



COMMUNITY EDUCATION COUNCIL DISTRICT 15

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Resolution Calling for the Permanent Elimination of Discriminatory Admissions Methods for Middle and High Schools

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 September 20, 2022, the following resolution offers CEC 15's position regarding Screening methods for admission to middle and high schools:

WHEREAS, students are returning to a public school system in the midst of recovering from the COVID-19 global health crisis that illuminated the long-standing inequities in our public education system;

WHEREAS, under-resourced and historically marginalized students and families have greater access to public middle and high schools due to admission changes implemented in December 2020;

WHEREAS, all 5th-grade students and their families have not dealt with the burden of navigating admission screening in their search for a public middle school since December 2020,¹

WHEREAS, previously screened middle school programs are entering their third open admission cycle with two active cohorts of students admitted without the use of screens;

WHEREAS, the removal of middle school screens in its first year [increased diversity](#) at many of the most sought-after middle schools with the percentage of students from low-income families and English Language Learners increasing on average by 7 and 4 percent respectively;²

1

<https://www1.nyc.gov/office-of-the-mayor/news/874-20/mayor-de-blasio-chancellor-carranza-2021-22-school-year-admissions-process>

2

<https://www.nydailynews.com/new-york/education/ny-middle-schools-pandemic-middle-school-screens-suspension-20210511-bvnten6fmnhibek3jzl6hyna6e-story.html>

WHEREAS, the reinstatement of middle school screens would stunt progress made in diversifying middle schools and once again make the application process burdensome and stressful for students and families;

WHEREAS, we continue to find it fundamentally inappropriate to measure the “worthiness” of a 9-year-old student to attend a public middle school by judging their capacity to learn on their academic record up to that age;

WHEREAS, changes to the high school admission process have also improved access and transparency by centralizing the student ranking process within the Department of Education, standardizing the selection criteria screened schools use, and eliminating [proven discriminatory selection criteria](#) such as attendance and state test scores;³

WHEREAS, changes to the high school admissions process likely increased diversity at several of the most sought-after high schools which saw significant increases in offers going to students from low-income families and Black and Latino students;

WHEREAS, the use of admissions screens at all levels has been proven to disproportionately exclude Black and Latino, low-income, multilingual learners, and students with disabilities;

WHEREAS, the changes made to admissions over the course of the pandemic were widely supported as shown by multiple [petitions](#), [letter sign-ons](#) (see also a sign-on letter from [District 2 educators](#).) and [campaigns](#) led by Black and Latino students;

WHEREAS, the changes to admissions are aligned with multiple past reports that exposed the discriminatory effect of screening, making any reversion to the screening process in the name of supporting students and families unfounded and unsupported by research;⁴

WHEREAS, the racially and socioeconomically disparate impact of COVID-19 has shown us that we must move past inequitable systems, and cannot return to “business as usual,” but rather we must begin to build a more equitable system for all students.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Department of Education permanently end the use of admission screens at public middle schools;

THEREFORE BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Department of Education sustain all the changes made to the high school admissions process including the elimination of the use of attendance and state test scores as selection criteria;

3

https://docs.steinhardt.nyu.edu/pdfs/metrocenter/atn293/sdag/Making-the-Grade-II.pdf?_ga=2.180347746.750278352.1660591005-1047760929.1656694656

⁴ See New York Appleseed’s [report on middle school screens](#); the [NYC Bar Association’s report](#) on competitive admissions methods; and, The Fordham Feerick Center’s [Screened Out](#) report.

THEREFORE BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED if the Department of Education continues to allow screened programs at the high school level, we demand the Department of Education continue to allow students with a grade point average of 85 or above to receive first priority to academically screened programs;

THEREFORE BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Department of Education prioritize funding and co-creating programming that supports students, their families, and DOE employees who are critical to supporting the navigation of admissions.

This Resolution was approved at a CEC15 Calendar Meeting held on September 20, 2022 by a vote of members present including: Camille Casaretti, Nancy Randall, Vanessa Ueoka Gonzalez, Nakia Muhasa Brown, Antonia Ferraro, Joe Alexander, Nana-Poku Agyekum, Ivan Banda, and Tia Schellstede.

*The Resolution was voted YES by 9 members.
Opposed: Vincent Lu, Alfred DeIngeniis*