

The Chinese American Citizens Alliance of Greater N.Y. (CACAGNY)

紐約同源會

Press Statement
April 25, 2020

Contact: cacagny1895@gmail.com

CACAGNY Statement on Gifted & Talented Exam Results

Two days ago on April 23rd, students in New York City received their results from the Gifted and Talented (G&T) exam. This set off the usual scramble by qualified youngsters to find a program that they can attend. And year after year, the Department of Education deals them the same losing proposition.

There are only 2,000 G&T seats across this vast city of 31 school districts, for 8,000 qualified youngsters. No matter what anxious parents do to move heaven and earth, it is preordained that 6,000 qualified youngsters will not find seats. For every kid lucky enough to find a place, the City will deny 3 other qualified kids.

This is a disgrace.

To add to the plight of families, many G&T programs are implementing new quotas this year, for geographic and other preferences. The Department of Education communicated very little of these changes to parents, and provided no guidance to help families navigate the unknown impact of these changes on the availabilities of remaining seats. Sheer arrogance, if not outright hostility, against families interested in G&T.

Education leaders interested in non-cosmetic solutions to the city's dismal state of education understand the need for more G&T programs. That's why a 2017 education study sponsored by Brooklyn Borough President Eric Adams and Bronx Borough President Ruben Diaz devoted no fewer than 7 of its 9 final recommendations to making G&T Programs more widely available in the City. The Adams-Diaz study focused on why so few African Americans and Latino kids pass the Specialized High School Admissions Test (SHSAT), but G&T Programs are not just for passing the SHSAT. For every ability and achievement level in students, you get the best learning out of kids by tailoring teaching to their peer levels. This benefits all kids, whether they take the SHSAT or not. There's a reason why we don't put all kids from kindergarten to 12th grade in one mixed-up class.

Senator Comrie and Assemblyman Colton have a bill in the New York State Legislature mandating at least one G&T Program in every school district. Senator Addabbo and Assemblyman Colton have another bill mandating a variety of G&T programs, not just in every school district, but also in individual schools. The Addabbo/Colton bill is supported in the New York City Council by a bill sponsored by Councilman Holden.

The scarcity of G&T seats created by the Department of Education is especially harmful to Chinese Americans. Asian Americans have the highest poverty rate in New York City. They cannot afford private schools when their children are denied seats in G&T programs. And they don't have the choices enjoyed by many African Americans and Latinos, who for many years avoided having their bright students wasted in below-grade-level classes at DoE's district schools by taking flight to charter schools, or to private schools paid for by programs like Prep for Prep and Oliver Scholars.

And when Asian Americans scrape together their hard-earned savings for supplemental education, to give their bright kids the G&T learning that the City's schools fail to provide, detractors smear them by saying they cheat for the SHSAT. Phil Wong, President of CACAGNY, says: "We Asians do not apologize for studying. CACAGNY demands that legislative action be taken in Albany and in the City Council to mandate G&T programs to be widely available in a variety of forms and levels, so that all bright and capable students in the City who are ready and eager to study can do so in our Department of Education public schools."



Founded in 1895 in San Francisco, the Chinese American Citizens Alliance is the oldest Chinese American civil rights organization in the United States. CACAGNY is its New York Chapter. www.CACAGNY.org

1895年在舊金山成立之同源會，是美國最古老的民權組織。紐約同源會是這個地區的分會。