

October 9, 2020

Dear Mayor de Blasio and Chancellor Carranza,

The Covid-19 pandemic has forced students, parents, teachers, and administrators to confront unprecedented challenges. At a time of enormous uncertainty, clear and consistent communication by the Department of Education (DOE) is more essential than ever. However, despite being one month away from the scheduled date of the Specialized High School Admissions Test (SHSAT), tens of thousands of middle school students have been denied their right to register for the exam, presumably because DOE intends to postpone the SHSAT to another date or otherwise alter the administration of this year's exam.

At a recent event, Chancellor Carranza [suggested](#) that new information may become available in "mid to late October." That is too late. Thousands of students have been studying for the SHSAT for months. Non-profit organizations and working class New York families across the city have expended enormous resources to help these students get prepared. As students make their final preparations for what could be a life-altering exam, they each deserve more than a few days notice of how and when DOE's plans will change.

We have three simple questions today:

- 1) When will the City administer the Specialized High School Admissions Test (SHSAT)?
- 2) What is your plan?
- 3) What is your backup plan?

As you know, the SHSAT is mandated by state law; there is no other way of determining admission to the city's Specialized High Schools. Therefore, the question of the SHSAT is one of when, not if. Students have been studying for the test and are prepared to take it on the published dates of Nov. 7 and 8. Further, at a time when we, the undersigned, are vigorously supporting expansion of the SHSAT into more communities of color and ultimately to increase access to the specialized high schools, it is crucial that DOE makes it easier, not harder, for parents in every community to receive information about this critical admissions test.

DOE owes parents, teachers, and most of all its students, immediate guidance on this issue. Our hard-working and bright young students deserve nothing less.

Sincerely,

- PLACE NYC (Parent Leaders for Accelerated Curriculum and Education)
- Christa McAuliffe Intermediate School PTO, Inc.
- NYC Lab Middle School for Collaborative Studies (02M312) Parent Association Executive Board
- PS184M Shuang Wen School PTA
- JHS190 Russell Sage PTA
- PS174 PA Exec Board

- Stuyvesant High School Parents Association Executive Board
- Asian American Coalition for Education (AACE)
- Chinese American Citizens Alliance Greater New York (CACAGNY)
- Elmhurst United
- NYCRA (New York City Residents Alliance)
- Queens Parents United
- South Asians for Education, Scholarship and Training (SAFEST)

Parent Leaders / Community Leaders *

- Deborah Alexander, CEC30 Co-President
- David Aronov, City Council Candidate, District 29
- Adriana Aviles, NYC Council Candidate District 19
- Dr. Natalie Bissoon, Queens Community Board 10, Education Chair and BP Appointee CEC 27
- Brandy Carbone & Lynne Andrews, NYC Lab Middle School for Collaborative Studies (02M312) Parent Association Co-PA Presidents
- Henry Choi CEC24 Vice President
- Yiatin Chu, CEC1 Member, SLT Member, Co-President of PLACE NYC
- Nalini Chugani, PS 33 PTA Executive Board
- Wai Wah Chin, Charter President, CACAGNY
- Kaushik Das, SLT co-chair of PS 33 Chelsea Prep
- Veronica Flores, PS184 SLT
- Lisa Friedman, Board Member, PS9 Sarah Anderson PA
- Lorrie Giventer, NYC Lab Middle School For Collaborative Studies (02M312) Parent's Association, Executive Board Member At Large
- Stephanie Gonzalez, CEC 24 Member, State Committee 34th AD
- Jean Hahn, Vice President of PS174 PA
- Robin Kelleher, NYC Lab MS PA, PS33 Chelsea Prep PTA EB
- John Keller, Vice President, Parent Association, Stuyvesant High School, Member, School Leadership Team, Bronx High School of Science
- Chien Kwok, PS 111 PTA co-President, PLACE NYC founding and Executive Board member, CACAGNY member
- Amy Kohn, PS 33 PTA
- Vito LaBella, CEC20 Member
- Ferdie Lee, District 24 CEC Parent Member
- Angela Leong, Grade Representative, NYC Lab Middle School
- Lucas Liu, CEC3 Treasurer, PS9 Sarah Anderson PA, Co-President of PLACE NYC
- Cassandra Louie, CEC26 member
- Vincent Lu, CCELL Member
- Maud Maron, CEC 2 President, SLT PS41 and Salk
- Anna Maternia, CEC 24 Member

- Benjamin Morden, CEC-D2 Member, PLACE NYC Member
- Shannon Mulvihill, PS 33, PTA VP, SLT
- Alysa O'Shea, CEC D27 Parliamentarian and Borough President Appointee
- Manuel Perez, District Leader 34th AD, President of the Democratic Heights Club
- Vijah Ramjattan, CEC28 President
- Julie Rosenberg, SLT Member, Lab Middle School
- Ethan Sacks, Corresponding Secretary, Stuyvesant High School Parents Association
- Hetal Shah, Parent member SLT at PS 33
- Leonard Silverman, CEC2 Member, CPAC Member, President's Council (District 2)
- Hans Stohrer, NYC Lab Middle School For Collaborative Studies (02M312) Parent's Association, Executive Board Member At Large
- Robert Tamayev, CEC28 Member
- Edwin Wong, Candidate, New York City Council, District 29
- Phil Wong, CEC 24 President
- Sally Wong, Elmhurst United
- Thomas Wrocklage II, Esq. - CECD2 member, PLACE Executive Board Member
- Stella Xu, Education Chair, Forest Hills Asian Association
- Donghui Zang, President, New York City Residents Alliance D29 City Council Candidate
- Dr. Dariusz Zawislak, CCELL Member
- Yukong Zhao, President, AACE

*Affiliation provided for informational purpose