



## COMMUNITY EDUCATION COUNCIL DISTRICT 15

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### **RESOLUTION ON AMENDMENTS TO 2022-23 HIGH SCHOOL ADMISSIONS POLICY**

*The Community and Citywide Education Councils (CCECs) are composed of parents who have been elected or appointed to serve as stakeholders of NYC School Community Districts, and specific cohorts of students, representing NYC public school students and their families.*

*Approved on November 9, 2021, the following resolution offers CEC 15's position regarding Amendments to the 2022-23 High School Admissions Policy.*

**WHEREAS**, New York City students have access to over 400 NYC Public High School with over 700 programs through the Department of Education High School Admission Process;

**WHEREAS**, students can also test or audition to apply to nine specialized high schools;

**WHEREAS**, the Department of Education has created a number of different communication methods for families and students to stay engaged with admissions which include: the NYC High School Directory<sup>1</sup>, the HS Admissions website, the HS Admissions email list, and direct communications from school Guidance Counselors to enrolled 8th grade families;

**WHEREAS**, the Department of Education has also created a system called School Finder for families and students to explore high schools based on interests, location, and other variables;

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<sup>1</sup>2020 HS Guide:

<https://www.schools.nyc.gov/docs/default-source/default-document-library/en-hsag-2020---english-web>

2021 HS Guide:

<https://www.schools.nyc.gov/docs/default-source/default-document-library/2021-high-school-and-specialized-high-schools-admissions-guide---guide-to-the-shsat>

**WHEREAS**, the Department of Education has a webpage dedicated to Specialized High Schools, along with an email list that offers admissions tips and key date reminders;

**WHEREAS**, families and students can get help with their student application through school counselors, a Family Welcome Center, or through the NYC Department of Education Enrollment Office;

**WHEREAS**, the High School admission process has allowed students to apply for placement anywhere in NYC regardless of national origin, race, color, religion, disability, sex, or familial status;

**WHEREAS**, the current policy for admissions, although legal by law, has not resulted in fair and equitable admissions in the above mentioned categories;

**WHEREAS**, the pandemic has forced our city to reexamine and address some of the inequities that we have already known exist;

**WHEREAS**, the New York State Board of Regents launched an initiative to advance diversity, equity and inclusion<sup>2</sup> in schools across the New York State; and

**WHEREAS**, the “Board expects that all school districts will develop policies that advance diversity, equity and inclusion – and that they implement such policies with fidelity and urgency”;

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that amendments to the 2022-23 cycle of High School admissions reflect the following changes:**

**All public non-charter school choices should appear on one list rather than multiple lists.** Simplifying the process will limit confusion and burden on families that to date have been working within a multiple list system. By creating a single list, families that are waitlisted will be able to receive a placement faster. Additionally, it is not equitable that some families may receive offers from three schools while others will receive only one offer.

**The number of schools that parents can list should be increased to a number greater than 12.** Although the current admissions policy results in 97% of students receiving an offer to one of their 12 choices, families are asking for the opportunity to list more than 12 schools.

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<sup>2</sup> <http://www.nysed.gov/diversity-equity-inclusion>

**Special Education Students should have access to the same choice of schools as General Education students.** Families of students that require a special program, like D75 Inclusion, NEST, Horizon or 2E require a clear list of available programs and must be prioritized. Expansion of these programs should be a DOE priority for Equity and Access.

**Enrollment caps of +/- 110% should be implemented.** Overenrolled schools create a burden on all school community members. Anecdotal stories of “hallway fire traps” and class sizes of 42 high school students are widespread. Caps on enrollment will allow for reduction in class sizes, further increases of ICT classrooms, increases in Health & Safety, and more equitable distribution of funding and resource opportunities for students at currently under enrolled schools.

**Outreach from High Schools, Superintendents and CCHS.** Once a student receives a placement, the family should receive a welcome letter from the school, in English and in the family’s home language, with an introduction to the High School Principal, the Parent Coordinator, the AP of Special Education, MLL and/or STH coordinator, the HS Superintendent, and the Citywide Council on High Schools. This letter should include contact information for all of the above mentioned, including a list of programs and services that are offered by the school.

**The waitlist policy should be clear and easy to understand.** There is no clear understanding of how the waitlists work leaving families confused and disappointed. HS Supts and Principals should meet with these families to discuss next steps.

**Annual Admissions and Enrollment Reports should be presented to CCECs.** The Office of Enrollment along with the Admissions Office should present annually to the CCECs with comparative year to year data highlighting the DOE’s efforts to create more equitable outcomes for students and showing progress towards the Board of Regents initiative to advance diversity, equity and inclusion in schools across New York State.<sup>3</sup>

**Attendance should never be included in any admissions screening.** There are a variety of reasons why students may miss days of school, including health related reasons. DOE is currently advising families to keep students home if they exhibit a fever or other related symptoms. Students should not be penalized by attendance screens.

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<sup>3</sup> <http://www.nysed.gov/diversity-equity-inclusion>

**Screening by Grades.** Since the pandemic, some middle schools chose to use number grades and other middle schools used Pass Fail grades. For middle school students that didn't receive numerical grades, high school screening by grades would give unfair advantages to some students. For screened schools, DOE must find an equitable way to offer seats.

**Clear Pathway for students who do not submit an application.** This small cohort of students require extra support. Direct outreach must be provided to families or students who can not navigate the system, may not know about the admissions process and/or miss the application deadline.

**Support for 6-12 Schools.** An assessment should be done to improve retention rates at 6-12 schools. An open and honest discussion with BCO support would reflect who's leaving and why? 6-12 models have a body of research behind them that families may not be aware of.

**Align Ed. Opt. Admissions.** Educational option (ed. opt.) programs are designed to serve students at a range of academic levels, yet these schools do not all follow a similar ranking process giving advantage to some and varying from the original intent of this equitable model. Currently, some schools may choose to rank some applicants based on their academic record or other criteria. Offers are made based on randomly assigned numbers, and some offers are made based on ranking numbers for programs that rank applicants. If a program also uses admissions priorities, all qualifying applicants in the first priority group will get offers first. Where the majority of high school admissions are to Ed. Opt. programs, by not aligning admissions methods, confusion and unnecessary burden is placed on families to understand how to apply to each school in order to gauge where their child may qualify.

**Timeline to submit an application should be extended.** The first week of December does not allow students or families the necessary time to explore their options, attend open houses, attend high school fairs, nor does it allow for meaningful outreach by guidance counselors.

*This Resolution was approved at a CEC15 Calendar Meeting held on November 9, 2021 by a vote of members present including: Camille Casaretti, Antonia Ferraro, Tia Schellstede, Nana-Poku Agyekum, Ivan Banda, Joseph Alexander, Nancy Randall and Alfred De Ingeniis.  
Abstained: Vincent Lu*