

Integrated Classrooms Inclusive Enrichment

Why NYC can do better than segregated G&T programs.

Competitive methods of selection for the gifted & talented (G&T) programs in New York City are as much measures of opportunity and access as measures of true need for specialized G&T services.

New York City cannot promise equity and excellence until it stops justifying a program that segregates very young students into separate classrooms.

**Segregated G&T classrooms do not benefit all our students.
Integrated classrooms do.**

What We Hear: Separating students into separate classrooms is better for all students!

What We Know:

Research has shown that isolating some students into gifted classrooms does not significantly boost their academic achievement while harming that of the students left behind. Meanwhile, there are reams of social science research on the academic and socio-emotional benefits of integrated classrooms, such as resilience, empathy, real-world skills for a multicultural world, intergroup understandings, increased math and reading test scores, increased likelihood of graduation and college attendance. Integrated classrooms provide the quality education that all families are seeking for their children.



What We Hear: G&T does not need to be eliminated, but rather needs to be expanded to serve more students, particularly Black and Latinx students!

What We Know:

G&T services do need to expand to reach every student who needs them, but the only way to do that is by ending the current model of scarcity and segregation. Providing G&T services to ALL students who need them is only possible when they are provided through heterogeneous classrooms in every school. NYC has already tried to expand the current broken G&T program to underserved communities in the early 2000s and more recently in District 16. These efforts failed; G&T programs halved and the ones that did survive are in white affluent neighborhoods.



What We Hear: Without G&T, my child has less of a chance of getting into a prestigious middle-school and high-school!

What We Know:

If that is true, it must also mean that students who do not receive G&T services beginning at age 4 are less likely to attend a “prestigious” high school—a situation in which the injustice speaks for itself. Recent admission changes have moved toward creating equitable and excellent integrated spaces for all students rather than for a select few. Middle schools are no longer allowed to handpick students. If your child is truly gifted, they will stand out on an equal playing field in middle school without being handed added advantages over other students through G&T. It is also worth noting that students who attended a G&T program in elementary school make up a small percentage of the total students in screened high schools today.



Did You Know?



15,000 very young children took the G&T test in 2018. **7950** qualified. **Only 5700** who qualified actually went on to apply for a seat in a program, and, of those, **only 3700** actually got seats.

This means that families **of over 9000** students who were initially interested in G&T programs for their children **did not** ultimately receive G&T services for some reason.

The above numbers indicate the current system is doing a **TERRIBLE** job of meeting the needs of families interested in G&T services. It is also doing a terrible job of offering integrated school options with strong academic programs—something that parents say they want.

Integrated Classrooms Inclusive Enrichment

There is More Consensus than Division...

We believe there is more consensus than division when it comes to the REAL issues. Most people can agree:

Students need instruction tailored to their individualized needs;

The current system is not and cannot provide G&T services to all kids who need them;

Getting services shouldn't be based on competition for a limited number of seats— if a child needs the services, they should get them;

No child who can benefit from gifted services should have to travel from the school they would otherwise attend to receive the services they need;

Our current system of separate G&T classrooms guarded by a competitive process is a barrier to addressing these issues most of us agree on. A model of scarcity and competition relying on students needing to traverse great distances cannot serve all students.

Therefore, every school should provide strong academic programs regardless of how they do in a competitive process.

Providing accelerated and enriched learning opportunities to ALL students who need them is only possible when they are provided through heterogeneous classrooms in every school.

Schoolwide Enrichment is Possible

District leaders in the St. Louis Park School District in Minnesota announced in March of 2021 that they will be replacing their separate G&T programming with an anti-racist talent development program for all. Every child will have access to enrichment through a talent development course from K-5th grade.

Rockville Centre School District on Long Island, NY successfully de-tracked their IB program by expanding the accelerated math program to all of its high school students. This move led to consistent high scores from students already considered "high achieving" and increases in achievement and passing rates for all students.

