

## **A Novel Solution to Controversy Over Admission to Specialized High Schools**

March 1, 2026

On March 1, 2026, the New York Post published an [opinion article by CACAGNY charter president Wai Wah Chin](#). While the piece is not an official CACAGNY statement, it vigorously advances the fight for race-blind meritocracy in education that is at the core of CACAGNY's mission.

The New York Post piece offers an out-of-the-box proposal that, by every logical and rational argument, should exorcise racial bean-counters' decades-long vitriol against the SHSAT-based admissions procedure for New York City's fabled Specialized High Schools.

The proposal is quite simple: add Specialized High Schools seats so that every student who takes the SHSAT gets a Specialized High School seat. This can be accomplished by expanding existing Specialized High Schools, adding new Specialized High Schools, or both. Admission into the Specialized High Schools would continue to be meritocratic: students queue up by their SHSAT scores and are admitted to their most-preferred school with available seats. This is allowed under New York State's 1971 Hecht-Calandra Act, and was the authority Mayor Bloomberg invoked to expand the number of Specialized High Schools from three to eight.

Racial bean-counters should be very pleased: the percentages of black and Hispanic students admitted by the Specialized High Schools would match exactly the percentages of black and Hispanic students who apply.

Proponents of meritocracy should also be pleased: more students would be, by their own choice, admitted to high schools under a race-blind, objective, scholastic, competitive, scholastic exam. The resulting schools would not all be of the same academic levels, of course, just as the eight Specialized High Schools now are already not all the same; they were not all the same even with just the original three. Being the same is not the point of the Specialized High Schools. Each can be different, and still admit students meritocratically.

CACAGNY has an ongoing lawsuit against New York City over the City's racially motivated expansion of the Discovery Program, a backdoor admission procedure to the Specialized High Schools. Thanks to Pacific Legal Foundation, CACAGNY's *pro-bono* counsel, and its brilliant arguments, this lawsuit has already yielded a [legally valuable ruling](#) at the 2nd Circuit Court of Appeals. The proposed expansion of Specialized High Schools would make the City's Discovery Program silly: why would you need an admission backdoor when everyone is admitted? Still, if the City persists with its discriminatory Discovery Program after there's no need for it, then the City would have even more to answer to CACAGNY in court.

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