

Chinese American Citizens Alliance of Greater New York Statement

President, officers and board members of the Council

CACAGNY strongly objects to Mayor Bill de Blasio's proposals on Sunday June 3 to change the admissions policy to the NYC Specialized High Schools.

His proposal to expand vastly the Discovery Program and set aside 20% of the seats for selected students who fail to meet the admission scores is unfair and unjust to the thousands of students who score higher than these favored students and would have otherwise been admitted.

His further proposal to undo the fair and objective Hecht-Calandra Act with secretive, inconsistent admission criteria reverse-engineered to achieve racial targets masks his devastating failure to provide even basic K-8 education to vast numbers of communities in NYC, let alone the highly competitive academics needed for the Specialized High Schools. In one of his middle schools, only *two* 8th graders demonstrated math proficiency in *five* years.

More than half the students in the Specialized High Schools qualify as poor. Many are immigrants who rely on the objectivity guaranteed by Hecht-Calandra to compete on a level playing field for educational opportunities. Despite his denials, Bill de Blasio's proposals target Asian American kids and callously toss out their hard-won achievements.

We call on Bill de Blasio to respect students who achieve, no matter their ethnicity, to stop pitting one disadvantaged minority against another, and to do something constructive instead: **improve** education for *all* communities, starting from the lowest grades!

We all know that District 26 is overcrowded and we hardly have enough seats for all our students. In 2015 we sent more than 400 of our middle school 8th graders to the specialized high schools, the highest number among all Queens Districts which we all are so very proud of. This is resulted from years of hard work by our diligent students and hard work of the teachers, and the unyielding support by their parents throughout the years and not just test prep to get them in the Specialized High School as stated. If the Mayor and Chancellor do away with the SHSAT, which high schools in our district can take in the 400 plus students otherwise would have attended the Specialized High Schools? Do we have the capacity at present at our high schools? Do we add more trailers and make shift classrooms for our bright and hardworking students? Is this fair for them?

President, officers and board members of the Council, we urge you to vote yes to pass the resolution calling upon Governor Cuomo, Mayor de Blasio, Chancellor Richard Carranza, and the New York State Legislature to vote against removing, limiting or changing the admissions criteria, such as the Specialized High School Admissions test (SHSAT), for admission into the Specialized High Schools of New York City.

Thank you.

Linda Lam, Executive Board, CACAGNY