

New York Appleseed[®]

April 14, 2022

New York Appleseed Re: Announcement on Gifted and Talented Programs

New York Appleseed, along with many other organizations that advocate for equitable learning opportunities for all NYC students, particularly our most marginalized students, is incredibly disappointed and dismayed by today's announcement regarding G&T programming. We are appalled that the NYCDOE came to the conclusion of maintaining programming that separates and segregates our youngest children, often across racial and socioeconomic lines, despite numerous reports, community engagement sessions, and research that cited the detrimental effects G&T programs create for NYC students and the school system as a whole.

Instead of expanding opportunities for all NYC students to have access to enrichment, we are expanding on a model of scarcity by continuing to gatekeep **public** school programs through a competitive process. The addition of 1,000 seats does nothing to resolve the problem at the core of G&T programming—that students must be separated by “ability” when that “ability” is more likely a reflection of socioeconomic variables beyond many students' control.

To make matters worse, the addition of an entry point in 3rd-grade for the top 10% of second graders to fight for a still limited amount of seats, will only proliferate and exacerbate the exclusion of access that NYC's most marginalized students experience. Eliminating the G&T eligibility test for 4-year-olds becomes negligible when the following policy becomes to instead judge the educational attainment of students as young as 7 years old for a chance at accessing the academic services they want and need.

We hear this administration loud and clear in its mission to scale, sustain, and restore, however, if we continue to scale exclusionary policies, sustain segregative programming, and restore proven ineffective reforms, we will continue to feed the vicious cycle of structural inequality that affects our most vulnerable students. All of New York City's students—especially its Black and Brown students, students identified as English Language Learners, students from low-income families, students in temporary housing, and students with disabilities—deserve so much more from city leadership than a haphazard expansion for some when we have the funding, ability, research and tools to provide enrichment for all.

Black Lives Matter at School NY Steering Committee

Students Break The Silence

District 28 Action for Equity

Community Education Council District 14

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Community Education Council District 16

Citywide Council on Special Education (CCSE)

New York Civil Liberties Union

Alliance for School Integration and Desegregation

Coalition for Asian American Children and Families (CACF)

New Yorkers for Racially Just Public Schools (RJPS)

Parents For Responsive Equitable Safe Schools (PRESS NYC)

District 15 Parents for Middle School Equity (PMSE)

D30 Collective

Educational Council Consortium (ECC)

The Mural Justice Project

NYC Opt Out

Teens Take Charge

Alliance for Quality Education