

The New G&T and Mayoral Control: When Bad Implementation Sabotages Good Intentions

Mayor Adams should be commended for his April 14, 2022 announcement to reinstate Gifted and Talented Programs (G&T) in New York City public schools. Actually, he went further: he proposed to expand G&T. By doing so, he pointedly rebuffed the Woke educators who ruled the roost in former mayor De Blasio's Department of Education, to whom the supreme “moral imperative” is not excellence in education, but the optics of racial equity, pursued by sinking to the lowest common denominator.

But as pointed out in this [New York Post Op-Ed](#), the reinstated G&T has two critical implementation flaws: (1) students are qualified to apply for G&T by *subjective* criteria – *teacher* recommendations, and *teacher-given* grades -- and (2) those students are then admitted by *random lottery*. So instead of admitting the top, say, 5% of students for 5% of seats, they (badly) “qualify” say 20% of students, then draw randomly from this pool that's purposefully 4 times too large. And just like that, a program meant to operate at the learning speeds of students two grade levels ahead is no more: too many lottery winners are not two grade levels ahead! The Woke use this one-two punch of *debased initial qualifications* followed by *lotteries* to nullify G&T programs, magnet schools, even AP courses around the country. One can't be blamed for suspecting that Woke hands buried deeply -- or not so deeply -- in the Department of Education sabotaged Mayor Adams' G&T program.

The old G&T under De Blasio had flaws too, but they were inflicted by educators who hated G&T, and could be fixed easily. Bills introduced back in July 2018 at [CACAGNY's rally](#) by City Councilman Robert Holden ([Resolution 417](#)), Assembly Member William Colton (most recently [A4083A](#)), and State Senator Tony Avella (S9141A, most recently [S3445A](#) by Senator Joseph Addabbo Jr.) fixed all these flaws while preserving all that worked so well in the old G&T. So -- G&T programs are too far away to attend? Under the Holden/Colton/Avella/Addabbo proposal, there'll be at least one G&T in *every school district*. Don't think it's valid to test just 4-year-olds? This G&T will have testing, entry, and seats at *every grade*, not just kindergarten. Don't like admission by one test? There'll also be *Honors Programs* that admit by multiple academic criteria. Clearly, the Holden/Colton/Avella/Addabbo G&T is the right G&T for the Department of Education to implement. *There are no telltale lotteries in this G&T.*

The two critical flaws in Mayor Adams' G&T did not escape the notice of State Senator John Liu, Chairman of the New York City Education Committee, where mayoral control of New York City public schools is up for review again. Adams wins solid points for listening to parents -- 120,000+ students left New York City public schools in the past 5 years -- and he seems eager to restore common sense back to public education. Nevertheless, it is alarming that this G&T, his first major departure from De Blasio's horrible legacy, could have gone so awry in implementation. Concerns are certainly justified over what further mischief might be served up by this Department of Education. The blanket 4-year renewal of mayoral control offered out of the blue by Governor Hochul is *most ill-advised*. Instead, the term of mayoral control granted to Mayor Adams *should not exceed two years*. Mr. Adam's best intentions notwithstanding, he could use the constructive review by, and support from, partners in Albany to herd his wayward Department of Education to do the right thing: *educate!*

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