



## COMMUNITY DISTRICT EDUCATION COUNCIL 30

28-11 Queens Plaza North, Room 512

Long Island City, NY 11101

Tel: 718-391-8380

Fax: 718-391-8500

Email: [cec30@schools.nyc.gov](mailto:cec30@schools.nyc.gov)

Website: [cec30.org](http://cec30.org)

### Resolution #163

#### **Opposed to Separate Classes for Gifted and Talented Students, and for Enrichment, Individualized Pathways, and Opportunities for Acceleration for All Students**

**WHEREAS**, on April 14, 2022, the Mayor and the Chancellor announced an expansion of the Department of Education's Gifted and Talented program, adding 100 kindergarten seats and 1000 third-grade seats to the existing program;<sup>1</sup> and

**WHEREAS**, 100 kindergarten seats equals four new classes across the city, and 1000 third-grade seats is around one new class for each of the 32 community school districts; and

**WHEREAS**, application to third grade G&T seats will be available to the 10% of second-graders in each school with the highest average grades in social studies, math, science, and English language arts; and

**WHEREAS**, all children have gifts and talents, which develop at different ages and in different ways, and

**WHEREAS**, sorting students into separate classes by ability often leads to diminished expectations, limiting the majority of students in general education classes from identifying their gifts and talents;<sup>2</sup> and

**WHEREAS**, separate classes for "gifted" students segregate schools and school systems by socioeconomic status, race, language, and (dis)ability; and

**WHEREAS**, separate classes for "gifted" students is a form of tracking, which many researchers have shown to have negative effects on overall student achievement;<sup>3</sup> and

**WHEREAS**, separate classes for "gifted" students denies those students of the many well-documented benefits of learning in mixed ability, integrated classrooms such as higher test scores in math and reading, increased likelihood of graduation and college attendance, and real-world preparedness for working in a multicultural world;<sup>4</sup> and

**WHEREAS**, the effect of this separation has been felt strongly in New York City public schools, where Black and Latinx students make up 65% of all students K–5, but only 17% of students labeled as "gifted"; where 73% of K-5 students citywide qualify for free or reduced price lunch, but only 34% of students in G&T programs do;<sup>5</sup> and

**WHEREAS**, in District 30, Black and Latinx students make up 59% of K–8 students, but only 12% of students in K–5 G&T programs; 72% of District 30 students qualify for free and reduced price lunch, but only 25% of students in D30 G&T programs do; 20% of students in District 30 are English-language learners, but less than 3% of students in G&T programs are English-language learners; 16% of D30 students have IEPs, but less than 3% of students in G&T programs have IEPs; and 7%

of students in D30 live in temporary housing, while less than 2% of students in G&T live in temporary housing; and

**WHEREAS**, while the school-based screens for new third-grade programs may create some G&T seats for students from communities that have been denied access to programs for “gifted” students in New York City, most students in all communities will still be denied access; and

**WHEREAS**, Gifted and Talented programs that start in the third grade will take students from other elementary schools in the district, thereby reducing those schools’ per pupil funding and performance on test-based measures; and

**WHEREAS**, separate “gifted” classes for elementary school are uncommon in other municipalities;<sup>6</sup> and

**WHEREAS**, earlier this school year, under the previous Chancellor and mayor, the Department of Education proposed a new program called Brilliant NYC to replace the current Gifted & Talented program; the DOE conducted engagement sessions with thousands of parents and staff members across the city on a transformative program that would give all elementary students access to the kinds of enrichment found disproportionately in Gifted & Talented programs, as well as opportunities for accelerated learning, and individualized pathways;<sup>7</sup> and

**WHEREAS**, the current administration has neither mentioned nor commented on any of the engagement or research conducted for Brilliant NYC, and provided no opportunities for parents who are not CCEC presidents to express their thoughts about enrichment, accelerated instruction, or the current Gifted and Talented program; and

**WHEREAS**, the School Diversity Advisory Group, convened by Mayor Bill De Blasio in 2018 and including parents, students, educators, advocates, and scholars, recommended that separate Gifted & Talented classes be replaced with enrichment programs developed in each district that would be accessible to multilingual learners, students with disabilities, students who qualify for free or reduced price lunch, and students living in temporary housing;<sup>8</sup> and

**WHEREAS**, since 2017, District 30 has been engaged in New York State’s Socioeconomic Integration Pilot (NYSIP), which aims to promote “racial/ethnic, special education, English Language Learner/Multilingual Learner (ELL/MLL), and socioeconomic integration in Title I schools;” and District 30’s vision for the current Phase III of that program is to remove barriers to challenging, enriched curriculum for all students in the district;<sup>9</sup> and

**WHEREAS**, established, research-driven programs are available for school programming and curriculum that provide enrichment and differentiated instruction to all students;<sup>10</sup> therefore, be it

**RESOLVED**, that rather than create a very small number of Gifted and Talented seats that further segregate our schools, District 30 should build on the work they have begun as part of the NYSIP program to create equitable and pervasive opportunities for enrichment and challenging, engaging learning in every school; and be it further

**RESOLVED**, that if a third-grade program must be created in District 30, it be sited in a neighborhood whose residents have been denied access to Gifted & Talented programs, and that seats are prioritized for NYCHA residents, low-income students, students in temporary housing, English-language learners, and students with disabilities, who are significantly underrepresented in current G&T programs; and be it further

**RESOLVED**, that if a third-grade program must be created in District 30, it is limited to one class for the district, to limit the expansion of segregated classrooms and the adverse effects on the budgets of schools from which students leave to join new programs.

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- 1 “Mayor Adams, Chancellor Banks Announce Expansion of Gifted and Talented Programs Citywide,” The official website of the City of New York, April 14, 2022, <http://www1.nyc.gov/office-of-the-mayor/news/203-22/mayor-adams-chancellor-banks-expansion-gifted-talented-programs-citywide>.
  - 2 In her study of the effects of tracking into “academically gifted” and “regular” tracks in a North Carolina high school, education scholar Maika Watanabe notes that “Students internalize identities of superiority/inferiority attached to these hierarchical labels” (Maika Watanabe, “Tracking In The Era of High Stakes State Accountability Reform: Case Studies Of Classroom Instruction In North Carolina,” *Teachers College Record* 110, no. 3 (March 1, 2008): 489–534).
  - 3 Ning Rui, “Four Decades of Research on the Effects of Detracking Reform: Where Do We Stand?—A Systematic Review of the Evidence,” *Journal of Evidence-Based Medicine* 2, no. 3 (2009): 164–83, <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1756-5391.2009.01032.x>; Halley Potter and Michelle Burris, “Should Gifted Students Be In Separate Classrooms?,” December 12, 2019, <https://tcf.org/content/commentary/gifted-students-separate-classrooms/>; Jill Barshay, “PROOF POINTS: Gifted Programs Provide Little to No Academic Boost, New Study Says,” *The Hechinger Report*, April 19, 2021, <http://hechingerreport.org/proof-points-gifted-programs-provide-little-to-no-academic-boost-new-study-says/>.
  - 4 Mickelson, Roslyn Arlin. *School Integration and K-12 Outcomes: An Updated Quick Synthesis of the Social Science Evidence. Research Brief No. 5. Updated. National Coalition on School Diversity*. National Coalition on School Diversity, 2016. <https://eric.ed.gov/?id=ED571629>.
  - 5 Data compiled from the 2020–2021 Diversity Report, available at <https://data.cityofnewyork.us/Education/2020-2021-Diversity-Report/8vk5-fzts>.
  - 6 Nationwide, 9.5% of elementary school gifted programs are in separate classes or dedicated schools. The rest are pull-out programs, clustering or differentiation, or other methods within existing classrooms. Carolyn M. Callahan, Tonya R. Moon, and Sarah Oh, “Describing the Status of Programs for the Gifted: A Call for Action,” *Journal for the Education of the Gifted* 40, no. 1 (March 2017): 20–49, <https://doi.org/10.1177/0162353216686215>.
  - 7 New York City Department of Education, *Brilliant NYC Report* [n.d.], <https://www.documentcloud.org/documents/21580593-final-brilliant-nyc-plan>
  - 8 School Diversity Advisory Group, “Making the Grade II: New Programs for Better Schools,” August 2019. Archived at <https://web.archive.org/web/20191203014538/https://www.schooldiversity.nyc/>.
  - 9 “The goal of this work is to examine our individual implicit biases, remove barriers and afford the underrepresented subgroups access and inclusion to challenging academic programs that lead to higher education and/or specialized career paths” (“NYS Integration Project – Professional Learning Community Program Grant \$1,197,312 for 2020-21 --- Total of \$2,399,641,” NYC District 30, [2021]).
  - 10 The District of Columbia Public Schools uses the Schoolwide Enrichment Model, a flexible, research-based educational model founded by education psychologist Joseph Renzulli that applies the principles of enrichment to all students, rather than separate classes for “gifted” students, (see <https://dcps.dc.gov/node/992352>).