconomic background and race
25 benefit from an integrated school system. I think

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2 that we are failing our children in the 21st century
3 and that we need to have the help of this school
4 diversity monitor to close this opportunity gap. I
5 think it is not true that we have as you have
6 suggested an achievement gap but rather an
7 opportunity gap that things are not available to all
8 of our children equitably and equity for me, it's
9 been defined in a few ways today but it means that
10 children have what they need and all of our children
11 don't have the same needs and we want the City
12 Council to create this position to make sure that our
13 children have what they need. I think that the annual
14 reports that this position would offer us that would
15 track the DOE's efforts to combat segregation and to
16 implement integration are, are very important for our
17 city and so just to close I would ask the Council to
18 support this resolution, to support the DOE in doing
19 this work and most importantly to support our
20 students who are counting on us and I think have been
21 waiting for us for far too long. Thank you.

22 LUKE DAVENPORT: Good evening and hello
23 everyone, thank you very much for the opportunity to
24 testify Chairman Treyger. My name is Luke Davenport,
25 in my day job I analyze data for schools but I'm here

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2 in my capacity as a member of New York City Alliance
3 for School Integration and Desegregation as a few of
4 us are as well. I'll just say a little bit about our
5 coalition, we're all volunteers but we have over
6 1,000 members and we are educators, activists,
7 parents, students, a broad... very diverse cross
8 section of New York who all believe that we need to,
9 you know actively desegregate and really and truly
10 integrate our schools in New York City public
11 schools. we wholeheartedly embrace the five Rs
12 framework for real integration that the students of
13 Integrate NYC have put forward and you'll see those
14 reflected in our policy document which I'd encourage
15 you to take a look at. We released a policy platform
16 in June 2018 which calls for a number of things one
17 of which is eliminating G and T programs, another is
18 eliminating middle school screens among other things.
19 So, I want to talk a little bit about... because it... at
20 ASID we talk a lot about historical patterns, you
21 know what has happened in the past, right, this isn't
22 the, the first chapter of this history and what I
23 think you see over and over again is whenever the
24 city attempts to remedy segregation in the schools
25 there's a backlash, right and often that backlash

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2 isn't framed as far as, you know opposing
3 integration, no one is saying we don't want
4 integrated schools. I haven't heard anyone say that
5 and yet we have to recognize that regardless of the
6 intent the... what has actually happened has been
7 continuing to entrench segregation further over many,
8 many decades and many, many years and I fear deeply
9 that that's what we're doing now if we pursue further
10 G and T programs, if we open more specialized
11 schools, do more things, if we keep the SHSAT, we're
12 doing more things that separate students, smaller
13 minorities of students from the larger group. So, I
14 think there's a lot that could be said about the
15 problems with the SHSAT that don't even actually have
16 to do with diversity frankly. If you... if you weren't
17 considering that you would still have a good reason
18 to eliminate the SHSAT, I mean we've, we've heard a
19 lot of evidence about the fact that grades are more
20 predictive of future success than tests, right,
21 that's pretty well established in the... in the
22 research, you have other aspects, you know test prep
23 and things like that. But I think there's kind of a
24 larger question and then I'll... and I'll wrap up,
25 which is why are we okay with having these separated

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2 educational experiences to begin with, right, where
3 is the evidence that supports them as being good
4 education practice and in fact, if you look at... there
5 were two 2014 studies around the specialized high
6 schools that indicated that students who go to
7 specialized high schools did no better in terms of
8 getting into, through and the prestige of the
9 colleges that they went to than similar scoring peers
10 who went to other high schools, right. You talked a
11 lot about, you know what is a good school, right,
12 what... getting around that language. I think that's a
13 really important point that research is also true for
14 G and T, it's very... there's very... the research... the
15 record on whether or not G and T programs are
16 effective is nixed at best, right? So, I think we
17 need to ask ourselves why are we constantly wanting
18 to create separate schools by ability when the
19 evidence doesn't support that approach necessarily.
20 So, I'll leave it there, thank you for your time and
21 thank you for listening.

22 ANNA MINSKY: Hi, my name is Anna Minsky,
23 I'm a New York City school parent, I'm also a member
24 of my Community Education Council in district five in
25 Harlem and a member of the Alliance for School

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2 Integration and Desegregation with other on the panel
3 and in my professional life I provide technical
4 assistance on the use of data to guide systemic and
5 structural reforms at Metis Associates. So, I guess I
6 want... it was important to me to come today because as
7 a parent I wanted to call on the DOE and I guess
8 they're not here anymore to take drastic action
9 thoughtfully and inclusively so that our schools can
10 become truly integrated citing the five Rs framework
11 for the children who are in the system right now and
12 I wanted to use this opportunity to call on the Mayor
13 and the Chancellor to take immediate actions on the
14 recommendations of the school diversity advisory
15 group to eliminate middle school admissions screening
16 and to eliminate all gifted and talented programs.
17 But for the rest of my testimony I would like to
18 focus on the two bills that relate to data
19 transparency. On the community... as... on my experience
20 on the Community Education Council I can speak to the
21 importance of having this school level demographic
22 data and the expansion under the bills would be
23 excellent. I can talk about the ways that we use it
24 but I'm sensitive to time. There are basic... the bill
25 is thoughtful about gifted and talented programs and

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2 how they've been used as a mechanism of school
3 segregation and it calls that out specifically but
4 there are a couple of other structures that I think
5 are important that aren't handled right now in the
6 bill and my written testimony talks about it more
7 specifically; those are the use of self-contained
8 special education classrooms, the use of admissions
9 screening as people have talked about and the use of
10 school transfers which in our district where
11 charters, charter school, school students outnumber
12 public school students become a very important
13 mechanism for school segregation and I just finally
14 wanted to conclude since nobody else mentioned this
15 by raising the question of whether.. as we think about
16 designing these bills about data we're comfortable
17 with asking every student to identify with a
18 bureaucratic racial classification system that has
19 been used primarily to promote racism and might not
20 this be an opportunity to nudge the DOE to allow each
21 parent and student to identify their own racial and
22 ethnic identity on their own terms.

23 SHARMILEE RAMUDIT: Hi, hi, my name is
24 Sharmilee Ramudit, I am a member of the Community
25 Education Council for District three and also a

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2 member of ASID and many other groups that were
3 represented in this room or I pop into their meetings
4 and so many of those other voices in this room spoke
5 so very eloquently about why we gathered here today
6 and precisely to the data that... and experiences that
7 have motivated the... this hearing today. So, what I
8 would like to speak to is the lens that I've
9 developed and how I developed that lens in my work
10 and how it informs my, my view on CEC three. So,
11 what... and that position is rooted in social justice
12 centered leadership and policy making and how I got
13 there is first by doing historical research. At New
14 York's Historical Society there's a rich trough of
15 resources that document the political and civic
16 opposition to desegregation. Dr. Matthew Delmont
17 explains in his book, why busing failed; race, media
18 and the national resistance to school desegregation
19 that New Yorkers were just as biased as residents of
20 Alabama and Mississippi and many New York politicians
21 and citizens did not want the Brown decision to come
22 to their schools. So, you only have to travel uptown
23 a few more stops to our neighbors in district five to
24 Harlem Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture
25 for access to all the other scholarship, knowledge

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2 and historical insight into the root causes of this
3 resistance as explained by Ella Baker, Langston
4 Hughes and other luminaries of the Harlem
5 Renaissance. So, historically policy makers only know
6 how to segregate. If you would like to now do the
7 opposite, my recommendation is to seek out the, the
8 scholarship that describes what social justice
9 centered leadership and policy making looks like. Dr.
10 Sonya Douglass Horsford, Janelle T. Scott and Gary
11 Andersen wrote a book, *The Politics of Education
12 Policy in an Era of Inequality*, that has really
13 informed my thinking in how I make my decisions on
14 CEC three. So, you have taken the, the momentous step
15 in legitimizing 65 years of education advocacy in the
16 New York City educational landscape. Moving forward,
17 if you would like to do more than just restate the
18 obvious, it is time to partner with all of the
19 research institutions, the CBOs, the other
20 stakeholders who are here in this room that have been
21 advocating for these very oversight commissions, task
22 forces, demographic data metrics, and advisory groups
23 to help correct the segregation that is so starkly
24 visible in our New York City schools. And I have an
25 example of what we've done in district three, I can

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2 put on my official CEC three hat and speak to that
3 which is just that the Community Education Council
4 for district three has made diversity and equity one
5 of our primary goals, goals as a Council and CEC
6 three represents the upper west, west side and parts
7 of Harlem in a resolution that the high school
8 committee passed in which we passed unanimously, we
9 speak to segregation and inequities that exist across
10 the entire system and recommendations that should
11 look at all of that. We speak to the scare city
12 mindset which is a barrier to addressing this and we
13 speak to the complexity of the admissions process
14 which needs a comprehensive... and we speak to then a
15 comprehensive plan where integration and
16 diversification efforts by the city have not included
17 proposals to improve programming and leadership at
18 underperforming elementary and middle schools or a
19 discussion of the future low performing high schools
20 that are not adequately preparing students for
21 college and careers. So, efforts to expand and
22 replicate successful school models need to be a large
23 part of the equity efforts. So, we continue to work
24 on these efforts in CEC three and we look forward to
25 partnering with you in a comprehensive approach.

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2 YI FANG CHEN: Good evening everybody, my
3 name is Yi Fang Chen, I'm a parent of two kids ages
4 six and three, yes, my older son who's age six is in
5 G and T. So, let me tell you a little bit about
6 myself, so I came to this country at age 16 as a new
7 immigrant, I didn't speak English, I went to New
8 Utrecht High School also in Brooklyn. So, while New
9 Utrecht High School it's a great school, I mean it
10 provided me with all I needed to succeed so
11 eventually I went to Stanford to obtain my PhD degree
12 in statistics and I have been a data scientist since
13 then. So, I have over ten years of experience
14 analyzing data, building statistical models so I do
15 want to point out that people say, you know like G
16 and T or specialized high school test doesn't measure
17 the performance, it does and as you can see in the
18 recent, the New York Times Metis study, right,
19 there's plenty of very strong, very significant
20 statistical significance for the correlation between
21 the performance of students at the SHSAT and the
22 performance when, when they achieve that high school
23 in the first few years and also when I was a high
24 school student at New Utrecht I did a study myself
25 taking advanced placement statistical class back then

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2 and I do find that there's also association between
3 the students like grade point average and also their
4 performance on the AP exams. So, that's that, so I'm
5 for tests and also because I'm working in this field
6 of data science so I know the need for the artificial
7 intelligence for the big.. they have for all the
8 modern technologies that's why like I totally
9 disagree when people say, you know like we should get
10 rid of testing, if you get rid of testing what could
11 be used as a universal standard to, you know justify
12 if students are performing or not. It's like you have
13 to take an exam to become a doctor, right? You have
14 to take a job interview and so all the technical
15 questions to see if you are a fit for the right
16 position, right? And also, secondly, I think it's
17 really about parental choice when it comes to school,
18 right? So, I... like also... as a... as a parent of two
19 toddlers age three and six, my son has taken the
20 first-grade examination before, I think it's about...
21 I'm a full time working mom, mom and also my husband
22 is a full time... full time working dad so every, every
23 night we get home after seven p.m. we have to sit
24 down with him and make sure that he learns like what
25 he's learning at school today and then like we ask

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2 him about like what's going on at the school
3 throughout the day, right? So, it's really about
4 parental engagement, involvement, right? The parents
5 have to be there for the kids, right, in order to
6 make sure they are learning, they are learning how to
7 read, write and do the basic math so... and also like...
8 as a New Yorkers myself, Utrecht, so we love
9 diversity, that's the reason that I chose to come
10 back to this great city after spending five years at
11 Stanford doing my PhD. So, like have you guys ever
12 considered the economic impacts of like all this, you
13 know getting rid of testing, getting rid of
14 everything? We want... like we all want best school for
15 all and best education for all our kids, right, I
16 think the economic impact aside could fill it, right?
17 I recently read on the newspaper from the previous,
18 previous year like survey there are like 40,000 New
19 Yorkers moving, right, leaving the city so if all
20 this like change of... taking, taking down like
21 whatever like really elite schools and then taking
22 away this and that, right, it will resolve in a a lot
23 middle income families who wants best for their kids
24 to leave the city eventually. So, I do want like all
25 of us to also take this into consideration and

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2 lastly, like I said the specialized high school is
3 only one percent of the school, right, what about the
4 99 percent, what are you going to do with that, why
5 don't we fix all the schools, why don't we fix the
6 failing K through eights. I think Chancellor Carranza
7 is framing the diversity for the failing of the
8 schools, the causation is wrong. As a statistician I
9 could... I could confidently say it's the other way
10 around, if you fix the failing... you... if you fix the
11 failing K through eights schools then all the diversity
12 problems will be gone, all the schools are great why
13 are we sitting here having this fight over good
14 school, bad school, you know? That's it, thank you.

15 [applause]

16 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: Thank you, oh,
17 there's one more, I'm sorry, yes.

18 DEBBIE MEYER: So, thank you because
19 that's a perfect Segway to what I'm going to talk
20 about. I got to talk before, I've been on the very
21 first panel, so this is different for me. I want to
22 talk about not the 40 percent of kids that might get
23 to take the SHSATs or the GE... or the G and T test but
24 the 60 percent of kids that never learned how to read
25 in our schools. Segregation is a symptom of a lot of

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2 issues and literacy is a very important one. We know
3 our low literacy rates mirror the rest of the nation
4 and we know struggling readers do not lack intellect
5 or curiosity and it affects people of all races and
6 backgrounds. I always thought public education was a
7 bootstrap and a silver bullet, I thought public
8 education is what states provide for citizens to
9 foster civic participation and create a workforce to
10 drive our economy not fill its prisons. I thought
11 elementary school teachers could teach reading and
12 then I found myself a parent of a struggling reader
13 and everything I knew about public education was
14 challenged. My son is dyslexic like about 20 percent
15 of the population and like most struggling readers he
16 requires instruction based on the research behind
17 reading, most schools don't deliver that even though
18 dyslexia represents 80 percent of all learning
19 disabilities. A resourceful parent can find and pay
20 for tutors with appropriate skills or psychologists
21 able to evaluate their kid or an attorney who can sue
22 the school district for a free and appropriate
23 education, that doesn't just cost money, it costs
24 time during the day when most people are working and
25 they can't make calls, they can't go to appointments.

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2 A savings account is really important too, my family
3 spent 90,000 dollars to try to keep my kid in public
4 school. The taxpayers of New York have generously put
5 in 150,000 dollars to help him become a reader and
6 writer in a specialized dyslexia school. So, if
7 education were a bootstrap or a silver bullet, we
8 wouldn't allow so many kids, nearly 60 percent to
9 flail and not learn to read. Struggling readers get
10 disconnected from school, they never reach their
11 potential, they become statistics rather than
12 leaders, they have mental health issues some as early
13 as grade school without really resourceful parents
14 they are likely to become homeless, victims of child
15 abuse, domestic violence or part of the criminal
16 justice system. So, I wonder are schools led and
17 staffed entirely by people who as kids found school
18 easy, did Title IX strip the teaching colleges of the
19 best and the brightest students, why are schools
20 teaching science but not respecting the science of
21 reading, why are university departments so siloed
22 from one another and not informing the doctors, the
23 social workers or the educators? The neuroscience is
24 clear, dyslexic students and other struggling readers
25 succeed when schools address the five pillars of

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2 literacy. No science backs up the incredibly
3 ubiquitous balanced literacy or whole language
4 instruction. We should really end the reading wars.
5 What else can we do, we can screen early for the risk
6 of dyslexia, pediatricians could do this along with
7 hearing and vision tests and family history, Pre-K
8 and kindergarten teachers could do this, social
9 workers could help families find resources early,
10 help parents understand what to demand at school,
11 teaching colleges can play a much bigger role in
12 ensuring all children learn to read, they can prepare
13 teachers to understand reading. Schools are strict so
14 you shouldn't have to retrain their teachers. So, if
15 these struggling readers learn to read before they
16 need to read... learn to read we'll reap the benefits
17 in many ways; more room in special education for kids
18 that really need it, fewer kids will act out with
19 frustration, classrooms will be easier to manage and
20 the demand for great middle schools and high schools
21 will increase. My formerly illiterate fourth grader
22 left a Harlem public school, he had also qualified
23 for G and T and is now an eighth grader at the
24 Windward school for children with dyslexia, he will
25 attend Bard Early College next year. With the science

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2 of reading in place education can become the
3 proverbial bootstrap. So, I'd like to propose some
4 kind of reporting bill on literacy, what are teaching
5 colleges preparing their teachers with and what are
6 the schools using to teach these kids? I took my
7 family... we went Washington, we went to the African
8 American Museum and the Holocaust Museum, so we were
9 having a lot of discussions about Jim Crow and the
10 southern strategy. When we walked up to a poster in
11 the Holocaust Museum that explained that the Nazis
12 made a policy not to teach polish people to read and
13 my son just looked at me, he's like do we have the
14 same policy? Thank you.

15 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: I want to thank you
16 because... I want to note also that there have been
17 systematic efforts to even... for the... in the DOE not
18 to even mention or specify dyslexia on an IEP which
19 adds to the systematic deprivation of services to, to
20 our students and I truly appreciate your very
21 passionate and meaningful advocacy on this issue and
22 I do appreciate that and just to... I want to just note
23 that we have a New Utrecht high school graduate here
24 and New Utrecht High School is where I taught and
25 I'm, I'm very proud to have taught at New Utrecht and

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2 other very good diverse school and I appreciate that
3 you refer to it as, as a great school because there
4 are great schools beyond, you know just specialized
5 schools and I, I would just say respectfully that
6 when, when folks say fix, fix the other schools or..
7 but if we keep referring to them as failing or bad
8 that adds to the problem because in my opinion and I
9 appreciate that you want to Stanford and, and, and
10 have data and actually... is that when you... when folks
11 refer to schools as bad or look at data right on the
12 school report cards webpage and look up certain
13 things I would encourage families to also look up
14 what is their fair students funding allocation. Fair
15 student funding allocation is how much they receive
16 in city dollars to support the students in that
17 school, the majority of our schools, overwhelming
18 majority of our schools are not receiving all that
19 they're entitled to and so I refer to some schools as
20 quite frankly under resourced, under staffed and they
21 cannot effectively meet the needs of all their kids.
22 I agree that if all schools were properly resourced
23 and staffed and equipped with the opportunities which
24 all our kids deserve that will be the ultimate game
25 changer that... there's, there's no question about it.

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2 It's just I try to be mindful that as we've heard
3 from some advocates, some folks come up with, with
4 recommendations on how to integrate, diversify school
5 to refer back to some of the prior testimony some of
6 those efforts have actually exacerbated segregation
7 in our schools and segregation has many forms;
8 racial, academic, based on students, students with
9 special needs also as I mentioned before there are
10 schools in district 75 which really do not get talked
11 a lot about that serve already a very... you know
12 special needs pop... student population that are not
13 even fully accessible to them and so this has taken...
14 this is a... this is a greater conversation... broader
15 conversation. I am just asking folks as a former
16 teacher and as someone who cares deeply about public
17 schools to be mindful of our language, to be mindful
18 that schools need help, need resources, need support
19 and if folks keep referring to schools as failing,
20 bad, terrible this, that perception becomes then
21 someone's reality and they will not enroll their
22 child in their neighborhood school or this... rather
23 than work together to improve all of our schools and
24 to demand public officials to get... to, to deliver the
25 resources. We heard before from a state legislator

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2 who noted on the record that New York State
3 government just passed the budget that technically
4 was not an increase for our schools and some of the
5 same folks then complain about inequities and
6 problems in our school system, you can't have it both
7 ways, you must... we must get resources into our
8 schools particularly in those schools in communities
9 that have been historically marginalized and short
10 changed in many different ways so again I thank
11 everyone here for your very powerful, passionate
12 testimony and your work, thank you, thank you so
13 much. Folks because we are... the translator has to
14 leave very, very soon if, if you don't mind if we
15 just have a panel just to come up very briefly just
16 to speak with the translator so we don't use the
17 translation services if that's okay, thank you, I, I
18 truly do, do appreciate that. So, the translator
19 will, will say the names.

20 TRANSLATOR: [calls up next panel]

21 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: Okay, whenever
22 folks are ready please.

23 JIN ZHONG: [foreign dialogue]

24 TRANSLATOR: Ladies and gentlemen good
25 evening. My name is Jin Zhong, I'm a first generation

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2 of an immigrant. I was the mother of two kids in the
3 public school, the two kids are all born in America.
4 Today I come in to participate at this hearing as
5 feeling the Mayor's proposal, he feels like the Mayor
6 was racial discrimination to the Asian people. The
7 Mayor is... tried to cover his, his failure in the
8 education. He tried to raise up the conflict about
9 inside the races, this is not sufficing. The Mayor
10 should be... pay attention to the P-K eight and the...
11 and so on. He should be... pay attention to the basic
12 education. The test is, is reflective of people's
13 ability same as the nursing, lawyer, attorney test is
14 the same thing. I support the test, thank you.

15 LIMA: [foreign dialogue]

16 TRANSLATOR: My name is Lima... proposal of
17 Mayor tried to cancel the SHSAT I feel it's not
18 understandable. Everybody should have a fair chance
19 to learn. If kids, they try their best they should
20 get a better chance to study. The Mayor says he wants
21 to give everybody a chance to learn better so why
22 they didn't teach the kids to learn hard. She tried
23 to change the policy to, to do the... to write a letter
24 to people in order that to qualify and also study
25 harder to better school, you should give them a fair

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2 way to study, it's not to, to change the policy to
3 let them achieve that. That's all I want to say,
4 thank you.

5 QING LIN: Good evening Councilman Mark
6 Treyger and... I... before I start my statement, I want
7 to ask you something, it's the... for me... I listened to
8 the... to this hearing almost the whole day since this
9 morning and I find that it's a... it looks like you
10 Council Members you just choose them speakers first
11 and then the real public hearing is very late and
12 after most of the Council Members left after all the
13 media left and like I found out that Miss Shino
14 Tanikawa she came in later afternoon and she has a
15 chance to speak and then she left and I want to know
16 so what kind of privilege she has and I don't
17 understand and I don't accept that this kind of
18 public hearing. Anyway, so why I'm here today because
19 the Mayor De Blasio failed our schools. He wasted 773
20 million on the renewal program and just now you said
21 that he needed five years and he get in the office
22 for five years and he didn't improve the schools, he
23 closed some schools and I, I don't think that's a, a
24 correct and that's a... not a... you still give all the
25 senators, they still give him the Mayoral control

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2 that's unacceptable and the Chancellor Carranza he
3 came in New York for one year and he did nothing just
4 to dividing our communities and why now City Council
5 and the Chancellor and the... you all want to eliminate
6 the SHSAT, to test its to trying to help the Mayor De
7 Blasio to cover his failure and as you said before
8 that there are very few AP classes in some high
9 schools and many... and many schools are under
10 resourced of proper means and as our... as us parents
11 we know that and we have no choice we don't want our
12 kids to go to that school, that's the reality, you
13 have to face the reality, reality otherwise you
14 cannot fix the problem, you cannot avoid it to say
15 some words and to do some... avoid something and that's
16 not the way to fix the problem and the reality is the
17 SHSAT works, it works for that case and all the
18 students, the eight schools they benefit from this
19 test so why don't you, I'm not talking to you but all
20 the... because I prepared this for all the Council
21 Members and everyone in education so why don't you
22 fix K through eight first, why don't you improve all
23 the schools first before you touch SHSAT, why you put
24 the cart before the horse so at the last I want to...
25 you... all the Council Members ask yourself, you want

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2 to do something right for all the kids or you want to
3 do something wrong but you can reach some political
4 goal, thank you.

5 [applause]

6 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: I, I, I appreciate
7 your, your passion on this issue it's just the, the
8 students that testified at the start of the hearing
9 they're a part of a... an advocacy network of kids,
10 students that have been working on many of these
11 issues for students for, for a number, number of
12 years and to, you know credit their hard work and to
13 validate their hard work we certainly wanted to hear
14 from student voices and I'll note for you that prior
15 to this hearing I, I visited Brooklyn Tech, I met
16 with Brooklyn Tech students, a variety of students
17 not just one group, I met with the staff, I have
18 heard and I, I will say that it, it, it pains me how
19 divisive many of these things... issues have become and
20 it does have an impact on those student bodies as
21 well. I appreciate your phrasing that schools are
22 under resourced and understaffed because that's a big
23 part of, of this issue here as well and the question
24 becomes why are certain communities more under
25 resourced than others and with regard to the

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2 specialized schools I acknowledge, fully understand
3 that many of the students that are attending the
4 specialized schools themselves don't come from
5 economic privilege, you know many... I, I understand
6 that but what, what I'm hearing is that the schools
7 themselves have access to, to more resources than
8 other, other schools and that becomes an issue again
9 in terms of equity and fairness across our system.
10 So, I, I... I'm sorry that folks are waiting, this has
11 been a long hearing and these, these subjects will
12 require... will have a lot of passionate testimony but
13 I, I have been working hard to hear all voices and I
14 want to hear all voices, I will continue to hear
15 from, from all voices because we need to have
16 everyone here at the table so I, I, I appreciate you
17 being here and waiting, waiting this long. Very, very
18 quickly last word and then we have to... we have to
19 move on.

20 QING LIN: Yeah, just one minute so thank
21 you very much, as I said I'm not talking to you I'm...
22 [cross-talk]

23 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: Yes, I appreciate
24 it... [cross-talk]

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2 QING LIN: ...just the... I'm talking to all
3 the Council Members... [cross-talk]

4 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: I appreciate that.

5 QING LIN: ...and I appreciate that you
6 stay so late with us... [cross-talk]

7 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: Yes... [cross-talk]

8 QING LIN: ...and I really thank you for
9 your hard work... [cross-talk]

10 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: Thank you... [cross-
11 talk]

12 QING LIN: ...but talking about the
13 specialized high school I want to say that government
14 spends much less money on those, those kids. For
15 example, I heard it from Stuyvesant High School...
16 [cross-talk]

17 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: Right... [cross-talk]

18 QING LIN: ...the kid... the money spent on
19 them is much less than the regular high school, why
20 because they get money from the alumni and they get
21 help from other... the graduate... the students
22 graduated...

23 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: Right... [cross-talk]

24 QING LIN: ...because they want to come
25 back to help their school.

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2 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: Well also... [cross-
3 talk]

4 QING LIN: ...yeah...

5 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: Just to note for
6 the record because we do have to move on, the city
7 itself, the city government itself adds a... adds a
8 weight on the funding formula to those specialized
9 schools so that's in addition to whatever they might
10 receive from their alumni associations, the, the fair
11 student funding formula adds actually a weight for
12 specialized schools so they get more money because
13 they're specialized schools which adds to this...
14 concerns about equity but I, I do... we have... we have
15 to move on so I again appreciate your time here, here
16 this evening. Thank you so much. Okay, thank you all
17 for... again for your patience, long, long day Jerome
18 Kramer; Chris Giordano; George Lee and... we have a rep
19 here from the New York Chung Ying Chinese community,
20 yes please. So, we'll call two, two more folks up...
21 oh, I'm sorry. Okay, Sharon Just and Greg Waltman.

22 [off mic dialogue]

23 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: And, and I do
24 appreciate this panel's patience because we wanted to
25 make sure that the folks had translation services

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2 before the translator had to leave so I do appreciate
3 your, your patience and whenever folks are ready you
4 may, may begin.

5 SHARON JUST: My name is Sharon Just, I
6 dropped off two letters earlier, I don't know if the
7 Committee... or if you all... have all received those.
8 I'm a PA Co-President, parent of three. I'm speaking
9 with respect today to crunching done for the D three
10 high school committee. This data combines the DOE
11 demographics, high school directory, test results,
12 city, state ranking for all New York high schools.
13 The SHSAT schools enrolled 15,500 students so I
14 grouped them to compare against 19... the top 19
15 nonspecialized schools which enroll the same number
16 of kids, around 16,000 but which use mixed admission
17 methods not just the SHSAT. If you look purely on an
18 academic basis not discussing demographics, the SHSAT
19 schools significantly outperformed those top 19 non
20 specialized which are schools such as Beacon, Elanor
21 Roosevelt, Townsend; the SHSAT schools are 108... 180
22 points higher on SAT score, their SA... ACT scores are
23 four to five points higher, regents scores seven or
24 more points higher than the top non specialized
25 schools with the same groups of 16,000 students. The

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2 question on the SHSAT thus should not be framed as
3 get rid of the SHSAT because other things predict
4 performance better, that's just not correct based on
5 the data. The question is whether the SHSAT misses
6 students who could otherwise have performed at those
7 levels. The status quo is not acceptable because it
8 has led to the SHSAT schools under enrolling black
9 and Hispanic children but neither is the DOE proposal
10 which would take a child at the 99th percentile who's
11 third in their homeroom of 30 children and leave them
12 in a school with no options to reach the specialized
13 high school looking at what is available in the rest
14 of the schools. In the rest of the schools even if
15 you include the SHSAT schools only five percent of
16 New York high schools even offer at least four of
17 five AP STEAM classes; AP bio, chemistry, physics,
18 calculus AB and calculus BC. The SHSAT schools De
19 Facto are serving as New York City's advanced STEAM
20 schools; Bronx Science, High School of Science, Math
21 and Engineering, Brooklyn Tech. I'm a Georgia Tech
22 alumnus and an engineer, at an event this month the
23 Georgia Tech President told alumni that if you
24 haven't had algebra in eighth grade, calculus and
25 physics in high school you're not getting into

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2 Georgia Tech. furthermore their typical prep is AP
3 calculus and AP physics and two years of calculus not
4 just one. New York City is woefully under provided in
5 high quality STEAM high schools, when people say the
6 solution is to make all schools better the problem is
7 that 85 percent of schools are below the US average
8 SAT and the average size of those schools is only 500
9 kids, how do you take a 500 kid school which has
10 about 100 seniors and try to put AP physics in it.
11 For one child that will not happen, you must
12 aggregate those high performers in order to fill
13 classes of AP physics, AP chemistry, AP calculus and
14 if you don't provide those classes and those options
15 you are shutting the door to schools like Georgia
16 Tech and that is patently wrong for New York City to
17 do. New York City needs to expand the number of seats
18 in the SHSAT schools but also open the door for the...
19 for children to enter with the top middle school
20 approach so that you have a pathway in by test and a
21 pathway in without a test and allow both pathways as
22 equally important, you can do so by expanding the
23 number of seats. I've laid out a very detailed
24 proposal that adds 5,000 seats or 10,000 seats to
25 take the SHSAT schools from 15,000 to 20,000 seats or

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2 25,000 seats and it steps in enrollment in a way
3 where at the end of the time of the phase in of
4 sophomores, freshmen, juniors, etcetera. If its
5 25,000 seats its 56 percent SHSAT entry, 44 percent
6 top middle schoolers, if you get to 20,000 students
7 its 69 percent SHSAT, 31 percent top middle schoolers
8 and I can show you exactly where to get those 5,000
9 seats. You got a 2,500 seat school coming online in
10 Queens, Queens currently only has York which is a 500
11 seat SHSAT school dedicate that as a SHSAT school,
12 take one school each in each of the other four
13 boroughs of a 600 seat school because remember I said
14 there are around 500 seats, find a 600 seat school
15 that's failing, there's a bunch of them, close it,
16 migrate to a SHSAT school and right there you've got
17 a plan that's 69 31 and meets both.. it's a win, win
18 approach and we've got to stop battling over who gets
19 in the lifeboat and build more boats. Thank you.

20 [applause]

21 GEORGE LEE: Thank you Chairman Treyger.
22 I had a speech prepared earlier and I changed it
23 because Chancellor Carranza made an outrageous
24 statement in his testimony this morning, but I think
25 I'll change it again because I heard some more

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2 outrageous things that... I heard that the specialized
3 high schools should not be considered as better
4 schools, that all schools are good and with all due
5 respect to your loyalty to Ed Murrow and, and John
6 Dewey the fact is as a specialized high schools
7 Stuyvesant, Bronx Science and Brooklyn Tech produced
8 14 Nobel prize winners, John Dewey and, and Ed Murrow
9 and the finish schools that Diane Ravitch is so fond
10 of did not produce 14 Nobel prize winners. The three
11 specialized high schools produce a disproportionate
12 number of math, math Olympiad gold, gold medalist and
13 physics Olympiad gold medalists, neither do the
14 finish schools nor at Merrill nor John Dewey produced
15 them. I'm not saying that you get an invalid
16 education at, at Merrill, I'm not saying that the
17 people who come out are any less moral human beings
18 or any less complete human beings but if you're
19 looking for a particular kind of STEM education and
20 excellence there is nothing better than the three
21 specialized high schools and.. than in a specialized
22 high school and what produced them is the SHSAT, that
23 is the only thing that curated class after class of
24 distinguished STEM students. I'm following what you
25 said actually so if you and some of the previous

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2 people who spoke here talk about all schools being
3 the same or there's no good schools and no bad
4 schools whereas some of the other people said I want
5 my... to send my kids to a good school you're talking
6 at different levels, I mean you're both right in some
7 sense but if you're going to make Stuyvesant into an
8 Ed Murrow people are going to leave New York City,
9 the 40,000 people that you found talked about that's
10 going to happen but if you make Ed Murrow into
11 Stuyvesant people will come to the New York City
12 public school system. That's all I have to say, thank
13 you very much.

14 [applause]

15 XU MUI NI: My turn? Hi Council Member,
16 Menchaca. I from the New York Chung Ying Chinese
17 Community Association Chairman... [cross-talk]

18 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: Right... did we catch
19 your name, I'm sorry...

20 XU MUI NI: Xu Mui Ni.

21 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: Thank you.

22 XU MUI NI: Also, I'm a democratic
23 candidate for Queens community attorney. Okay, I want
24 to say, you know like the Mayor De Blasio he said the
25 Asian student percentage too high because this is... io

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2 not agree. This is not helping for a student to get a
3 better education so I may still be keep for the
4 testing and how you educate like more students get
5 change, I mean the city, city and state get a funding
6 for the... for the CUNY high school so when school get
7 a funding they can have the teacher to teach in the
8 special high school testing maybe all of the students
9 get more chance and another part, you know the city
10 should be... create like more five borough special high
11 schools, you'll get more space so you... I, I mean
12 there's more students get more chance and keep for
13 the test, please. Thank you.

14 DAVID REM: My name is David Rem. As a
15 native lifelong New Yorker, I am a proud father of a
16 half Columbian Hispanic daughter born to a first-
17 generation immigrant mother who as of September 2019
18 accepted Stuyvesant High School incoming student. I
19 was appalled at hearing Chancellor Carranza comment
20 that anyone who wants to keep the SHSAT exam
21 unchanged, unchanged as the sole criteria for
22 children getting entry into New York's eight
23 specialized high schools is a racist person. I
24 believe that Chancellor Carranza owes all New Yorkers
25 an apology and I call on the Mayor De Blasio to fire

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2 Carranza for making such a blatant, racial statement.

3 I thank the New York Senator John Liu for publicly
4 calling out Carranza's statement as a racist

5 statement. It is insulting to me to think that my

6 brilliant, minority, Latino daughter would somehow

7 need De Blasio's proposed racial quota in order to

8 gain entry into a specialized high school, Ava scored

9 a 600 on her SHSAT exam as well as scoring, scoring a

10 perfect 4.5 on her New York State math scores as well

11 as scoring a 4.2 on her ELA test, state test. Ava

12 scored 43 points above Stuyvesant's cut off of 557,

13 Ava has been a lifelong 99 to 100 report card

14 students from kindergarten to eighth grade. I'm the

15 product of the New York City system, 1970s and 80s,

16 when the same SHSAT test was also the sole entrance

17 test to gain entry into these specialized high

18 schools. In the 70s and 80s Brooklyn Tech was

19 predominately black and Hispanic, I lived here I saw

20 it just like Stuyvesant was predominately Jewish,

21 nobody had a problem with the test then. Today the

22 majority of their specialized high school students

23 are composed of a different minority namely Asian so

24 why all the sudden do De Blasio, Carranza's racist,

25 anti-Asian proposed policy to get rid of the SHSAT

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2 exam warrant even any consideration, they don't, and
3 they shouldn't even be considered. In fact, race
4 should not even be listed on the SHSAT exam itself.
5 In private and catholic schools when children take
6 that test there is no bubbling in for your race, I
7 used to bubble in human race back in high school.
8 There are some 439 New York public city schools,
9 eight of which are the specialized high schools, we
10 should leave the eight specialized high schools alone
11 and focus instead on the 430 or whichever ones are
12 those which are failing miserably. So how do I
13 propose to fix the failing New York City public
14 school system? Firstly, you must fix K through eight,
15 that's the base for any student to achieve great
16 things in life which the majority of its in shambles.
17 Secondly, there are 27,000 kids that took the
18 specialized exam test this year and there's only
19 5,000 seats, you have to add numerous other
20 specialized high schools to the system. Thirdly, we
21 should even listen to some of the specialized high
22 school principals such as Stuyvesant's principal Eric
23 Contreras who is also a Latino man, he opposes
24 Chancellor Carranza's and Mayor Bill De Blasio's
25 plan, proposed plan to get rid of the exam. Further..

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2 fifthly, we desperately need to add more gifted and
3 talented programs, they still make a difference, I
4 understand the particulars, but they still make a
5 tremendous difference. We also need to add free
6 specialized prep classes in all schools, in all
7 boroughs throughout all racial areas. Lastly and the
8 most importantly and I heard you, you knock it a
9 little bit but the 15 feeder schools, they work,
10 they're proven. We need to copy and duplicate that in
11 all middle schools, why would you not want to copy
12 and duplicate something that has been producing
13 whether it's... whatever the reason that's occurring in
14 that school whether it's the teachers, the quality of
15 the teachers, whatever... the funding, the money, the
16 resources, whatever, you have the data it's real
17 easy, simple. Also do not continue to pass children
18 from grade to grade who can't even meet the New York
19 state exams and that happens all the time. The Mayor
20 and the Chancellor also grossly misrepresented New
21 York's public about their discovery program which in
22 my opinion unfairly allows students to gain entry
23 into that and, and he states that they missed the cut
24 off by just a few points, that's not the case. Every
25 single one of those discovery program children did

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2 not even meet the minimum requirements such as the
3 448 score Bronx... Brooklyn and actually you
4 discriminate against other black, Asian, Hispanic
5 children that fortunately did not reside in the
6 Mayor's... one of the... De Blasio's carefully crafted
7 and racially biased residential zones, aka the 60s
8 score poverty residential level. So, you allow in an
9 Asian, black, Hispanic child who scored way under the
10 cut, not a few points, 70, 100 points and you didn't
11 let the Hispanic, black, Asian child whatever in that
12 scored one point lower than the cut off. There's no
13 quick fix that De Blasio and Carranza so desperately
14 want. The New York City public school system broke
15 down over two decades ago so I'm going to give him
16 his props he's not entirely to blame, there was the
17 Bloomberg Administration and other past
18 administrations such as the Dinkins Administration,
19 okay but... therefore eliminating the SHSAT test is not
20 the quick fix to a remedy caused by a severe decades
21 long problem. The New York City public school system
22 will take many, many, many long years to improve not
23 the five years that's spoken about tonight. This is
24 reality but this is a reality that most, most people
25 do not want to hear. Chancellor Carranza is quick to

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2 mention that no other high school in the country
3 relies on a single test, the SHSAT test for children
4 to gain entry into a specialized high school, I would
5 counter with this that has been said multiple times
6 tonight, no other specialized school in the country,
7 in the country has provided 14 Nobel prize winners
8 and scientists and all the rest. The SHSAT exam is
9 the fairest, race blind, gender blind, ethnicity
10 blind, well privileged blind method to establish
11 which brilliant children get into New York's eight
12 specialized high schools. In closing let it be known
13 that I am not Asian, however I love Asian people and
14 I love all people and that's the god's honest truth
15 and keeping the SHSAT exam I have... I have zero
16 special interest in keeping the SHSAT exam as my
17 daughter Ava has already been accepted into the top
18 specialized high school, Stuyvesant high school,
19 however keeping the SHSAT exam is just the fairest
20 policy for all of New York City's children and I am
21 kind of appalled that the Chancellor and other
22 commissioners and Council Members they, they want us
23 to hear them but they always run out and as soon as
24 the, the politics and the... and the bright lights and
25 the cameras are over there is about 12 people left in

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2 this room and I thank you two gentlemen for being
3 here and I am very upset as you can tell and I feel
4 passionately about this issue and I just feel it is..
5 it is just wrong to approach this issue and I
6 respectfully ask that you do not support Mayor Bill
7 De Blasio's and Council... and Carranza's proposed
8 policies to get rid of this exam, it's not the way
9 gentlemen to, to, to get to the bottom of the
10 problem. Thank you very much.

11 GREG WALTMAN: Good afternoon Council,
12 Greg Waltman from G1 Quantum Clean Energy Company.
13 I'm here to talk about the concrete solutions you
14 were alluding to. First off starting with Chair
15 Barron's husband, Assemblyman Barron echoing his
16 comments, you know it's completely disingenuous to
17 think that with the value entitlements and point of
18 privilege that anything resource allocation wise is
19 going to get distributed back into these schools to
20 make the type of difference that you're looking for
21 and, and when I say its disingenuous I say it in a
22 frame of context from a clean energy standpoint where
23 I've been echoing clean energy solutions such as the
24 wall, the solar wall application where you're putting
25 solar panels on ten feet of border wall on the

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2 southern side, if it's going to be there it may as
3 well create energy which creates 242 trillion
4 kilowatt hours of energy or 291 billion dollars of
5 energy per year at 12 cents per kilowatt hour
6 allowing us to export energy to Latin America to
7 reduce the barrier to entry for them to participate
8 in the global economy and contextually contractually
9 creating those types of contracts derived out of New
10 York could be most beneficial in reshaping the type
11 of budgetary considerations as we talk to the school
12 or, or talk about school and, and revitalizing and,
13 and injecting capital into these types of
14 initiatives. So, when I... when I see the green new
15 deal in these initiatives talked about it's almost
16 like the City Council is housed at the casino being
17 imposed upon by value Omaha, Nebraska establishment
18 constituents and what happens is you're, you're
19 having an issue where you're trying to throw 14
20 billion dollars, a green new deal at, at, at these
21 issues but in reality someone's already came to you
22 and said well the wall pays for itself and there's
23 way more to be had and access and revenue to be
24 generated to address these issues. So, so, it's, it's
25 almost like saying okay, we have a... you know we... say

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2 we didn't have pens and a... and a way to write, right,
3 well we have all this paper like maybe we can create
4 a utensil or, or something to write with and then oh,
5 well Mexico is going to create the pen, right and
6 then well I've already said that if you put solar
7 panels on the border wall you can... you can create 242
8 trillion kilowatt hours of energy and, and fraction...
9 you know whatever fraction you'd like to cut that
10 into and, and it keeps going on, oh, well we have 14
11 billion dollars to create that pen but the solutions
12 already been addressed and now you're going to go 2.2
13 trillion on an infrastructure deal and I've already
14 outlined a way not... I didn't even get to Quantum
15 tracks yet, creating the first ever self-sustainable
16 city in the world but, but you're... [cross-talk]

17 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: Do you have
18 testimony that you've provided for us?

19 GREG WALTMAN: Menchaca two months ago...

20 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: Okay, if you could
21 email it to our... it to our committee to... because this
22 hearing we're having a little bit... [cross-talk]

23 GREG WALTMAN: But that, that doesn't
24 make sense, it's almost like you're, you're a casino
25 trying to clear these value bets but someone's

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2 sitting here right in your face articulating the
3 solutions... [cross-talk]

4 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: Right... [cross-talk]

5 GREG WALTMAN: ...but the media due to the
6 hyper protectionism, the, the value based hyper
7 protectionism... [cross-talk]

8 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: Right... [cross-talk]

9 GREG WALTMAN: ...that's rampant in the
10 media it's not being presented to the public as an
11 alternative solution... [cross-talk]

12 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: So, so, so we'll
13 follow up... [cross-talk]

14 GREG WALTMAN: ...so, when you talk about...
15 [cross-talk]

16 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: Right... [cross-talk]

17 GREG WALTMAN: ...excuse me, one more time,
18 when you talk about money being allocated to these
19 types of school and programs... [cross-talk]

20 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: Right... [cross-talk]

21 GREG WALTMAN: ...and you say you have no
22 resources to do it, it's just not only disingenuous
23 its criminal. Thank you.

24 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: I, I appreciate
25 that. So, just to kind of... to wrap up here and I, I

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2 want to be very clear, I have never, and I do not
3 question the greatness of Stuyvesant Tech and the
4 great... these great schools, never once. I will take
5 always issue when other schools be, become unfairly
6 denigrated, quite frankly no fault of their own in my
7 opinion and I'm proud to say I'm, I'm a proud Merrill
8 High School alum as I should be, I think you would
9 agree, we should be proud. I'm proud that Merrill
10 High School helped produce the education chairman of
11 the City Council, I'm happy that Merrill High School
12 produced academy award winner Marisa Tomei and, and
13 other talented folks and I applaud Stuy and Brooklyn
14 Tech and other schools for producing Nobel prize... I
15 mean this, this is extraordinary achievements. The,
16 the challenge before us is how do we create equity
17 and opportunity across the board and I appreciate
18 some very concrete proposals that we've heard here,
19 here, here today and I appreciate your passion on
20 behalf of, of our... of our children in New York City
21 schools. Thank you so much, appreciate it, thank you,
22 thank you. The last panel and the most patient,
23 right? Donghei Zang; Mindy Jia; Yuran Deng and
24 Donghei Zang, yes. Okay, so whenever folks are ready
25 just state your name and you may begin your

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2 testimony, thank you so much. Make sure your
3 microphone is on.

4 DONGHEI ZANG: Okay, is that good? Hi, my
5 name is Donghei, I'm a Queens resident, I'm a parent
6 of two kids, one is going to Stuyvesant and the... and
7 the other one is going to Bronx Science. I'm here...
8 also I'm the President of New York City Residents
9 Alliance. So, I would like to say as a parent of two
10 kids from special high school I fully embrace the
11 idea that there are two fields blacks and Latinos so
12 I would like to see the population of blacks and the
13 Latinos going up so to reach some kind of racial
14 balance consistent with the city population but
15 however that, that cannot be on the price of lowering
16 the standards. By lowering the standards, you are
17 just going to destroy those eight special high
18 schools which is not acceptable. However, on the
19 other hand I cannot accept Mr. Chancellor's language
20 saying there are too, too many Asian students, he was
21 saying the Asians own, own the specialized high
22 schools,, that's not acceptable, that's racist
23 language, he should.. he should apologize for that and
24 he should be fired for that. Okay, first let me get
25 to his point that he repeatedly saying in the morning

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2 when I was here, he was saying there are no other
3 universities taking one test as the criteria, I would
4 like to say it's okay have two tests, okay if one
5 test is not fair let's do two tests like the SAT or
6 whatever or three tests, you know would be... would he
7 be happy on that? As long as it's about objective I'm
8 sure he wouldn't have said that so one test is just
9 the excuse and second... I, I would like to say in the
10 current... in the current system, in the current,
11 current financial burden we can't accept the one test
12 is most objective and the most practical way and the
13 second about the test itself he was... he was saying
14 something... oh, we got rid of the test so the students
15 don't have to take the test, you don't have to
16 prepare for the test I feel the same for, for the...
17 for the... for the boss... over the nation's biggest
18 public system, he doesn't encourage students to
19 prepare the test and to take the test. For me as a
20 father of two students and I was also student for a
21 long time myself so prepare reason for test and under
22 the test itself and more important, the reviewing
23 after you take the test that's the most crucial part
24 of our learning process, the test prepares them for
25 test and review test is a necessary step to study and

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2 to learn so that should be encouraged, that shouldn't
3 be abolished. What... how, how can... how can school...
4 because of school you... if we failed the test how can
5 the admission process be objective without an
6 objective tests to score and third, okay, his, his
7 claim saying the Asians have privilege, you know to
8 go to the private schools, that's a big lie, the
9 private school it doesn't cost a thousand dollars,
10 it's only like a few hundred dollars and also I know
11 the city has been offering some programs like the
12 dream program, like other programs, you know to offer
13 our students who don't have to... the ability, ability
14 to pay for the few hundred... or few thousand, you know
15 to the test prep so the person its, it's not our
16 problem and actually the Asian people don't have a
17 financial privilege so 65 percent or something else
18 similar to that of the Asian students, other students
19 even Stuyvesant High School they receive the free
20 lunch program which means they are... they are... they
21 are from low income families and actually many
22 parents who were here this morning so they don't even
23 speak English, they, they do... they do laundry work,
24 they do... work, you know they do the nails, they do...
25 they work in the nail industry so their average

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2 family income is like 20,000 or 30,000 dollars a year
3 and I think that's almost equivalent to if you don't
4 work, as a single mother, if you don't... you also
5 receive some government stipend so... allowance so that
6 amount... about the same amount of money but why are
7 the Asian kids can succeed, it's because the Asian
8 family stay widely with the education so for the... for
9 the... for the family who only got like 20,000 or
10 30,000 dollars a year as their annual income, the
11 total family income they don't go to vacation, they
12 don't go to luxury restaurants they save every penny
13 and they, they save every penny for their children to
14 go to school. Also actually the moneys most... not most
15 important, the most important thing you got, you know
16 the parents spend the time and they put attention on
17 their students education so as long as each family
18 can do, do that your children will succeed, it
19 doesn't matter whether you know math or you know
20 English so it's a matter why do you care about your
21 children's education, I think that's the only reason
22 that the Asian families, the current Asian families
23 can succeed in their children's education. I think
24 every family regardless you are... you're black,
25 Latino, you are white, you are Asian, you're from

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2 Korean so as long as you pay attention to your
3 children's education you can succeed so that's really
4 something should be encouraged but not punished, the
5 current policy, the current proposal put by Mayor and
6 to the Chancellor is just punishing the hard working
7 kids, it's just punishing the hard working Asian
8 family. Okay, we all know... and on the other hand we
9 all know the real reason that there are currently
10 fewer black and Latino kids is that because in their
11 districts it's not their family's fault it is the
12 government's fault and the... and as many speakers have
13 already said it takes five to ten years to fix, you
14 cannot be rushed but we have to fix them, we have to
15 encourage, we have to find ways to encourage the
16 families to, to, to take care of their children's
17 education to pay attention to their children's
18 education so, so as long as we start doing that we
19 will improve and on the way that we're improving we
20 will find out that not only is those eight, eight
21 special high schools is, you know a prominent school,
22 all the schools will be standing... all the kids will
23 be standing, I think that should be the human true
24 goal, that should be the human true solution, I don't
25 want to go, go into the... that but I do have some

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2 comments about the Chancellor himself, he's... he was
3 saying recently some language... criticize him on that
4 and also you know he and the, the Mayor proposed the
5 discovery program which actually started this year,
6 we all know the proposed discovery program that was
7 implemented this year it, it was unconstitutional
8 because it intentionally excluded 80 percent of the
9 Asian kids by, by doing whatever is called the, the
10 priority index as a result, you know like my child in
11 school and... child in school so we were all excluded,
12 there was also many, many poor Asian kids, you know
13 there, their families were poor but they were already
14 excluded from the discovery program but the result is
15 we all know the result even by exclude, excluding 80
16 percent of the Asian kids in this year's discovery
17 program enrollment still there are 54 percentile of
18 the Asian kids got enrolled into the discovery
19 program that again tells us how hard has the Asian
20 families been working to, to educate their, their
21 kids and how badly our school system and the Mayor
22 had failed our black and the Latino kids. I agree,
23 every kid was talented, our, our kids should be
24 deserve... with the... should deserve a chance but you
25 should start from the real thing, you should try to

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2 improve their state test score first and then talk
3 about the specialized high school and I have to ask,
4 so, so... but the, the Chancellor saying oh, we have
5 tried every tool so I have to eliminate the test, I
6 ask him what about if say the state and the city
7 senator under the state assembly gave you the
8 authority let you do the experiment which of course I
9 don't agree, our children are not rats, are not white
10 moths, we should... our children shouldn't... cannot be
11 afforded to, to experiments but say let's do the
12 experiment if their proposal is implemented to the
13 seven percent code I, I kind of see that by the end,
14 you know there are some kind of... what about if after
15 they implement the program still 70 or 60 or 80
16 percent of all Asian kids go to the special high
17 school, what is he going to do on that time, are they
18 really hating our Asians so I think he's racist, he
19 shouldn't be... he shouldn't be the boss of the
20 nation's largest public system, he doesn't deserve
21 that, he messed with San Francisco first, people
22 didn't like that, didn't like him and then he went to
23 Texas he messed up with Texas and why, why our Mayor
24 has to hire him as a... as our Chancellor and also I
25 knew he was once persecuted... he, he was not

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2 prosecuted but he got involved.. he, he was involved
3 with a sexual harassment lawsuit and at the end I
4 know it, it was kind of sad however but shall we
5 consider that when, when you hear of him as a school
6 Chancellor shouldn't be.. our school Chancellor be a
7 role model of morality as well so I would like to say
8 he's really.. he shouldn't be.. he shouldn't be doing
9 that, that job. In the end I would like.. I would like
10 us to say, I think in, in some locations I know, you
11 know from statistic reasons we have to ask what is
12 your race or country or region, where are you from,
13 you're from Korean or you're from Columbia, you are
14 Asian or you are black, you are Latino or you are
15 native Indian but I feel that I've thought many
16 occasions we don't even need to ask the question..
17 that question. For example, in the school of
18 admission process why the kids are black, or Latino
19 why does that.. does that matter, they are all
20 American kids and they all have American dream, thank
21 you.

22 [applause]

23 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: Okay, thank, thank
24 you and the last.. the last two speakers, appreciate
25 your being here.

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2 JAMIN JAI: Hi, my name Jamin Jai, I'm a
3 mother of... you know I have one child so he's in sixth
4 grade. So, first of all I have... you know I have a
5 comment about today's hearing title. The title is
6 that you call segregation in New York City's schools
7 and I, I actually have a, you know problem with this
8 title because segregation by definition it is the
9 action or the state that sets someone or something
10 apart from other people and other things and then,
11 you know by saying there is a... segregation in New
12 York City it is actually a misnomer and then by using
13 this misnomer actually stirs and divides the city and
14 the communities. So, I actually think it's
15 irresponsible for officials, you know elected by New
16 York City residents to use this misnomer so that's
17 first. So... and also specialized high school in New
18 York City actually are open to every single kid in
19 New York City that are willing to put in the efforts
20 to prepare for the rigorous study at the specialized
21 high schools. So, SHSAT is actually an objective way
22 to measure the student's effort and readiness for
23 specialized high schools. It is irresponsible to
24 eliminate the SHSAT without coming up with an
25 objective and agreed upon alternative to measure the

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2 incoming student's readiness. From the middle 1970s
3 to 1990s black and Hispanic kids made up close to
4 half or more of the Brooklyn Tech student body and
5 the percentage has dropped since then actually due
6 to... not due to the SHSAT its actually due to the
7 reduction and dearth of the gifted and honors program
8 in the black and Hispanic neighborhoods. Even back in
9 the 1970s and... 1970s and 90s the kids that make it
10 into the specialized high school, the 50 percentile
11 of the Brooklyn Tech they take... they took the SHSAT
12 exam so, SHSAT exam is not the problem. So, finally I
13 actually want to propose to really solve this problem
14 it is that start focusing on SHSAT and the
15 specialized high schools. Second, bring back the K to
16 eight gifted and honor programs in black and Hispanic
17 program... neighborhoods to focus on the pipeline.
18 Third, study SHSAT and study SH... specialized high
19 school and replicate their success story to all
20 schools and then fourth, open gifted and honors
21 programs in all high schools to create more seats for
22 all the students in New York City. Thank you very
23 much.

24 [applause]

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2 YURAN DENG: Good evening, thank you for
3 everyone for... to still being here. My name is Yuran
4 Deng, English name Annie and I'm a proud alum of
5 Stuyvesant High School. I just wanted to be pretty
6 short and fill in some of the holes that were pre..
7 left by the numerous testimonies we've had today. So,
8 fact, actually the Department of Education itself
9 sponsored a study, the SHSAT and found that it is a
10 statistically strong predictor of high school GPA,
11 regent scores and AP scores. They've actually had
12 this study since 2013, they hid it because obviously
13 the Mayor wanted to do away with the test. Second,
14 the... New York as a state spends the most per capita
15 on its students than any other state or territory in
16 the nation actually averaging around 24,000 and the
17 per capita fund at Stuyvesant only 17K, so, we're not
18 actually better funded. Now the Chancellor wants to
19 say that he's not trying to hurt the academic
20 proudness of these schools but he already has and the
21 discovery program that has... was implemented this year
22 at Stuyvesant the lowest score for the students that
23 were admitted in the first round was 560, for the
24 discovery program for Stuyvesant the range was from
25 471 to 485, not even 500 so that's a whole 80 points

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2 lower than the lowest point that was admitted in the
3 original class and what happened to the people who
4 scored in the range between that, you know what
5 happened to them? They just got lost, they just got
6 forgotten, no, they got discriminated against. Now
7 we're here to speak specifically on 196-A because
8 whether or not you like the test, the proposal really
9 doesn't work. Why doesn't the top seven percent from
10 every schoolwork? Well, from the data we found out
11 today in the NYCade article we found out there are
12 schools in this city where only two percent of the
13 students passed the state math exam while 93.5 of the
14 same students passed their math classes so grades are
15 highly inflated and these schools are not performing,
16 so take that school, only two percent passed their
17 math exam, if you take the top seven percent that
18 means there are five additional percent of the
19 students at that school will be entering a
20 specialized high school or have the option to without
21 even passing the state math test. So, that's not
22 really the type of student you probably want to pass
23 into these schools which are geared towards science
24 and math studies. What does the test, test? English
25 and math, very simple, it's reading and while some of

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2 the math topics are not yet covered in the eighth
3 grade curriculum, you know that is actually the test
4 that's put on the students, do you have the extra
5 what it takes to study on your own and master those
6 areas which you eventually will need to learn anyway
7 in high school? So, for... the parents who actually
8 invest in their kids to learn the topics that are
9 covered on the SHSAT is not just to master a test,
10 they're learning ratios, they're learning fractions,
11 they're learning frequency tables, that is actually
12 what I saw on the sample test that is offered in the
13 NYC guide which is given to students on the
14 specialized high schools. Now what would happen if we
15 offered the plan that was proposed? Actually, the
16 people actually made models to say what would happen.
17 In this top seven percent, it will include actually
18 500 students with a one or a two on their math state
19 test and 400 with only a one or a two on the ELA. So,
20 that's going to be like 900 students who are
21 underperforming and maybe needing remedial work at
22 Stuyvesant or the other seven schools that are tested
23 into. Now you have to realize that students don't
24 study in a vacuum, it takes time away from the
25 classroom when you have... when you have questions that

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2 are not at the standard level expected of the whole
3 class, right? So... and when you introduce students who
4 are unprepared to these schools you are drawing from
5 the resources which are already less than the average
6 for the... for the city and one of the last things I
7 want to mention is I want to draw two comparisons.
8 One is with the City College of New York; it was once
9 a beloved college and highly esteemed called the
10 Harvard of the poor and then we had open admission
11 but... which increased diversity but did not give any
12 credit to merit and then what happened? Well, now
13 when I tell somebody that I went to Stuyvesant and I
14 went to city college people ask me what happened
15 which makes me feel like, you know it's not a good
16 choice just because of the prestige but also because
17 of just how much credit the school has lost because
18 of its reputation and the same you can expect for the
19 specialized high schools. These schools don't exist
20 in a vacuum either, colleges are watching and when
21 they find out that you have all these students who
22 are not even passing their state exams and those
23 exams to serious educators are seriously subpar you
24 are not going to see the same rate of admission and
25 we already have mentioned a lot of students and

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1
2 families fleeing New York City actually and we see
3 that a lot in the communities of Bayside for example
4 where the non-specialized high schools have basically
5 been ruined and also I see it in my own family
6 because two of my uncles decided not to come to New
7 York City after all and decided to go to Orlando
8 where they believed their students will be having a
9 better education. So, please look at all aspects of
10 these proposals and look at the details in the plan.
11 The proposed plan actually leaves a huge number of
12 seats to just a random lottery, that includes all of
13 the students from private schools and catholic
14 schools, parochial schools, other schools, all of the
15 students who do not have the factors that go into
16 their formula go into a random lottery, it doesn't
17 really make any sense and please if you want to
18 consider getting rid of the test then at least find a
19 better alternative first.

20 [applause]

21 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: So, I, I, I
22 strongly... I, I, I appreciate, you know a, a lot of
23 the passion behind the testimony and just to note
24 for... you know I'm a proud product of CUNY as well,
25 there was a time when CUNY used to be free but they

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2 stopped making it free once they began to admitting..
3 to admit all students particularly students, students
4 of color so quite frankly I would argue that it was
5 economic barriers that has led to issues within our
6 city university not making sure that the process was
7 more fair for people and to note... I want to note for
8 the record that I came out against what the Mayor
9 proposed last year because it was not the product of
10 an inclusive process, the Council today actually did
11 not put forward a fix, it, it's putting forward a
12 process to engage all communities, all stakeholders
13 and that, that's what the Speaker actually noted in
14 his opening remarks that we're, we are putting
15 forward a... we want an inclusive process to, to, to
16 solve some of this... most serious challenges our
17 school system is, is, is facing and we, we, we have
18 to figure this out but we don't have all the answers
19 here today but we need everyone here to be at the
20 table and certainly I have... I have certainly told..
21 I've told the Chancellor to be mindful of his
22 language, but I'll respectfully ask the public to be
23 also mindful of certain language as well because I, I
24 share this as both a student... I am a proud product
25 from Pre-K all the way to grad school of public

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2 schools, I went to public schools all across my, my
3 life and I'm proud of that. I have become a better
4 person, a better public servant as a result of my
5 diverse settings in many of, of, of our systems. So,
6 increasing diversity does not weaken institutions
7 however the issue before us is how do we make sure
8 that every community, every person, every child has
9 access to opportunities and, and I again agree with
10 you that a significant number of the students that
11 are attending specialized schools don't come from
12 economic privileged backgrounds, 100 percent
13 accurate. One of the issues that I, I raised was that
14 some of the schools themselves, the schools in
15 partnerships with their partnerships they have access
16 to sometimes more resources than other schools and
17 that was said to me by Stuy alumni, I am good friends
18 with alumni from Stuy who are great not just students
19 but now they're educators and they're doing great in,
20 in their field and that's wonderful and... but we never
21 put each other down, we never said... you know I don't
22 say to Stuyvesant that you're better than me or this,
23 I think all of us are great in, in different respects
24 and maybe some students don't want to be noble
25 science... which, which is great too, some students

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2 want... one of the students I worked with in the
3 Utrecht High School I used to teach in the Utrecht,
4 his name is Anthony Ramos, if you don't know who that
5 is he was one of the big stars in Hamilton and he was
6 a baseball player in the Utrecht, joined the theater
7 program, thankfully we had one and now Anthony is, is
8 a... is an international star and so the goal is to
9 figure out how to work together with all of our
10 communities to make sure that, that all of our
11 schools, that all of our children have access to
12 great programs and opportunities for a very good
13 future and I... again I thank all of you for, for your
14 advocacy and, and for being here tonight and... [cross-
15 talk]

16 YURAN DENG: Thank you... [cross-talk]

17 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: ...we... do we have to...
18 we have to... we do have to close... [cross-talk]

19 YURAN DENG: Yeah, I just wanted to
20 mention one thing... [cross-talk]

21 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: Go ahead, please...

22 YURAN DENG: Well it so... we appreciate
23 this opportunity so much to be actually a part of the
24 process but we also have to note that the Chancellor
25 basically did say earlier today that even if he had

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introduced process it wouldn't have changed his
proposal so it was really a downer... [cross-talk]

CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: Well I... and as I
noted before if you heard my, my exchange their own
diversity advisory group was not even consulted about
their proposal so that... there were a lot of folks
left out and you cannot have a conversation about
exclusion while excluding people so that's
problematic in more ways than one. So, again with
that I do want to thank everyone for their patience
and for their endurance for a very long day, there's
more work to do but we, we should do it in an
inclusive and fair and just way and with that this
hearing is adjourned.

[applause]

DONGHEI ZANG: Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: And I just want to...
I... and...

[gavel]

C E R T I F I C A T E

World Wide Dictation certifies that the foregoing transcript is a true and accurate record of the proceedings. We further certify that there is no relation to any of the parties to this action by blood or marriage, and that there is interest in the outcome of this matter.



Date

May 31, 2019