

THE COUNCIL OF THE  
CITY OF NEW YORK

Chancellor Richard A. Carranza  
NYC Department of Education  
Tweed Courthouse  
52 Chambers St.  
New York, NY 10007

March 20, 2019

Dear Chancellor Carranza,

The public education system in New York City remains one of the most segregated and unequally resourced school systems in the country, reflective of segregation and inequality in other areas of our civic life.

That segregation is starkly obvious in our specialized high schools. As reported by the New York Times, only 7 of the 835 seats at the prestigious Stuyvesant High School were offered to black students this year. Furthermore, black and brown students comprise only 10% of the student body across all eight of our elite high schools. In a city where two out of three public high school students are black or Latino, that is wholly unacceptable.

Diversifying the student body in our specialized high schools begins with expanding access to the educational resources students need to achieve the high academic standard needed to get there. This means we need to increase the availability of advanced level courses and programming offered in black and brown communities.

We, the undersigned members of the New York City Council, write today to demand the Department of Education increase access to and resources for advanced level programming and student enrichment in black and brown communities, as well as increase resources available to prepare students in these communities to take and pass the gifted and talented entrance exams. To that end, we in the Council believe investing an additional \$1 million in FY 2020 to fund student enrichment and test prep programming across the city is a prudent first step.

When you consider that nearly 60% of the middle schools that sent students to specialized high schools were in districts that had gifted and talented schools that required a test for admission, it is evident how decades of unequal investment in enrichment for students of color might be the most significant contributing factor to the city's problem of diversity in specialized high schools.

We in the City Council agree that the city must restore the funding for enhanced academics in black and Latino communities. As recently as 1989, Brooklyn Tech, for example, was 51 percent black and Latino. As enhanced academics for high-potential students was eliminated in those communities, the percentages of students of color decreased to the point we are at today. We know

students can compete successfully if given the resources. They have done it before. They can do it again.

Without adequate funding and a commitment to educating all students equitably, we will continue to fall short in addressing the lack of diversity in our schools, specialized or otherwise.

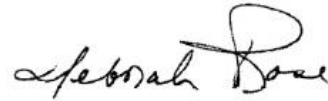
Sincerely,



Robert E. Cornegy, Jr.



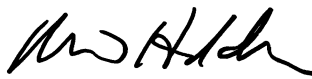
Mark Treyger



Deborah Rose



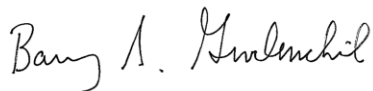
Andy King



Robert Holden



Vanessa L. Gibson



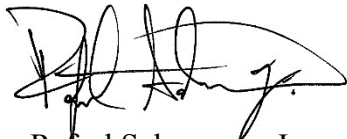
Barry Grodenchik



Adrienne Adams



I. Daneek Miller



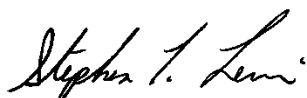
Rafael Salamanca, Jr.



Margaret Chin



Brad Lander



Stephen Levin



Peter Koo



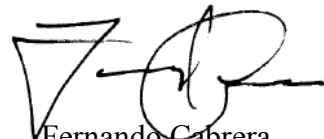
Rafael Espinal



Justin Brannan



Donovan Richards



Fernando Cabrera



Alicka Ampy-Samuel