

CITYWIDE COUNCIL ON HIGH SCHOOLS NEW YORK CITY DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

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Citywide Council on High Schools

Annual Report 2014-2015



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President's Message:

As we unfold this year's sixth Citywide Council on High School's Annual Report for the 2014-2015 school year, the de Blasio administration continues to strategize with creating new school policies and formalizing the best way to educate the public school students of New York City.

Mayor de Blasio has curtailed most of the 12 years of Bloomberg's administration reforms by keeping his campaign promise of not closing failing schools but instead revamped them into "Renewal Schools" in order to give them a second chance. During his first year, he stopped the Bloomberg madness of random co-location of schools. In his second year, this is where we see the "Great Restructuring" taking place.

Chancellor Fariña has not allotted a considerable amount of time to high schools, due to what I believe was her laser focus on Universal Pre-K and ensuring the success for Middle School structure. But recently Chancellor Fariña has instituted: new schools, Community Schools, the New Snapshot, PROSE schools, Learning Partners Program, new CTE schools and other programs to help solve some of the issues the high schools are currently facing.

What is new in this CCHS Annual Report, is that we have added a recommendation section at the end. In this section, the council is presenting the DOE their advice on what they would like to see going forward. This is our way of giving a voice to the high school parents of this great city. We are asking the DOE to look at our recommendations and give us feedback during the 2015-2016 school year.

On behalf of the council, I would like to thank all the high school superintendents that have participated in our monthly meetings. A special thanks goes to Superintendent Karen Watts for her excellent job as our liaison. She has done a superb job assisting us with presenters and keeping us informed of DOE policy changes.

A special thanks goes to our Annual Report Chair Michelle Gebrail whom with her commitment to the project has turned out an excellent report in a timely manner. I want to thank the Annual Report Committee: Chair Michelle Gebrail, Neyda Franco, Constance Asiedu, Monica Bajraktarevic, Andrew Dorman, Pamela Garcia, Theresa Hedrington, Noah Kaufman, Don McQueen, Marianne Russo, Elizabeth Veras, Monique Lindsey (past CCHS member) and myself. A special thanks to our Administrative Assistant, Suet Mei Chan for her research and artistic design. Our Annual Report writer Gail Robinson deserves special acknowledgement for her hard work, research and diligence in completing this report.

The passion and commitment of dedicated parent volunteers, is what makes this CCHS Council strong. My hope is that this will continue after the current council leaves and another takes its place. This report ends on April 30, 2015 and the next report will resume when the newly elected CCHS members take office, at which time they will issue another Annual Report.

Structure and Powers of CCHS

The CCHS is among the 32 community education councils (CECs) and four Citywide Councils created when the New York State legislature enacted mayoral control of New York City schools in 2002. While CECs have retained a few of the powers and functions of the community school boards they replaced, such as drawing school zoning lines, the CCHS can only:

- "Advise and comment on any educational or instructional policy involving high schools";
- "Issue an annual report on the effectiveness of [DOE] in providing services to high school students" and make recommendations on improvements;
- Hold at least one calendar and one business meeting per month. These are public meetings where high school issues are addressed.

The structure of CCHS is different from that of the CECs or even of the other Citywide Councils. CCHS is the only council that has borough-based representation: two elected representatives for each borough are joined by three additional members appointed by the public advocate, the Citywide Council on Special Education and the Citywide Council on English Language Learners. Like other councils, the CCHS also has a non-voting student member.

Although official actions (such as resolutions) must be voted upon and approved by at least seven members, much of the council's work is carried on through the borough representatives. With more than 400 high schools, this is the only practical way for the council to have meaningful relationships with individual schools. Further, since each borough except Staten Island has at least 75 high schools, CCHS representatives have divided responsibilities along district or geographic lines within the boroughs they represent. This splitting of responsibilities reflects the large number of schools that the representatives need to cover. It is in no way required. The three appointed members are not restricted to any geographic area.

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Introduction

The New York Citywide Council on High Schools (CCHS) Annual Report provides insight into major developments affecting our high schools during the 2014-15 academic year. As parents, the council would like to inform the New York City Department of Education (DOE) of what our expectations and recommendations are. We would like to collaborate with all our allies in education. It is our hope that this report will help serve as a tool to strengthen the education the city provides its children. In turn, this will aide our students in their journey to compete globally in a very competitive and technologically advanced world.

This report comes at the end of Mayor Bill de Blasio and schools Chancellor Carmen Fariña's first full school year since they took office in January 2014. During his first months as mayor, Mayor de Blasio and his administration focused largely on creating free universal, full-day pre-kindergarten for New York's 4-year-olds. High schools received little attention.

With the largely successful introduction of pre-k programs in September 2014, the chancellor began directing more of her attention to primary and secondary education, scrapping some policies from the previous administration and putting new ones in their place. In a huge change for high schools, Mayor de Blasio and Chancellor Fariña ended the Bloomberg administration's practice of shutting failing schools. During Michael Bloomberg's 12 years in office, the three chancellors who served him closed or started to phase out more than 60 high schools they considered to be failing, including many large, comprehensive high schools. In reversing that practice, Chancellor Fariña announced that the Department of Education (DOE) would try to "turn around" struggling schools by giving them additional support and helping them by providing a wide array of social and medical services to their students.

The administration's other key 2014-15 initiatives involving high schools included:

- Abandoning the letter grade on the Progress Reports issued annually for every city school and replacing the Progress Report with the simpler School Quality Snapshot;
- Strengthening the role of district superintendents and doing away with the network system that had provided support for schools;
- Placing struggling schools under one umbrella as "Renewal Schools";
- Creating community schools that would provide services aimed at meeting the needs of students beyond academics;
- Expanding dual language programs;
- Changing discipline rules and procedures to reduce the number of student suspensions;
- Essentially eliminating the ban on students having cell phones in school buildings.

¹ Citywide Council on High Schools, *Annual Report 2012-13*, New York City Department of Education, December 2013.

As this report is written, some of these initiatives are only a few months old, making it far too soon to evaluate their success or failure. This report, though, will describe the changes and the reasons behind them. It also will lay out the challenges facing the city's high schools and provide a view of the state of the high school system as the 2014-15 school year draws to a close.

As of the 2014-15 school year, New York City had more than 400 high schools offering some 700 programs.² While the system includes schools with thousands of students -- Brooklyn Tech has almost 5,500 -- it also has a smattering of schools with barely over 300 children. There are schools for students with various talents and for those wanting to pursue specific careers -- including some New York-centric ones like working for the Metropolitan Transportation Authority, backstage at a theater or helping to manage New York harbor. Most schools offer a general academic program designed to prepare their students for college but some do that with a smorgasbord of Advanced Placement classes, foreign languages and unusual electives. Others provide few classes beyond those mandated by the state Board of Regents. There are specialized high schools for academically high-performing students and transfer schools for students who have fallen behind. Some high schools are combined with middle schools, and a few will soon extend to grade 14, allowing students to earn an associate's degree as well as a high school diploma. There are schools that help most of their students shine, others where students do little more than mark time until they graduate or drop out and many that fall somewhere in between.

This system -- with all of its choices -- serves some students very well, but it also fails some of them. Of 79,233 teenagers who started high school in New York City in 2008, 21,658 had not earned a diploma six years later.³

Just as New York City high schools are a diverse group, so are the approximately 333,500 young people who attend them. During the 2012-13 school year, about 16 percent of students in city high schools were Asian, 39 percent Hispanic, 31 percent Black and 13 percent White (another 1 percent were listed as mixed race or American Indian). Around 13 percent were English language learners. Almost 17 percent had a disability that required them to receive some special education services. About three quarters came from families whose incomes were low enough that the student qualified for a free or reduced price lunch, and almost 17,000 were homeless at some point during the year. Approximately one third were considered over age for the grade they were in.⁴

The Great Restructuring

Throughout the year, Chancellor Fariña announced a series of changes aimed at giving more authority to district and high school superintendents who had seen their power curtailed

² 2014-13Directory of NYC Public High Schools, New York City Department of Education (http://schools.nyc.gov/NR/rdonlyres/6EBFAB79-2001-48FA-8680-E494DF2CE20C/0/20142015HSD FullDirectory.pdf).

³ Figures adapted from figures released by the New York City Department of Education on graduation rates for cohorts from 2001 to 2010, using the state calculation method.

⁴ New York City Independent Budget Office, *New York City Public School Indicators*, July 2014 (http://www.ibo.nyc.ny.us/iboreports/2014edindicatorsreport.pdf).

during the Bloomberg administration. To do this, she will disband the so-called support networks created by former Schools Chancellor Joel Klein. Beginning in spring 2010, all schools had to partner with a network, choosing from about 60 of them. The networks provided the schools with expertise on instruction, budgets, attendance, safety and other concerns.⁵

Under Chancellor Fariña's reorganization, the key players will be district superintendents -- including 10 regional high school superintendents and 32 representing Community School Districts -- who will hire principals and work to ensure that their schools are operating in compliance with city guidelines. Chancellor Fariña said the restructuring is designed to strengthen lines of command and increase accountability.

Earlier in the year, she toughened the requirements for district superintendents and also asked all of them to re-apply for their jobs. While 36 percent of the district superintendents did not keep their jobs in the October shakeup⁷, all the high school superintendents did. Two of the district high school superintendents -- Michael Prayor and Fred Walsh -- and LaShawn Robinson, the one transfer school superintendent, are relatively new to their jobs. In March, Aimee Horowitz, the high school superintendent for Staten Island, was named the Executive Superintendent in charge of the city's program to turn around struggling schools (see page 14) but she will remain in her Staten Island post as well.

Unlike the superintendents of the 32 community schools districts, the post of high school superintendent is not mandated by state law. They are only accountable to the chancellor.

These are the superintendents and the districts they cover:

Marisol Bradbury: District 1 and most of District 2 (Manhattan) **Fred Walsh**: Districts 3, 4, 5 and 6 and part of District 2 (Manhattan)

Elaine Lindsey: Districts 7, 10 and 12 (Bronx) Carron Staple: District 8, 9 and 11 (Bronx)

Karen Watts: Districts 13, 14, 15, 16 and 32 (Brooklyn) **Michael Prayor**: Districts 17, 18, 20, 21 and 22 (Brooklyn)

Donald Convers: Districts 19 and 23 (Brooklyn); District 26, 27 and 29 (Queens)

Juan Mendez: District 24, 25, 28 and 30 (Queens) Aimee Horowitz: District 31 (Staten Island) LaShawn Robinson: Transfer High Schools

Rose-Marie Mills: Office of Adult and Continuing Education

⁵ New York City Department of Education, "School Support" (http://schools.nyc.gov/AboutUs/schools/support/default.htm).

⁶ New York City Department of Education, "Department Announces New Criteria for School Superintendents," July 8, 2014 (http://schools.nyc.gov/Offices/mediarelations/NewsandSpeeches/2014-2015/Department+Announces+New+Criteria+for+School+Superintendents.htm).

⁷ Ben Chapman, "Exclusive: Schools Chancellor Carmen Farina Dumps 36 Percent of Superintendents in Biggest Shakeup Since Taking Office," *New York Daily News*, Oct. 21, 2014.

⁸ Anna Sanders, "Staten Island Educator Aimee Horowitz Heading de Blasio's \$150 Million Program for Struggling Schools," *Staten Island Advance*, March 10, 2015,

Chancellor Fariña also announced the creation of seven field support centers -- two each in Brooklyn and Queens and one in each of the other three boroughs -- all of which will have five to six senior staff and be headed by a field support center director. These centers are slated to open in summer 2015. This director and other center staff are expected to help schools with a wide range of operational and instructional issues, including safety, technology, after-school programs and student behavior.

In March, Chancellor Fariña appointed Mariano Guzmán, a senior adviser to the chancellor and former District 2 community superintendent, as senior executive director of the Office of Field Support. She also named the following people to serve as directors of the Borough Field Support Centers:⁹

Bronx: Jose Ruiz (Districts 7, 8, 9, 10, 11 and 12)

Brooklyn:

Bernadette Fitzgerald (Districts 13, 14, 15, 16, 19, 23 and 32) Cheryl Watson-Harris (Districts 17, 18, 20, 21 and 22)

Manhattan: Yuet Chu (Districts 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6)

Oueens:

Lawrence Pendergast (Districts 24, 25, 26 and 30) Marlene Wilks (Districts 27, 28 and 29)

Staten Island: Kevin Moran (District 31)

The directors will play a specific role in trying to support struggling schools. This is part of the administration's efforts to avoid closing these schools (for more, see page 14). In general, these field offices are intended to provide help and support to high schools, elementary and middle schools, according to *Strong Schools*, *Strong Communities*, a report issued by DOE. In the report, the department said, "The goal of this approach is to ensure that those schools that are doing well can continue to develop their practices and share them across the system, while those schools that require additional support receive what they need to improve." ¹⁰

The department has said that, despite the various structural changes the chancellor is making, principals will retain the autonomy they acquired during the Bloomberg years and will remain responsible for hiring and budgets. "We are drawing clear lines of authority and holding everyone in the system accountable for student performance. All of our offices – from central

⁹ New York City Department of Education, "Chancellor Fariña Announces Appointment of Borough Field Support Center Directors," March 9, 2015.

⁽http://schools.nyc.gov/Offices/mediarelations/NewsandSpeeches/2014-

^{2015/}Chancellor + Fari%C3%B1a + Announces + Appointment + of + Borough + Field + Support + Center + Directors.htm

¹⁰ New York City Department of Education, *Strong Schools, Strong Communities: A New Approach to Supporting New York City's Public Schools and All of Our Students,*" January 2015 (http://schools.nyc.gov/NR/rdonlyres/C955EF12-EBBC-4B41-AF8D-20597C55DF0C/0/StrongSchoolsStrongCommunities_NYCDOE.pdf).

to the field – will be aligned under one vision," Chancellor Fariña told¹¹ a forum as she unveiled her restructuring plan in January.

The restructuring may appeal to some advocates who said most parents did not understand the network system -- or even know of its existence -- and did not know where to turn when they had an issue with their child's school or principal. Some principals, though, urged Chancellor Fariña to preserve the networks saying that, since they were not based on geography, they helped counter the city's economic and racial segregation. In a letter written in 2013, 120 principals said the networks "provide particular kinds of support for schools that many of us have found to be invaluable."

New Schools

Nine new district high schools opened in September 2015. This is a far cry from the number opened under the Bloomberg administration, which launched hundreds of new schools, most of them small and many with a theme, to replace the generally larger high schools it shut down. More than 330 new high schools opened in the years from 2002 to 2013.¹³

Most new schools begin with grade 9 in the fall and add a grade every September until they become a full high school. The high schools that opened in 2014-15 listed on the next page.

Brooklyn

- Nelson Mandela School for Social Justice (District 16)
- Urban Assembly School for Collaborative Health Care (District 19)

Manhattan

- Inwood Early College for Health and Information Technologies (District 6)
- Manhattan Early College School for Advertising (District 2)
- Urban Assembly Maker Academy (District 2)

Queens

- Benjamin Franklin H.S. for Finance and Information Technology (District 29)
- Business Technology Early College H.S. (District 26)
- EPIC H.S. -- North (District 27)
- EPIC H.S. -- South (District 27)

The department does not plan to open any new high schools in September 2015.¹⁴

¹¹ Patrick Wall, "With System Shake-Up, Fariña Aims for Clear Line of Command," *Chalkbeat New York*, Jan. 22, 2015.

¹² Patrick Wall and Geoff Decker, "Fearing Change, Principals Lobby de Blasio to Protect Networks," *Chalkbeat New York*, Nov. 22, 2013.

¹³ Liz Robins and Theodore Meyer, "Nine High Schools, One Roof," New York Times, March 17, 2013.

¹⁴ Pamela Wheaton, "Round 2 High School Admissions Fair March 14-15," *Inside Schools*, Feb. 26, 2015.

Charter Schools

One of the complexities of the Charter Schools is while the Chancellor may decide when Charter Schools are located, she does not govern the daily operation of these schools. The number of publicly financed and privately run charter schools has risen dramatically in New York City since 2000. A large percentage of charter schools have been elementary schools but recently more charter operators, such as Success Academy and Achievement First, which started by operating elementary schools, have been expanding into secondary education. This is partly intended to allow a student to spend his or her entire K-through-12 career in schools operated by that network.

In 2014-15, according to the New York City Charter School Center, the city had 197 charter schools. Of those, 20 were K-through-12 schools, 15 were secondary schools offering grades 6 through 12 and 19 were high schools. 15

A number of the charter high schools admit only students who attend a middle school operated by the same network. For example, Achievement First Brooklyn High School is open only to graduates of Achievement First middle schools. ¹⁶ Others, such as Uncommon Charter High School, give preference to those students already in the network. ¹⁷

Some, though, are freestanding high schools. Broome Street Academy, for example, is a small school that serves many teenagers in temporary housing or foster care.

On the following page is an unofficial list of charter schools with high school grades.

Finding space for new charter schools remains a major challenge. The Bloomberg administration placed dozens of charters in DOE buildings, which they shared with one or more district public schools. Shortly after being in office, Mayor de Blasio and Chancellor Fariña sought to limit the placing of charter schools in public school buildings. In particular, the chancellor said she wanted to avoid "co-locating" high schools in elementary schools -- or vise versa. This sparked intense opposition from some in the charter sector, who quickly found an ally in Governor Andrew Cuomo. The governor then instituted rules allowing new or expanding charter schools to have "access to facilities" in city-owned school buildings and barring them from being charged rent. If no space were available, the city would have to provide funding to cover rent.¹⁸

• Since then, the de Blasio administration has continued to co-locate charters and district schools. Like its predecessor, it also allows two or more district schools to share a facility. In 2014-2015 the Panel for Education Policy approved these DOE's plans for

¹⁵ New York City Charter School Center, "Charter School Facts

⁽http://www.nyccharterschools.org/sites/default/files/resources/NYC-Facts-OCT-2014-15.v3.pdf).

¹⁶ Achievement First, "About Achievement First Brooklyn High School"

⁽http://www.achievementfirst.org/schools/new-york-schools/achievement-first-brooklyn-high-school/).

¹⁷ Inside Schools, "Uncommon Charter High School" (http://insideschools.org/component/schools/school/1722).

¹⁸ Kenneth Lovett, "State Leaders Reach Deal on Charter School Reforms," *New York Daily News*, March 27, 2014.

co-locations affecting high schools. Some of them are intended to create space for charter networks that either are opening new high schools or expanding into the high school grades. Expanding Young Women's Leadership School of the Bronx to include grades 9 to 12 in IS 117 Joseph H. Wade in the Bronx (District 9; building X117). Young Women's Leadership already offers grades 6 through 8 and will begin phasing in a high school in September, with a 9th grade class of 80 to 90 girls.¹⁹

Giving Success Academy Bed-Stuy 1 additional space in a building (District 14; building K033) that also houses a district high school, Foundations Academy, as well as the School for the Urban Environment, which is a middle school, and a District 75 program for students with disabilities. Success is adding a 5th grade to the elementary school it currently operates in the building. Foundations is part of the School Renewal Program for struggling schools and has been designated a community school (see page 13). Critics questioned whether giving Success additional space in the building could jeopardize efforts to improve Foundations.²¹

- Placing the high school grades of Achievement First East New York and Achievement First Bushwick in a building (District 32; building K111) with two district middle schools, IS 347 and IS 349. The Achievement First School will operate as Achievement First University Prep.²²
- Putting New Visions Charter High School for Advanced Math and Science IV in the August Martin High School building (District 27, building Q400) where it will share the campus with August Martin and Voyages Prep South Queens, a transfer high school. The charter school, which was originally slated to be in Brooklyn, would open in fall 2015 and hopes to have 460 to 560 students in grades 9 through 12 by 2018-2019.

¹⁹ New York City Department of Education, "Amended: The Proposed Grade Expansion of the Young Women's Leadership School of the Bronx" (http://schools.nyc.gov/NR/rdonlyres/A07170DC-C942-47AE-8E1A-91B0DF349222/176706/09X117PEPNoticeamended128_vfinal.pdf).

²⁰ New York City Department of Education, "Second Amended Notice: The Proposed Expansion of Success Academy Charter School Bed-Stuy 1" (http://schools.nyc.gov/NR/rdonlyres/A07170DC-C942-47AE-8E1A-91B0DF349222/176707/K033_SecAmenPEP_vfinal.pdf).

²¹ Brian Charles, "Three Delayed Co-locations Approved After Fariña Reins in Concerns," *Chalkbeat New York*, Feb. 26, 2015.

²² New York City Department of Education, "Amended Educational Impact Statement: The Proposed Colocation of the High School Grade of Achievement First Bushwick and the High School Grades of Achievement First East New York," (http://schools.nyc.gov/NR/rdonlyres/A07170DC-C942-47AE-8E1A-91B0DF349222/176708/SecondamendedK111_PEP_Notice_vfinal.pdf)

School name	District	DOE building where located (if any)	Projected Grades
Bronx			
Bronx Lighthouse Charter	Distrrict 12	Own building	K to 12
· Bronx Preparatory Charter	District 9	Own building	5 to 12
· Hyde Leadership Charter	District 8	Own building	9 to 12
International Leadership Charter H.S.	District 10	Own building	9 to 12
KIPP NYC College Prep H.S.	District 7	Own building	9 to 12
New Visions Charter H.S. for Advanced Math and Science	District 8	John F. Kennedy Campus (X475)	9 to 12
New Visions Charter H.S. for Advanced Math and Science II	District 8	Jane Addams HS bldg (X650)	9 to 12
New Visions Charter H.S. for the Humanities	District 10	John F. Kennedy Campus (X 475)	9 to 12
New Visions Charter H.S. for the Humanities II	District 7	Sameul Gompers HS bldg (X655)	9 to 12
· NYC Charter H.S. for Architecture, Engineering, and Construction Industries	District 7	Own building	9 to 12
ROADS Charter H.S. II	District 12	Bronx Regional Education Campus (X401)	alternative
· University Prep Charter H.S.	District 7	X162	
Brooklyn			
Achievement First Brooklyn H.S.	District 13	Shares space with Uncomomm Charter HS	9 to 12
Achievement First University Prep H.S.	District 32 (as of	· ·	9 to12
Brooklyn Prospect Charter	District 15	Own building	6 to 12
Coney Island Prep Public Charter	District 21	Own building	9 to 12
Math, Engineering and Science Academy Charter H.S.	K291	K291	9 to 12
New Dawn Charter H.S.	District 15	Own building	9 to12
New Visions Charter H.S. for Advanced Math and Science III	District 22	Sheepshead Bay Educational Campus (K495)	9 to 12
Northside Charter H.S.	District 14	K126	9 to12
· ROADS Charter School I	District 23	K894	alternative
· Summit Academy Charter School	District 15	K027	6 to 12
· UFT Charter H.S.	Distirtc 19	Own building	9 to 12
· Uncommon Charter H.S.	District 13	Shares space with Achievement First University rep HS	9 to 12
· Uncommon Collegiate Charter H.S.	District 13	K458	9 to12
· Uncommon Preparatory Charter H.S.	District 18	K515	9 to 12
· Urban Dove Charter School	District 13	Own building	9 to12
· Williamsburg Charter H.S.	District 14	Own building	9 to 12
Manhattan		·	
Broome Street Academy	District 2	Own building	9 to 12
Democracy Prep	District 3	M501	9 to 12
Harlem Village Academy H.S.	District 5	Own building	9 to 12
· John V. Lindsay Wildcat Academy	District 2	Own building	9 to 12
New Heights Academy Charter	Distric 6	Own buildng	5 to 12
Opportunity Charter	District 3	M113	6 to 12
Promise Academy I H.S.	District 5	Own building	9 to 12
Promise Academy II H.S.	District 5	Arthur Schomburg Educational Campus (M501)	9 to 12
Renaissance Charter H.S. for Innovation	District 4	M099	9 to 12
Queens			
· Renaissance Charter	District 30	Own building	K to 12
Staten Island		•	
· John W. Lavelle Charter	District 31	Own building	6 to 12
New Ventures Charter school	District 31	Will use space in the Lavelle building	alternative
		•	

⁽¹⁾ Compiled from information availabe on New York City Charter Schhol Center (http://www.nyccharterschools.org/) and Inside Schools (www.insideschools.org)

In June, the Panel for Education Policy is scheduled to vote on a co-location proposal that would allow Success Academy Charter School -- Cobble Hill to expand in its current building in Brooklyn, which it shares with two grade 6-to-12 district schools: Brooklyn School for Global Studies and the School for International Studies, as well as a District 75 program for students with disabilities. Success anticipates that its school, which now is a k-to-4 school, will eventually extend through 8th grade, but the current co-location proposal is for 5th grade only.²³

Current state law limits the number of charter schools that can operate in the city to 114. Charters have already been granted for 90 schools, leaving 24 slots available.²⁴ Charter advocates have expressed concern that this could halt the expansion of the charter sector in the city, perhaps as early as next year.

Governor Cuomo has proposed increasing the statewide cap by 100 slots to a total of 560 and eliminating the current system, which has separate limits for charters in the city and in the rest of the state. Because the rest of the state has many more unfilled charter slots than the city, the governor's plan theoretically could open the door to some 280 charter schools in the five boroughs.²⁵ Mayor de Blasio has opposed raising the limit and stated at a news conference in November that he thought the current cap was operating well. Noting that many charters that have been approved have not yet opened, he said there is "a lot more work to do within the cap we have.²⁶

The increase in the cap was part of an education package Governor Cuomo unveiled in January that also proposed changes in teacher tenure and the teacher evaluation system, tax credits for donations to private schools and a new system for dealing with what the governor deems failing schools. Rather than taking each measure to the legislature piece by piece, Mr. Cuomo hoped to make the charter school limit and the other items part of the budget process. While the budget deal reached in late March included some parts of the package, it did not raise the charter cap.²⁷ That probably will be considered by the legislature this spring,

Some charter school supporters have sought to tie the extension of mayoral control of schools -- something Mayor de Blasio enthusiastically supports -- to an increase in the number of charter schools. 28

²³ New York City Department of Education, "The Proposed Expansion of Success Academy Charter School --Cobble Hill in Building K293," April 23, 2015 (http://schools.nyc.gov/NR/rdonlyres/48F82A33-1E19-492D-A4A0-5C856391ADAB/181033/K293PEPNotice_vfinal.pdf).

²⁴ New York City Charter School Center, "New York Charter Cap Status," Nov. 17, 2014 (http://www.nyccharterschools.org/resources/cap).

²⁵ Ibid

²⁶ Geoff Decker, "De Blasio: State's Charter School Cap Good The Way It Is," Nov. 5, 2014.

²⁷ Elizabeth A. Harris, "Cuomo Gets Deal on Tenure and Evaluations of Teachers," *New York Times*, March 31,

²⁸ Michael Garland and Carl Campanile, "Senator: Mayoral School Control Requires Raising Charter Cap," New York Post, March 26, 2015.

Introducing the Snapshot

In October, DOE unveiled two tools that it says will provide more useful information to parents, educators and others about the performance, environment and practices at every public school in the city.²⁹ The system was put in place in fall 2014 with reports covering the 2013-14 school year. The impact of the changes remains unclear.

The new reports replace the Progress Report, popularly known as school report card, which was introduced by the Bloomberg administration. The Progress Reports gave every school an overall letter grade and, while they offered a wealth of information, some of the reporting techniques were complicated -- schools, for example, were assessed on how they stacked up against demographically similar schools and on whether their students improved from year to year. Many viewing the reports rarely looked beyond the letter grade, even though those grades often fluctuated dramatically from one year to the next.

The de Blasio administration has done away with that letter grade. Rather than a rating system for schools -- one that led to the closing of some schools under the previous administration -- the new tools aim to be more descriptive. The School Quality Snapshot for every school is intended as a summary of "practices, environment and performance" at the school and is aimed largely at families. Like the old Progress Report, the Snapshot tracks student achievement and reports on the results of the Learning Environment Survey completed by students, parents and teachers. The Snapshot for high schools adds some material not found on the old Progress Reports, such as SAT scores and attendance rates for students and teachers. It also includes information called from the Quality Review, in which an experienced educator makes a formal visit to the school and reports on his or her findings.

The Snapshot does not, though, compare the school to a selected set of peer schools. Instead it cites the comparable citywide and borough-wide figures. This means high schools with students who come in with limited skills are stacked up against schools with better-prepared students. The Snapshot also does not track whether or not a school has improved, a major feature of the Progress Report. It simply says how the school performed in the year in question.

Those seeking additional information, such as data on how school performance has changed and how that compares with achievement at peer schools, can find it in the more detailed School Quality Guide, which is directed primarily at educators. That provides pass rates for the five major Regent exams for the previous three years and indicates whether the school has failed to meet or exceeded the level of its peer schools. It provides similar information for credits earned, graduation rates and college readiness.

In her speech announcing the changes, Chancellor Fariña said the Snapshot is a "common sense approach" that will "provide rich details about the life of the school by capturing successes, challenges, and strategies for improvement." Calling it a "balanced picture," she

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²⁹ New York City Department of Education, "School Quality Reports (http://schools.nyc.gov/Accountability/tools/report/default.htm).

said the new tool "reflects our promise to stop judging students and schools based on a single, summative grade."³⁰

Failing Schools

Having essentially ruled out sweeping school closures as a remedy for struggling schools, the de Blasio administration has sought to devise a credible alternative to address the problem of low-performing schools. With these efforts still in their early stages, it remains too early to assess their success or failure. However, critics, notably some members of the state Board of Regents and Governor Cuomo, have called for more draconian measures, including shut downs or transferring control of schools to other entities. The deal reached by the governor and the legislature in March will give low-performing schools one or two years to make "demonstrable improvement" and left it up to the state Department of Education to lay out exactly what that means. Schools that do not improve could be placed in receivership, meaning they could then be managed by a non-profit or a charter network.³¹

For its part, the de Blasio administration has been putting together its plan for struggling schools throughout the school year. As classes started in the fall, Chancellor Fariña met with two dozen principals of struggling schools to inform them of what the department would do to help them turn things around. She reportedly told them she would send support teams to the schools to try to diagnose the problems and also provide coaching for teachers.

In November, the mayor identified a total of 94 low-performing schools, which included those on the earlier list. These 36 high school and secondary schools, according to the administration, had graduation rates in the bottom 25 percent of city schools during the previous three years and also received a rating of proficient or below on their most recent Quality Reviews. (Proficient is the second highest rating; the top is well developed.)

The schools with high school grades on the list are:

Bronx

- Banana Kelly H.S.
 (District 8)
- Bronx Collegiate
 Academy (District 9)

- Bronx Early College
 Academy for Teaching
 and Learning (District 9)
- Bronx H.S. of Business (District 9)
- DeWitt Clinton H.S. (District 10)

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³⁰ New York City Department of Education, "Chancellor Carmen Fariña's Remarks on Her Visions for NYC Schools, Oct. 1, 2014 (http://schools.nyc.gov/Offices/mediarelations/NewsandSpeeches/2014-2015/Chancellor+Carmen+Fari%C3%B1as+Remarks+as+Prepared.htm)

³¹ Elizabeth A. Harris, op. cit.

- DreamYard Preparatory
 School (District 9)
- Fordham Leadership
 Academy for Business
 and Technology
 (District 10)
- Foreign Language
 Academy of Global

 Studies (District 7)
- Herbert H. Lehman H.S.
 (District 8)

Brooklyn

- Academy of Urban
 Planning (District 32)
- Automotive H.S (District 14)
- Boys and Girls H.S. (District 16)
- Brooklyn Collegiate: A
 College Board School
 (District 23)
- Brooklyn Generation (District 18)

Manhattan

 Coalition School for Social Change (District 4)

- Holcombe L. Rucker School of Community Research (District 8)
- Leadership Institute (District 9)
- Monroe Academy for Visual Arts and Design (District 12)
- New Explorers H.S.(District 7)
- Peace and Diversity
 Academy (District 12)
- Bushwick Leaders H.S. for Academic Excellence (District 32)
- Cypress Hills Collegiate
 Preparatory School
 (District 19)
 Foundations Academy
 (District 14)
- Frederick Douglass
 Academy IV (District 16)
- Juan Morel Campos
 Secondary School
- Multicultural H.S. (District 19)
 - Henry Street School for International Studies
 (District 1)

Wadleigh Secondary
 School for the Performing
 Arts (District 3)

 H.S. for Health Careers and Sciences (District 6)

Queens

- August Martin H.S.
 (District 27)
- Flushing H.S.(District 25)
- John Adams H.S.(District 27)
- Long Island City H.S.
 (District 30)

- Martin Van Buren H.S.
 (District 26)
- Pan American
 International H.S.
 (District 24)
- Richmond Hill H.S. (District 27)

To fix them, Mayor de Blasio offered a School Renewal Program, which DOE described as "a new strategy to fundamentally turn around New York City's most challenged schools." Under the plan, each of the challenged schools would become a so-called community school (for more, see page 20). In partnership with community-based organizations, these schools would offer services aimed not only at students' academics but also at the child's emotional and social well-being and at his or her family. The schools would provide an extra hour a day of instruction and possibly after-school, weekend or summer classes as well. The plan also called for academic interventions for students and professional development for teachers.

The plan would cover three years. In this -- the first year -- schools are supposed to develop a School Renewal Plan. Next year, the schools will have to meet the goals set out in that plan and demonstrate improvement in attendance and teacher retention. By the final year -- 2016-2017 -- schools would have to demonstrate both significant academic progress and significant progress on meeting its targets.

Schools that fail to do so, the DOE announcement said, "will face consequences, including changes to leadership and faculty of the school ...and/or possible reorganization of the school" that could include combining schools, breaking up large schools or even shutting a school.

The city said it would spend \$50 million over three years for the program. In addition, Mayor de Blasio announced in May that the 130 Renewal Schools, community schools and persistently failing school also would receive a \$60 million a year beyond their

current funding. The mayor said the schools were entitled to the funding under the city's Fair Student Funding formula, but never received it, owing largely to the state's failure to deliver the money. The additional funding is to go toward programs such as hiring guidance counselors, providing academic supports to students who need additional help, extending the school day and providing Advanced Placement classes.³²

The mayor has put pressure on the schools to improve. In a March visit to one of them --Richmond Hill High School -- he likened improving the schools to "house-to-house combat," and said his administration would take methods pioneered by CompStat, the program for tracking and fighting crime, and use it in the schools. Principals whose students are lagging behind would be grilled at meetings on their schools' performance, the mayor said, much as precinct commanders are questioned at police department meetings.

Chancellor Fariña appointed Aimee Horowitz, a high school superintendent, executive superintendent for "renewal schools," responsible for overseeing the effort. The chancellor named Christopher Tricarico, a former principal, to head up the Renewal School Office.

Critics have complained that DOE has been slow to roll out specifics of its plan for struggling school or to inform schools about exactly what changes they are expected to make. An investigation by *Chalkbeat New York* concluded that by March "only a portion" of the 94 schools had "received serious help," such as principal mentors, teacher coaches and specific goals for this year. Officials at several schools told *Chalkbeat* they had met with Renewal officials only once. While schools in the program were supposed to offer an additional hour of instruction for students every day, this has not yet happened at the schools.³³

One focus of the debate has been chronic problems at Boys and Girls High and Automotive High, both in Brooklyn and both on the state list of "Out of Time" schools that have performed poorly for a number of years. The de Blasio administration is requiring all staff at the two schools, including principals, to reapply for their jobs. ³⁴ Applications will be reviewed by12-member hiring committees at each school, made up of representatives from the teachers union, the principals union and the city, as well as parents designated by the teachers union. Before this went into effect, Bernard Gassaway, the principal at Boys and Girls, quit, reportedly pushed out by Chancellor Fariña. ³⁵ Michael Wiltshire, a long-time principal at highly regarded Medgar Evers College Preparatory School, replaced him.

³² City of New York Office of the Mayor, "Mayor de Blasio Announces Struggling Schools Will Receive Their 'Fair Student Funding' for the First Time," May 4, 2015.

³³ Patrick Wall, "While Some struggling Schools Get Extra Attention, Others Wait for More Help," *Chalkbeat New York*, March 6, 2015.

³⁴ Elizabeth A. Harris, "With Deal, Staff at 2 Struggling Schools Must Reapply for Jobs," *New York Times*, Nov. 7, 2014.

³⁵ Ben Chapman, "Staff at Two Troubled Brooklyn Schools Forced to Reapply for Their Jobs," *New York Daily News*, Nov.7, 2014.

The department has said it would not send any new students to either of the schools in the middle of the year.³⁶ Students who transfer midyear, commonly referred to as over-the-counter students, are often struggling academically, behind in credits, had problems at a previous school or may have spent time in the criminal justice system, making them a strain on a school.

Despite such actions, critics, including Dr. Gassaway, said the plan for the two schools does not go far enough. Merryl Tisch, chancellor of the state Board of Regents, said the schools needed a major shakeup. "If we do not see movement on these schools, these lowest-performing schools, on their ability to retool their workforce by the spring, we will move to close them," she said in a radio interview in November. In February, Chancellor Tisch said she saw signs of progress.³⁷

Meanwhile, Dr. Wiltshire, who kept his post at Medgar Evers, has raised the idea of combining Boys and Girls with Medgar Evers. The plan, which reportedly won approval from the leadership team at Boys and Girls, would provide Medgar Evers with more classrooms and better facilities. Boys and Girls has a large building and ample outside space and athletic fields but too few students -- its enrollment has fallen from more than 4,000 to fewer than 1,000. A merger also could give Boys and Girls an academic boost. While it has a four-year graduate rate of 42 percent and college readiness rate of 6 percent, 92 percent of Medgar Evers students graduate in four years, and 52 percent are considered ready for college. Any such plan would need DOE approval.

Chancellor Fariña has already approved one school merger. It involves MS 354 the School of Integrated Learning and MS 334 the Middle School for Academic and Social Excellence, which were created in 2005 when DOE broke up a large middle school in Crown Heights. Since that time MS 354 has done far better than MS 334. The principal of 354 will now be in charge of both schools.³⁹ DOE reportedly has plans for several additional mergers, and, Dr. Fariña has said, they could include merging city schools with private or charter schools. She has also said mergers would come only after extensive meetings with educators, community residents and parents and that having a gifted leader who could take over the struggling school would be key to deciding which schools should merge with others.⁴⁰ The move to some extent represents a reversal of the Bloomberg administration policy of breaking schools into smaller schools.

³⁶ Patrick Wall, "To Stabilize Two Struggling Schools, City Will Not Send The New Students Midyear," *Chalkbeat, New York*, Sept.25, 2014.

³⁷ Patrick Wall, "As State Reviews City's Turnaround Plans, Regent Chief See Progress at a Troubled School," *Chalkbeat New York*, Feb. 2, 2015.

³⁸ Patrick Wall, "Principal of Troubled Boys and Girls HS Floats Merger with Selective Medgar Evers," *Chalkbeat New York*, April 28, 2015.

³⁹ Kate Taylor, "Merger in Brooklyn is an Alternative to City's Small School Model," *New York Times*, April 27, 2015

⁴⁰ Dale W. Eisinger, Lisa L. Colangelo, Ben Chapman, "Exclusive: Up T a Dozen NYC Schools to be Merged in Plan to Boost Test Scores," *New York Daily News*, May 3, 2015.

Meanwhile in February the state designated six more schools -- five of them high schools -- as "out of time" schools. The high schools are on the next page. 41

Bronx

Banana Kelly H.S. (District 8)

- Fordham Leadership
 Academy for Business and
 Technology (District 10)
- Herbert Lehman H.S. (District 8)

Queens

- August Martin H.S. (District 27)
- John Adams H.S. (District 27)⁴²

DOE will have to submit plans for improving the schools to the state Department of Education by the end of July. The city has said that these plans would likely be similar to those it has been implementing at Boy and Girls and Automotive.⁴³

The "out of time" schools could be among the first in the state to come under a new plan backed by Governor Cuomo and many charter school supporters and approved by the legislature in late March. It allows the state to place what it considers to be failing schools in receivership -- and turn them over to private organizations, such as charter networks. Those organizations could fire teachers and administrators -- regardless of union contracts -- restructure the schools and change the curriculum. ⁴⁴ The law would also allow the city to close the schools or put them under an "alternate governance structure," such as the Renewal Schools program.

Many of these "out of time" schools, including Adams and Lehman, have faced possible closure before. While they have remained open, some critics say the turmoil has discouraged better students from attending the schools and resulted in smaller enrollments. Teachers, they say, have left as well.

To build support for his plan for failing schools, Governor Cuomo in February issued a report highlighting 178 schools around the state, 91 of them in New York City, that he

⁴¹ Dale W. Eisinger, Lisa L. Colangelo, Ben Chapman, "Exclusive: Up T a Dozen NYC Schools to be Merged in Plan to Boost Test Scores," *New York Daily News*, May 3, 2015.

⁴² Eliza Shapiro, "Six City Schools Added to State's 'Out of Time' List," *Capital New York*, April 14, 2015.

⁴³ Patrick Wall, "Facing State Scrutiny, Six New 'Out-of-Time" Schools Must Make Major Changes," *Chalkbeat New York*, April 14, 2015.

⁴⁴ Ben Chapman, "More Than 50,000 New York City Children Attend 'Failing' Schools, Report Says, *New York Daily News*, Feb. 27, 2015.

sees as failing. For high schools, that translates to a graduation rate of below 60 percent for the last three years. The report included some schools on de Blasio's list of Renewal Schools and some that the Bloomberg administration moved to close and that are already in the process of being shut.

These schools on the governor's list are already being closed:

Bronx

- Grace H. Dodge Career and Technical Education H.S. (District 10)
- Jane Addams H.S. for Academic Careers (District 8)

- Jonathan Levin H.S. for Media and Communications (District
 9)
- Samuel Gompers Career and Technical Education H.S. (District 7)

Brooklyn

• Sheepshead Bay H.S. (District 22)

Manhattan

Bread and Roses
 Integrated Arts H.S.
 (District 5)

- H.S. of Graphic Communication Arts (District 2)
- Washington Irving H.S. (District 2)

These high schools on the governor's list are on the city's list of Renewal Schools:

Bronx

- Banana Kelly H.S.(District 8)
- DeWitt Clinton H.S. (District 10)

DreamYard Preparatory
 High School (District 9)

- Fordham Leadership
 Academy for Business
 and Technology (District
 10)
- Foreign LanguageAcademy of GlobalStudies (District 15)

- Herbert Lehman H.S. (District 8)
- Monroe Academy for Visual Arts and Design (District 12)

Brooklyn

- Automotive H.S. (District 14)
- Boys and Girls H.S. (District 16)
- Cypress Hills Collegiate
 Preparatory H.S.
 (District 19)

• Foundations Academy (District 14)

- Frederick Douglass
 Academy IV (District 16)
- Juan Moral Campos Secondary School (District 14)

Manhattan

• Henry Street School (District 1)

Queens

- August Martin H.S. (District 27)
- Flushing H.S. (District 25)
- John_Adams H.S.(District 27)

- Long Island City H.S. (District 30)
- Martin Van Buren H.S.
 (District 26)
- Richmond Hill H.S. (District 27)

The governor also cited these schools as failing, but they do not appear on the city's list and are not being closed:

Bronx

- Alfred E. Smith Career and Technical Education
 H.S. (District 7)
- Bronx H.S. of Business(District 9)

Brooklyn

- Aspirations Diploma Plus
 H.S. (District 23)
- FDNY H.S. for Fire and Life Safety (District 19)

Manhattan

- Community Health
 Academy of the Heights
 (District 6)
- Frederick Douglass
 Academy II (District 3)

Queens

• Grover Cleveland H.S. (District 24)

- Bronx H.S. for the Visual Arts (District 11)
- Bronxwood Prep
 Academy (District 11)
- New Explorers H.S. (District 7)

- H.S. for Youth and Community Development (District 17)
- W.E.B. Dubois Academic
 H.S. (District 17)
- Global Neighborhood Secondary School (District 4)
- Marta Valle H.S. (District 1)

Community Schools

During 2014-15 the administration began laying the groundwork for rolling out its first group of community schools at the beginning of the 2015-16 school year. In July the mayor announced a \$52 million grant to launch the development of the schools, which try to meet the needs of children and their families by supporting a child's emotional and physical needs as well as academic ones. These schools involve partnerships between the school, students, parents and community groups. They offer a variety of services such as health care, vision tests, tutoring, job training, mental health counseling and family counseling. The money, some of it from the state, would be managed by the city in partnership with the United Way.

In December, the administration announced that it had selected the first 45 schools to deliver a range of services under the administration's community school initiative. (Struggling schools identified as Renewal Schools that are not on the list also will become community schools, though may not be as far along in the process.). Each of the 45 schools, including 19 high schools and 6-to-12 schools, were matched with a community based organization and given a full-time community school coordinator who will be responsible for determining what services meet the particular school's needs and organizing the delivery of those services.

The community high schools and their partners are:⁴⁵

School Name	Community Based	Service Vision
	Organization	
Academy for Young Writers	Pathways to Leadership	Relationship building
(District 19)		between students and
		staff, promoting youth and
		family voice, mental and
		primary health services,
		individual and group
		counseling, academic
		tutoring, college and
		career services, family
		social services assistance
Bronx Career and College	Phipps Neighborhood	Targeted support and
Preparatory H.S.		intervention, professional
(District i2)		development, improved
		family engagement,
		mental health support,
		workshops for staff and
		parents, family

⁴⁵ NYC Department of Education, "Complete List of Community Schools and Partner Organizations," (http://schools.nyc.gov/AboutUs/schools/community_schools/complete_schools_list.htm)

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		counseling, and peer
Bronx Studio School for	Global Kids	mentoring Advisory programming
	Giovai Kius	Advisory programming,
Writers and Artists		peer mentoring,
(District 8)		restorative justice
		programing, strengthening
		family engagement
		practices, "100% Respect
		Campaign" launch, staff
		coaching and professional
		development
Broome Street Academy	The Door	Academic support
Charter H.S.		including after school
(District 2)		tutoring, ELL intervention
		and Regents prep classes,
		college and career
		guidance and prep, parent
		engagement, connecting
		with families with social
		services including legal
		and housing services
Brooklyn Generation	Urban Arts	ELT, advocacy and
(District 18)		mentoring programs,
		college and career
		pathways, academic
		enrichment and
		remediation, school-based
		intervention programs,
		mental health services,
		legal assistance, drug
		education and abuse
		prevention, counseling
Brooklyn Lab School	Henry Street Settlement	Peer counseling and
(District 19)		teacher mentoring,
(2.34.60.17)		community service,
		family engagement
		activities like "Family
		Night," internships,
		academic enrichment and
		support
Brooklyn School for Math	Make the Road by	Legal services for families
and Research/Academy for	Walking	and students, adult-
Environmental	waiking	· ·
Leadership/Bushwick		student mentoring, college
School for Social		guidance and support,
SCHOOL FOR SOCIAL		peer mediation and
		conflict resolution

Justice/Academy of Urban Planning (District 32)		services, job training and placement, family engagement and "family nights," staff and teacher professional development, peer health sexual education, mental and physical health services
Brownsville Academy H.S. (District 17)	CAMBA	Home visits, academic advising, counseling, community engagement, mentoring programs, student and family social services, college and career readiness, special events on days of historically high absenteeism
DeWitt Clinton H.S. (District 10)	Good Shepherd Services	Small Learning Communities (SLC); child care and support services for student parents; high school graduation support; dental, mental and health services, alternative learning classes for under- credited students; sports and art activities; family engagement
East Bronx Academy for the Future (District 12)	Phipps Neighborhoods	Health and wellness programs, sports and arts programming, internships, job readiness and job placement, tutoring and homework assistance, individual and family counseling

East Brooklyn Community H.S. (District 18)	SCO Family of Services	Early childhood programs, housing assistance, after-school programming, job development and internships, parent education opportunities, legal and financial planning for parents, counseling, and home visits
Green School: An Academy for Environmental Careers (District 14)	St. Nicks Alliance	Whole-school engagement; targeted interventions; health services; family social services support; academic support; after-school programming in areas such as sports, gardening and academics; internship and volunteer opportunities
H.S. for Excellence and Innovation (District 6)	East Side House Inc.	Primary Person program (mentoring); internships and community service; mental, dental and health services; art classes in painting and theatre
H.S. for Media and Communications (District 6)	Catholic Charities	Student outreach, college planning, SAT and Regents prep, parent workshops, counseling and mentoring, enrichment programming, after-school programming in arts and theater, community building events
H.S. for Teaching and the Professions (District 10)	Sports and Arts	Family engagement and connection to services, parent workshops, academic support, mentoring, targeted services

Jill Chaifetz Transfer H.S.	Bronx Works, Inc.	Individual and group
(District 7)	,	counseling, college
		readiness assistance,
		career guidance, student
		outreach including home
		visits, student action
		plans, parent engagement
		meetings
Morris Academy for	Center for Supportive	Peer mentoring and
Collaborative Studies	Schools	support, extended-day
(District 9)	Schools	programming,
(Bistrice))		professional development,
		health services, expansion
		of academic and
		extracurricular activities,
		improved family
		engagement
Port Richmond H.S.	NY Center for	Staff professional
(District 31)	Interpersonal Development	development, adult-
(Bistrict 31)	interpersonal Beveropment	student mentoring,
		tutoring and after-school
		programming, college
		awareness, family
		engagement and school
		events, mental health and
		social services
Rockaway Collegiate H.S.	Partnership with Children	Staff professional
(District 27)	- Landidan with Children	development, adult-
		student mentoring,
		tutoring and after-school
		programming, college
		awareness, family
		engagement and school
		events, mental health and
		social services
		555141 551 11005

In January, Chancellor Fariña announced the creation of the Office of Community Schools to provide resources and expertise for the 128 community schools the city hopes to launch. Christopher Caruso, who spent many years with The After School Corp. and also served as assistant commissioner of the city Department of Youth and Community Development, was named executive director of the office. In April, Americorps, a national volunteer program, announced that it would give \$5.8 million to the community and Renewal Schools effort and provide 300 volunteers to the programs over the next two years. ⁴⁶

⁴⁶ Eliza Shapiro, "Americorps Pledges \$5, 8 Million to City's Community Schools," *Capital New York*, April 7, 2014.

Mr. de Blasio promoted the community school concept during his mayoral campaign and has expressed great hopes for it. "Community schools embody the values we believe should drive public education and make a real difference in student achievement," he has said.

Some experts, though, say the research on the schools, which have been used in other cities, most notably Cincinnati, is mixed. Others have questioned whether offering services can turn failing schools around, as Mayor de Blasio hopes. Eric Nadelstern, a top education official in the Bloomberg administration who now teaches at Columbia Teachers College, has said he thinks the schools are "a great concept" but questions whether failing schools can "provide a wide range of additional services if they can't even do what we're charging them with doing."

Teacher Evaluations and Tenure

The budget deal negotiated this spring also brought changes to the teacher tenure system. It requires that new teachers work for four years before becoming eligible for tenure, up from the current three. The teachers would have to receive three ratings of effective or highly effective. The new law also makes it easier to remove tenured teachers, letting districts remove even long-time teachers who have been rated ineffective -- the lowest rating -- for two consecutive years. ⁴⁸ Governor Cuomo hailed the changes for moving the system from rewarding longevity to rewarding performance. ⁴⁹

The method for making those evaluations is still the subject of debate. Concerned that 96 percent of teachers were rated effective or highly effective in 2013-14, Governor Cuomo proposed having student scores on standardized tests account for 50 percent of the teachers rating and to reduce the importance of principal evaluations. The final bill left details to the state Education Department although it does make it more difficult for teachers to achieve high ratings, prohibits the use of student surveys in rating a teacher, and requires an evaluation by someone from outside the school. The department and the Board of Regents must reach a decision on a plan by the end of June.⁵⁰

AVID Program

A number of city high schools have implemented Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID) to prepare students to succeed in college. AVID, which is offered in some 2,000 U.S. high schools, is essentially a class given during the normal school day and aimed at students who want to go to college but who are in the "academic middle" -- B, C or even D students. It emphasizes writing, critical thinking, teamwork, organization

⁴⁷ Eliza Shapiro, "De Blasio Bets Big on Community Schools, Capital New York, Nov. 4, 2014.

⁴⁸ Elizabeth A. Harris, "Cuomo Gets Deals on Tenure and Teacher Evaluations," *New York Times*, March 31, 2015.

⁴⁹ Jon Campbell, "Big Changes Coming for Teacher Tenure," *LoHud*, April 1, 2015.

⁵⁰ Geoff Decker, "Seven Ed Research Heavyweights to Head to Albany to Help Direct Evaluation Overhaul," *Chalkbeat New York*, April 30, 2015.

and reading.⁵¹ In addition to the course work, AVID provides support to students through tutorials, relationships with teachers and being part of a positive per group. It also trains teachers who will give the class.

According to the organization, three quarters of the students in AVID nationally are from low-income families and have parents who did not graduate from college. It says that 78 percent of seniors in 2013-14 seniors in AVID were accepted to a four-year college or university.⁵²

The program, which AVID says reaches some 800,000 student in the U.S, and 16 other states and territories, is run by a non-profit. Schools must provide funding for AVID. In New York City, individual schools -- not the district -- pay for the program.

The high schools offering AVID are listed on the next page.

Bronx

- Academy for Scholarship and Entrepreneurship
 (District 11)
- East Bronx Academy for the Future (District 12)
- Felisa Rincon de Gautier
 Institute for Law and
 Public Policy (District 8)

- Morris Academy for Collaborative Studies (District 9)
- Renaissance H.S. for Musical Theater and Technology (District 8)
- Science and Technology
 Academy: A Mott Hall
 School (District 9)

Brooklyn

- ACORN Community
 H.S. (District 13)
- Brooklyn Collegiate H.S.
 (District 23)

- Brooklyn Generation H.S.
 (District 18)
- Brooklyn H.S. of the Arts (District 15)

⁵¹ Alexandra Pannoni, "3Answers for High School Parents About AVID Classes," *US News & World Report Education*, Feb. 9, 2015.

⁵²AVID, "AVID's Impact" (http://www.avid.org/avid-impact.ashx).

- H.S. for Violin and Dance (District 9)
- Brooklyn School for Global Studies (District 15)
- Cobble Hill H.S. of American Studies
 (District 15)
- Dr. Susan S. McKinney
 Secondary School of Arts
 (District 14)
- H.S. for Global
 Citizenship (District 17)
- Park Slope Collegiate (District 15)
- Urban Assembly School for Law and Justice (District 13)
- Jacqueline Kennedy
 Onassis H.S. for
 International Careers
 (District 2)

Queens

- Academy of Finance and Enterprise (District 24)
- Channel View School for Research (District 27)

• Victory Collegiate H.S. (District 18)

Manhattan

- Edward R. Reynolds
 West Side H.S.
 (District 3)
- Gramercy Arts H.S.(District 2)
- H.S. for Media and Communications
 (District 6)
- H.S. of Arts and Technology (District 3)
- Richard R. Green H.S. of Teaching (District 2)
- Wadleigh Secondary
 School (District 3)
- Long Island City H.S.
 (District 30)

Pathways College

Preparatory: A College

Board School (District 29)

Staten Island

• Curtis H.S. (District 31)

 Ralph R. McKee Career and Technical Education H.S. (District 31)

Four charter schools also offer AVID: Mott Hall Charter School (Bronx), New World Preparatory Charter School (Staten Island), Promise Academy I Charter H.S. (Manhattan) and Renaissance Charter HS for Innovation (Manhattan)

College Now

College Now is a collaboration between DOE and the City University of New York that offers college credit courses to New York City high school students every year. It also provides pre-college classes on a wide range of subjects to students not yet ready for college work. Some of the classes are offered at individual high schools; others at various CUNY campuses around the city. College Now also has a summer program where high schools students take a class at CUNY at no charge. Altogether, College Now says its program reach about 20,000 students a year.

College Now's At Home in College program works with about 1,800 high school seniors as well as some students from CUNY GED programs, to help them enroll in college -- and stay in college. It provides math and English courses, fee waivers for the CUNY application, advising and help completing college applications, filing for financial aid and learning about various programs of study.

PROSE Schools

In accordance with the contract reached in 2014 between the city and the United Federation of Teachers (UFT), Chancellor Fariña and UFT President Michael Mulgrew in July announced the selection of 62 schools that would try out new programs that might normally not be allowed under the Chancellor's Regulations or the union contract. ⁵³ The idea of the program, called Progressive Redesign Opportunity Schools for Excellence or

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⁵³ New York City Department of Education, "City Schools and UFT Announce 2014-2015 PROSE Schools," July 7, 2014 (http://schools.nyc.gov/Offices/mediarelations/NewsandSpeeches/2014-2015/City+Schools+and+UFT+Announce+2014-2015+PROSE+Schools.htm).

PROSE, is to allow schools to test innovative ideas, such as new schedules and flexible class sizes.

Some 107 schools applied to participate in PROSE last year. Their proposals were reviewed by a panel consisting of representatives from the union and the district. In addition, proposals had to be approved by 65 percent or more of teachers in the schools where the idea was to be implemented. Documents released by the UFT to the Daily News indicated that some schools had requested more ambitious plans that were not approved, such as no longer requiring students who fail classes to repeat a grade.

These secondary schools participating are listed on the next page:

Bronx

- Bronx Arena H.S.(District 8)
- Bronx Collaborative H.S.
 (District 10)
- Bronx Community H.S.
 (District 8)
- Bronx High School for Law and Community (District 10)
- Bronx Lab School
 (District 11)
- Community School for Social Justice (District 7)
- Comprehensive Model
 School Project (District 9)

- East Bronx Academy for the Future (District 12)
- English Language
 Learners and International
 Support Preparatory
 Academy (District 10)
- Fannie Lou Hamer Freedom H.S.
 (District 12)
- KAPPA International H.S. (District 10)
- Pan American
 International H.S. at
 Monroe (District 12)
- Bronx Compass H.S. (District 8)

Brooklyn

Brooklyn Democracy
 Academy (District 23)

• Brooklyn International H.S. (District 13)

- Brooklyn Secondary
 School for Collaborative
 Studies (District 15)
- East BrooklynCommunity H.S.(District 18)
- The International H.S. at Prospect Heights (District 17)
- Expeditionary Learning School for Community Leaders (District 21)

Manhattan

- Academy for Software Engineering (District 2)
- Beacon High School (District 3)
- City as School High School (District 2)
- Community Health
 Academy of the Heights
 (District 6)
- East Side Community
 School (District 1)
- Essex Street Academy (District 2)
- Frank McCourt High School (District 3)
- Harvest Collegiate
 (District 2)

- Gotham Professional Arts
 Academy (District 16)
- Kurt Hahn ExpeditionaryLearning School(District 18)
- Lyons Community
 School (District 14)
- Olympus Academy H.S.
 (District 18)

- Humanities Preparatory
 Academy (District 2)
- Innovation Diploma Plus
 H.S. (District 3)
- Institute for Collaborative
 Education (District 2)
- Manhattan International H.S. (District 2)
- NYCiSchool (District 2)
- Satellite Academy H.S.(District 2)
- The Facing History School (District 2)
- The James BaldwinSchool: A School for

Expeditionary Learning (District 2)

 Urban Academy Laboratory H.S.

Oueens

- Academy for Careers in Television and Film (District 30)
- International H.S. at LaGuardia Community College (District 24)
- Middle College H.S. at LaGuardia Community
 College (District 24)

(District 2)

• Vanguard H.S. (District 2)

- North Queens Community H.S. (District 25)
- Flushing International H.S. (District 25)
- International H.S. for Health Sciences
 (District 24)
- Voyages Preparatory
 South Queens (District 27)

It seems likely that not all of these programs have gone into effect. Jackie Bennett of the UFT told *Chalkbeat* that changes involving teaching methods and scheduling had gone into effect by late winter. Progress was slower, however, on those that entail significant changes to the union contract, such as extending the school day until 7 p.m. or increasing Saturday instruction, *Chalkbeat* reported. A decision on those could come later in the school year.⁵⁴

Some 119 schools applied to participate in the PROSE program next year (2015-16). In May, the chancellor announced that 64 were accepted. These are ones with high school grades are listed on the next page.

Bronx

- Bronx Center for Science and Mathematics (District 9)
- Bronx International H.S.
 (District 9)

- Bronx School for Law,
 Government and Justice
 (District 9)
- Claremont International H.S. (District 9)

⁵⁴ Stephanie Snyder, "City Seeks Next Group of PROSE Schools, as Fariña Praises First Round of Changes," *Chalkbeat New York*, March 3, 2015

- International Community High School (District 7)
- Laboratory School of Finance and Technology (District 7)

Brooklyn

- Academy for Young Writers
 (District 19)
- Brooklyn Frontiers H.S. (District
 15)
- Brooklyn Latin School (District 14)
- Cultural Academy for the Arts and Sciences (District 18)
- Green School: An Academy for Environmental Careers (District 14)
- International High School at Lafayette (District 21)

Manhattan

- Bard H.S. Early College (District 1)
- Lower Manhattan Arts Academy
 (District 2)
- NYC Lab School for Collaborative Studies (District 2)
- Urban Assembly Maker
 Academy (District 2)

- Pablo Neruda Academy for Architecture and World Studies (District 8)
- Urban Assembly School for Applied Math and Science (District 9)
- Kingsborough Early College
 School (District 21)
- Nelson Mandela School for Social Justice (District 16)
- Origins H.S. (District 22)
- Urban Assembly School for Collaborative Healthcare (District 19)
- Urban Assembly School for Law and Justice (District 13)
- Urban Assembly New York
 Harbor School (District 2)
- Urban Assembly School of Design and Construction (District 2)
- Urban Assembly School for Media Studies (District 3)
- Urban Assembly School for the Performing Arts (District 5)

Queens

- Bard H.S. Early College Queens (District 24)
- Benjamin Franklin H.S. for Finance & Information (District 29)
- Business Technology Early
 College H.S. (District 26)
- EPIC H.S. North (District 27)

- Institute for Health Professions at Cambria Heights (District 29)
- Metropolitan Expeditionary
 Learning School (District 28)
- Voyages Preparatory (District 24)
- Young Women's Leadership School, Astoria (District 30)

Staten Island

- Concord H.S. District 31
- Michael J. Petrides School (District 31)

Learning Partners Program

In another effort to spur cooperation, this time between schools, DOE in August unveiled the Learning Partners Program. In this initiative a school that has a special strength is grouped with two (and in one case three) other schools that want to improve in that area. The program focuses on 16 different issues, such as creating a positive school culture and interventions for struggling students. The schools will visit each other during the year.⁵⁵

Of the 24 triads, seven involve high schools. The Learning Partners teams involving high schools are (host schools are in bold):

Bronx Center for Science and Mathematics

- Astor Collegiate Academy
- Pelham Preparatory Academy

Marble Hill High School for International Studies

- Bronx Engineering and Technology Academy
- Bronx School of Law and Finance

Brooklyn International High School

- Manhattan International High School
- International High School at Lafayette

⁵⁵ New York City Department of Education, "Learning Partners" (http://schools.nyc.gov/Academics/InterschoolCollaboration/Welcome/default.htm).

Urban Assembly School for Law and Justice

- Clara Barton High School
- Edward R. Murrow High School

East Brooklyn Community High School

- High School M560 City As School
- Brooklyn Frontiers High School

Academy for Careers in Television and Film

- High School of Hospitality Management
- Queens High School for Language Studies

Broome Street Academy Charter School

- Facing History School
- Urban Assembly School for Global Commerce

Admissions

In March, 86 percent of the city's 8th graders, or more than 65,000 students, learned that they had been accepted by a school they listed as one of their five top choices on their high school applications. That represents an increase of 2 percentage points over last year. About 36,500 students, or 48 percent of the almost 76,000 applying, were matched with the high school they ranked first, and 76 percent got into one of their top three choices, both slight improvements over last year, the city said. Chancellor Fariña said she was pleased that more students were offered their highly ranked choices.

Eight percent of applicants did not get admitted to any school they listed on their applications. (Students can list up to 12 schools.) Those students had to submit a second application -- again listing up to 12 schools -- but could choose only among schools and programs that still had available slots. In the past the so-called second round also included new schools that would open in the fall. This year there are no new schools. Students will receive a response in May. ⁵⁶

All New York City 8th graders are required to apply to high school. There is no zoned school in most parts of the city, and even students who live in an area with a zoned school have to apply to it.

Parents and others have expressed concern that admissions, under the control of the Office of Student Enrollment, is secretive. Even many principals say they do not know how students are selected for their schools. A 2013 report by the New York City comptroller's office identified a number of weaknesses in the process, including a lack of formal written procedures, inadequate record keeping and a lack of oversight by the

⁵⁶ Pamela Wheaton, "High School Letters Out. What To Do in Round 2," *Inside Schools*, March 5, 2015.

department.⁵⁷ Chancellor Fariña has said she would address this issue and have schools disclose their admissions criteria. So far, though, this has not happened.

Because of controversy -- and low scores -- on the state's Common Core based standardized tests for elementary and middle students, New York state has moved to reduce the role that such tests can play in middle and high school admissions. It remains unclear, though, what practical effect this has had on admission to the city's screened high schools and Educational Option Schools, which have used standardized test scores as one of their criteria for admission.

In addition some City Council members, members of the de Blasio administration and civil rights activists, such as the NAACP Legal Defense Fund, have objected to the method used to admit students to the eight academically elite Specialized High Schools. The selection process for these schools is very transparent -- admission is based entirely on a student's score on the Specialized High Schools Admission Test -- but critics charge that this method results in too few Black and Latino students being admitted to the selective schools.

Graduation Rate

The number of New York City students earning a high school diploma continued to increase in 2014, reflecting a long-term trend in the city and much of the country. According to figures released by DOE, ⁵⁸ 68.4 percent of students who entered 9th grade in New York City in 2010 graduated in four years, getting their diplomas in June or August 2014. This represented a gain of 2.4 percentage points from the previous year. Black and Latino students continue to lag behind their White and Asian counterparts -- a 61.4 percent graduation rate for Hispanics compared with 82.6 percent for Asians -- but all groups saw increases. Black students registered the biggest gain, from 61.2 percent in 2013 to 63.8 percent in 2014. Only 32.5 percent of English language learners graduated in June after four years.

Overall, the rate of students graduating in June after four years has increased by nearly 13.5 percentage points in the last decade, despite a toughening of graduation requirements. At the same time, the dropout rate declined to 9.7 percent, down from 22 percent for the class that entered high school in fall 2001, falling from 12,674 students to 7,311.⁵⁹

⁵⁷ City of New York Office of the Comptroller, *Audit Report on the New York City Department of Education's High School Application Process for Screened Programs*," June 13, 2013 (http://comptroller.nyc.gov/wp-content/uploads/documents/MH12 053A.pdf).

⁵⁸ New York City Department of Education, "Chancellor Fariña Announces Increased High School Graduation Rates for Class of 2014," Dec.18, 2014

⁽http://schools.nyc.gov/Offices/mediarelations/NewsandSpeeches/2014-2015/ChancellorFariñ AnnouncesIncreasedHighSchoolGraduationRateforClassof2014.htm).

⁵⁹ Patrick Wall, "City's June Graduation Rate Jumps Nearly Three Points, Outpacing State," *Chalkbeat New York*, Dec. 18, 2014.

Despite the gains, New York City still falls behind the state as a whole, as 76.4 percent of New York state students graduated in June of their senior year. ⁶⁰ Meanwhile the so-called college readiness rate among city high school graduates remains low. Only 32 percent of them will be able to avoid having to take remedial classes if they attend City University of New York.

Advanced Placement Tests and SATs

The number of city high school students taking at least one Advanced Placement (AP) exam increased in 2014 -- from 35,630 to 39,025.⁶¹ Despite that, the pass rate remained essentially constant, at about 55 percent. To pass, students must score at least 3 on a scale of 1 to 5. Passing the course often enables a student to get college credit for the class.

Since 2010, the number of students taking at least one AP test has increased by 39.5 percent with gains seen among all ethnicities. The number of students passing also increased between 2010 and 2014. The number of Black students passing an AP exam rose by 57.5 percent, of Asians by 47.5 percent, Hispanics 46.9 percent and Whites 38.3 percent.

City students also registered gains on their SAT tests, required for admission to many colleges, in 2014. New York City scores increased by 4 points in critical reading and 3 in writing but remained flat in math, while national scores dipped slightly. Despite that, New York City students still score below the national average. The national average in reading for example is 492 points on a scale of 200 to 800, but New York City students scored a 441.

Disparities persist among groups. Out of a total possible 2,400 points on the SAT, Black students in New York City scored 1,227; Hispanics 1,236, Asians 1,535 and Whites 1,546.

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⁶⁰ Jessica Bakeman, "Statewide Graduation Rates Improve Again," *Capital New York*, Dec.18, 2014.

⁶¹ New York City Department of Education, "NYC AP, SAT &PSAT Results 2014 (http://schools.nyc.gov/NR/rdonlyres/CE9139F0-9F3A-4C42-ACB8-74F2D014802F/171385/CollegeBoard2014ResultsPublicPDF2.pdf).

Career and Technical Education

As part of a national push to make students career -- as well as college -- ready, New York City DOE has revamped and increased its Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs in the past decade. According to DOE, the city has 51 designated CTE high schools where virtually all students are enrolled in a career education program. Seventy-six primarily academic high schools also offer CTE programs, for a total of 381 programs covering a wide range of jobs. In 2014, 117,000 students completed at least one CTE course.

While CTE is considered a successor to vocational education, it has its differences. For one, many of the programs assume students will continue their educations after high school graduation so the schools seek to prepare students both for college and for a career. Some prepare students for careers, such as architecture or engineering, where a college education is a necessity.

Starting in 2003, the city opened a number of small career and technical high schools, many with a focus on technology or health careers. Several are operated in conjunction with the Urban Assembly, whose best-known school is probably the Harbor School on Governors Island. With the opening of Pathways in Technology Early College High School (P-Tech), the city launched a 9-to-14 school, enabling students to graduate with an associate's degree as well as a high school diploma. Although P-Tech will not graduate its first class of 12th graders until June 2015, DOE has already replicated the early college model with schools specializing in other fields, such as advertising and business technology.

At the same time the city has opened new CTE schools and programs, it has shut some of the older vocational education schools, including Graphic Arts, Samuel Gompers and Grace Dodge. Other older schools, such as Automotive and Transit Tech, have sought to retool their programs, stressing the technology used in their fields and making their programs more attractive to college-bound students.

In an effort to strengthen CTE as well as science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) education in the city, the GE Foundation announced in March that it would provide an additional \$3.2 million to the city for these programs. Part of the money will go toward a CTE pilot program that will involve industry experts in curriculum planning and strengthen learning and teacher training.⁶²

Advocates say CTE programs better prepare students for the workforce at a time when employers say they often cannot find workers with the proper skills to fill available jobs. Many educators also believe that the practical, hands-on approach of CTE programs can motivate some students and boost their academic performance. Neither the city nor state

2015/Chancellor+and+GE+Foundation+Announce+Innovative+CTE+And+STEM+Initiatives.htm).

⁶² New York City Department of Education, "Chancellor and GE Foundation Announce Innovative CTE and STEM Initiatives," March 23, 2015.

⁽http://schools.nyc.gov/Offices/mediarelations/News and Speeches/2014-

aggregates graduation rates or other achievement data for students in CTE programs. However, a 2014 report by the Community Service Society⁶³ found that students in CTE programs were more likely to graduate than similar students who attended another type of high school. The effect was particularly pronounced for Black and Latino males. While 52 percent of Black and Latino males in non-CTE schools graduated, the report said, the figure for Black males in CTE schools was 63 percent and for Latinos 66 percent. Although this benefit does not extend to students with very low (or high) 8th grade test scores, Black and Latino males in CTE schools opened after 2003 had a 25 percent higher graduation rate than those in non-CTE schools. On the down side, however, the CTE graduates were less likely to be college ready than their non-CTE counterparts.

Since New York State began requiring a Regents diploma for almost all students, CTE students have had to complete all the academic courses required of other students, along with special classes in their career specialty. In October, the State Board of Regents took steps to add some flexibility to graduation requirements allowing students to substitute completing an approved CTE program and passing an assessment in that field for one of the Regents tests. ⁶⁴ This is part of an overall move allowing high school students to replace a Regents, most likely the global history test, with another assessment, such as an additional science Regents or an arts assessment. "Today's action by the Board of Regents will encourage students to pursue CTE programs that can give them the skills and knowledge they need in our changing economy," Ms. Tisch said after the Regents adopted the change. In April, the state issues a list of approved technical assessments. ⁶⁵

Special Education

The de Blasio administration has continued with the special education reforms introduced by the Bloomberg administration. As of September 2012, all students moving on to the next level of schooling (entering kindergarten, middle school or high school) except for those with the most severe disabilities were to be placed in a school without regard to any disability the child might have. Schools cannot consider what special services a child might need in determining whether or not to admit the student. And once a child is admitted to a school -- and decides to go there -- the school has to provide whatever services that student needs under his or her Individualized Education Plan (IEP), whether or not the school already offers that service.

Placing children in the least restrictive possible environment is intended to help students with IEPs:

• Close the achievement gaps with their general education counterparts;

⁶³ Lazar Treschan and Apurva Mehrota, *Challenging Traditional Expectations: How New York City's CTE High Schools are Helping Students Graduate*," Community Service Society, February 2014.

⁶⁴ New York State Education Department, "Board of Regents Approve New Graduation Options," Oct. 20, 2014 (http://www.nysed.gov/news/2015/board-regents-approves-new-graduation-options).

⁶⁵ New York Sate Education Department, "Department-Approved Pathways Assessments in Career/Technical Education," April 8, 2015 (http://www.p12.nysed.gov/ciai/multiple-pathways/docs/multiple-pathways-approved-technical-assessments-2015-04-08.pdf).

- Facilitate the daily interactions with general education students in order to help children with IEPs learn age-appropriate language and social interactions and use age-appropriate educational materials for learning;
- Access the general educational learning materials.

The program also aims to increase schools' capacity to serve students with disabilities.

During this time of the reform, the funding formula has changed from funding classrooms serving special needs students to providing extra funding for every special needs student at his or her chosen school. This new approach has led to a lack of specialized staff, appropriate services and programs for students with IEPs in some schools. This is a particular problem in small high schools with limited resources to fund programs needed to meet students' IEPs. Small schools also often do not have enough special education students to create a self-contained class. In order to provide the mandated services, some principals have taken funds from general education to pay for the self-contained classes. In other instances, principals have encouraged parents to change their children's IEPs so they can be placed in a team-teaching class or a general education class with services provided on the side. This new system has resulted in teachers who have no prior training suddenly teaching special needs students. 66

By most accounts, the results of the reforms have been mixed. Although advocates have applauded the goals, they express concern that some students may not be getting the services they need.

The plan has been slow to take effect at the New York's more selective high schools. The city granted 27 schools -- 14 international schools, 6 academically screened schools and 7 audition schools -- an exemption from having to enroll more students with disabilities in fall 2012. Some of the schools had very few students with IEPs -- less than 1 percent at Medgar Evers College Preparatory School, for example, 1 percent at Bard Early College and 2 percent at Baruch College Campus High School, Eleanor Roosevelt High School and Frank Sinatra School of the Arts.

As of 2013, though, all high schools were required to set aside some seats for students with special needs, and by fall 2014 things appeared to have changed. An analysis by consultant David Rubel⁶⁷ of students admitted to 25 top city high schools found that 2.5 percent -- 712 students -- were classified as having a disability. Although this is far below their percentage in the school system as a whole -- about 18 percent -- it represents a sharp rise from 2011-12 when only 428 students at those schools had a disability. Of these 25 schools, Leon Goldstein and NYC Lab School for Collaborative Studies had the most students with special needs, according to the analysis. Despite the DOE policy,

⁶⁶ New York Citywide Council on Special Education, 2013-14 Annual Report, December 2014

⁶⁷ David Rubel, "Question for Discussion: Can We Hope to See the Next Richard Branson, David Boies, Whoopi Goldberg, Charles Schwab, Steven Spielberg, and Wendy Wasserstein in New York City's Top Public High Schools? -- September 2014 Update," September 2014 (http://www.davidrubelconsultant.com/publications/NYC_top_public_high_schools_and_students_discussi on_paper.pdf).

some schools, such as Townsend Harris, Scholars Academy and Bard Early College still each had only two or three students with IEPs. While some of the schools with low enrollments might not be doing enough to encourage students with special needs to apply, parents also may not consider these schools for their children, thinking that the school will not be able to provide the students with the services they need.

In April, Chancellor Fariña announced that she was expanding the Nest and Horizon programs for students with autism spectrum disorders with 41 additional classes. ⁶⁸ The Nest program places these students with general education students in team teaching classes; Horizon, aimed at children with more serious disorders, provides small classes and a specialized curriculum. Both programs are aimed at improving graduation and college and career readiness among these students. The high schools that will offer the new classes in September are:

Brooklyn

Millennium Brooklyn
 High School (District 15)

 High School of Telecommunication Arts and Technology (District 20)

Manhattan

 N.Y.C. Lab School for Collaborative Studies (District 2)

Queens

 Queens School of Inquiry (District 25)

- East-West School of International Studies
 (District 25)
- Channel View School for Research (District 27)

Staten Island

 New Dorp High School (District 31) • Tottenville High School (District 31)

⁶⁸ New York City Department of Education, "Chancellor Fariña Announces Expansion of ASD Nest and Horizon Programs," April 2, 2015 (http://schools.nyc.gov/Offices/mediarelations/NewsandSpeeches/2014-2015/Chancellor+Fari%C3%B1a+Announces+Expansion+of+ASD+Nest+and+Horizon+Programs.htm).

Meanwhile students with special needs remain less likely to graduate than their general education counterparts. Of students with disabilities who started high school in fall 2014, 40.5 percent received their diplomas four years later -- in either June or August -- compared to 68.4 percent for all students. This represents a sharp increase from 2012 when only 30.5 percent of students with IEPs received a diploma after four years.

Twice-Exceptional Students

New York City currently does not have high school programs specifically designed for students who are gifted and talented and also have IEPs. Parents are forced to determine their child's more pressing need, so they can choose a high school that provides for the student's intellectual needs but not their physical ones or a school that has the necessary special-education services but does not address the needs of the child's high level of intelligence.

English Language Learners

Chancellor Fariña, who often reminds listeners that she started school as an English language learner, took a number of steps in 2014-15 that, she said, would improve outcomes for the current group of English language learners (ELLs). This came as four-year June graduation rates for these students declined for the third straight year in 2014 --falling to 32.3 percent in 2013 from 41.5 percent in 2010.⁶⁹ Many linked the decline to stiffer graduation requirements.

During the Bloomberg administration, the state, apparently displeased with services for ELLs in the city, put the city on a corrective action plan which required timely testing of students and creation of bilingual programs. In October, Chancellor Fariña and then State Education Commissioner John King essentially marked the turning of a page as they announced that they had reached a memorandum of understanding on education for students not yet proficient in English. In it, the city agreed to increase the number of ELLs in city schools, especially high schools; create more dual and bilingual programs; provide more training for teachers in English language instruction; provide additional programs for ELLs with special needs; and create new ELL enrollment offices in every borough.⁷⁰

In August, Chancellor Fariña appointed Milady Baez, an expert in dual language programs (see below) who came out of retirement, to head an office of English language learners that will report directly to the chancellor. Previously one office had handled both ELLs and special education. In February Fariña gave the new office more prominence, promoting Ms. Baez to deputy chancellor.

In announcing Ms. Baez's promotion, DOE said the English Language Learner Office would create new dual language and transitional bilingual programs; offer parent workshops on these programs; and provide training to teachers and other staff on acquiring a second language and developing literacy in it.

Dual Language

While not intended exclusively for ELLs, dual language programs play a key role in the city's efforts to improve education for students who do not speak English fluently. In January, Chancellor Fariña announced that the city would open 25 new dual language programs in 2015-16 and expand 15 others. Each will receive a \$25,000 federally funded planning grant.⁷¹

⁶⁹ Geoff Decker, "percentage of English Language Learner Students Graduating with Regents or Local Diploma as of June of Year 4," *Chalkbeat New York*, June 23, 2014.

⁷⁰ Eliza Shapiro, "City, State Ed. Departments Release Plan for E.L.L. Students," *Capital New York*, Nov. 10, 2014

⁷¹ Amy Zimmer, "40 New and Expanding Dual Language Programs Coming to NYC Schools," *DNAinfo New York*, Jan. 14, 2015.

Three of the 40 schools involved are high schools: Bronx Aerospace, School for International Studies, and A. Philip Randolph Campus. There already were about 150 dual language programs in the city.⁷²

In most dual language programs, half the students are proficient in English and seek to become proficient in the other language as well, some because they have an interest in it, some because it's the language of their family's country of origin. The remaining half is English language learners proficient in the school's other main language. Both groups of students receive some instruction in English and some in the other language, with the goal of all students becoming proficient in both languages while learning the regular course work for their grade. Most of the programs in the city are in Spanish, but a number of other languages, including Hebrew, Russian, Mandarin and Haitian Creole, are available as well.

Diversity

After years in which racial and ethnic diversity was not given top priority by city officials, an increasing number of local officials and activists have raised concerns about the de facto segregation of many New York City schools. This follows a study released in March 2014⁷³ finding that New York state had the most racially segregated schools in the nation, largely because of the segregation in New York City. By many measures the divisions have increased in recent years: The study found that in 2010-11 almost half of all schools in the New York Metro were intensely segregated -- with 90 to100 percent of the students classified as minority. This represented an increase of 70 percent from 1989. The report, by the Civil Rights Project at UCLA, found that in 2010-11, 85 percent of the city's Black students attended such intensely segregated schools, compared with 78 percent in1989-90.⁷⁴ An analysis by *DNAinfo*⁷⁵ found that in more than half of New York City public schools, Blacks and Latinos make up at least 90 percent of the students, while Whites and Asians are concentrated in a small percentage of city schools.

This is partly due to residential segregation in the city, but that theoretically should be less of a factor at the high school level where students can -- and do -- apply to schools all over the city. However, studies⁷⁶ have found that many students -- of different races and at various levels of academic performance -- chose schools near their homes.⁷⁷

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⁷² Elizabeth A. Harris, "New York City Education Department to Add or Expand 40 Dual-Language Programs," *New York Times*, Jan. 14, 2015.

⁷³ Civil Rights Project, "New York State's Extreme School Segregation: Inequality, Inaction and a Damaged Future," March 2014 (http://civilrightsproject.ucla.edu/research/k-12-education/integration-and-diversity/ny-norflet-report-placeholder/NYmetro_NY_CBSA_intrastate_tables_2014_March21_v2.pdf)
⁷⁴ Sarah Darville, "New Analysis Shows New York State Has the Country's Most Segregated Schools," Chalkbeat New York, March 26, 2014.

Amy Zimmer, "Map: How Diverse (or Not) Is Your Kid's School?" *DNAinfo New York*, Dec.10, 2014.
 Lori Nathanson, Sean Corcoran and Christine Baker-Smith, *High School Choice in New York City: A Report on the School Choices and Placement of Low-Achieving Students*, Research Alliance for New York City Schools, April 2013.

⁷⁷ Lori Nathanson, Sean Corcoran, Christine Baker-Smith, *High School Choice in New York City: A Report on the School Choices and Placements of Low-Achieving Students*, Research Alliance for New York City Schools, April 2013.

Much of the discussion about diversity has focused on the city's eight academically elite Specialized High Schools, all of which select students solely on the basis of the Specialized High Schools Admission Test or SHSAT. (The ninth specialized school -- Fiorello H. LaGuardia High School of Music & Art and Performing Arts -- uses multiple criteria, including an audition.)

Citing DOE statistics the New York Times reported⁷⁸ that of the 5,103 students offered placement in eight Specialized High Schools for September 2015, 5 percent were Black, 7 percent were Hispanic, 52 percent were Asian and 28 percent were White. (The remainder were American Indian or multiracial or their race was unknown.) At Stuyvesant High School, historically the hardest to get into, Black students received 10 -- or about 1 percent -- of the incoming seats. This represented little to no change from the figures for the previous year. About 70 percent of public school students are Black or Hispanic.

Overall more than 27,000 8th and 9th graders took the test. Blacks and Hispanics were somewhat less likely to take the test than Whites and Asians but they were far less likely to pass it. About 46 percent of test takers were Black or Hispanic. While 33 percent of Asians and 30 percent of Whites who took the test were offered a seat at one of the schools, only 4 percent of Blacks and 6 percent of Hispanics were.⁷⁹

In response, legislation was introduced in Albany calling for the city to control the admissions process for the specialized schools and therefore be able to do away with the SHSAT or add additional admissions criteria. The bill did not make it through the Senate education committee, so will not pass during the 2015 session. The matter is a state issue because in the 1970s, the legislature established the SHSAT as the sole criteria for selecting students for the three oldest specialized schools -- Stuyvesant, Bronx Science and Brooklyn Tech. When the Bloomberg administration designated five new specialized schools, it determined that they too should admit students solely on the basis of the test. Those schools are: Brooklyn Latin; High School for Mathematics, Science and Engineering at the City College; High School of American Studies at Lehman College; Queens High School for the Sciences at York College; and Staten Island Technical.

Supporters of the test, including many alumni of the schools, though, say the SHSAT is the fairest means to determine admission because it rewards ability and hard work. They note that while the student bodies at the schools are not racially diverse, they do include large numbers of low-income students and many children of Asian immigrants.

DOE has not endorsed any specific legislation though, in response to the admission numbers, Chancellor Fariña said, "It's critical that our city's specialized high schools

⁷⁸ Elizabeth A. Harris, "Lack of Diversity Persists in Admissions to New York City's Elite High Schools," *New York Times*, March 5, 2015.

⁷⁹ Sarah Darville, "Share of Black, Hispanic Students Offered Specialized High Schools Seats Remains Low," *Chalkbeat New York*, March 5, 2015.

reflect the diversity of our city. We continue to review a variety of ideas to increase diversity at our Specialized High Schools, such as increasing access to the SHSAT, offering expanded free test prep and continuing to examine changes to admissions policies." The chancellor has said the best way to improve minority representation at the schools is to improve the quality of education for elementary and middle schools ⁸⁰

The Research Alliance for New York City Schools based at NYU issued a report⁸¹ in March that examined alternatives to the SHSAT to determine what effect they might have on the schools' populations. It found that about half the children admitted under the SHSAT would gain admission if standardized test scores, grades and attendance were used instead. The change would increase the number of Latino and Whites, reduce the number of Asians and could possibly decrease the already small number of Black students admitted. The only change that would substantially alter the racial mix at the schools would be guaranteeing admission to all students in the top 10 percent of their respective middle schools. The report concluded, "This rule would have a large impact on diversity, but at the cost of reducing the average achievement of incoming students, particularly in math."

The issue of diversity is not limited to specialized high schools. Statistics show that screened schools -- those that use some criteria of academic or artistic achievement but not the SHSAT to select students -- tend to have more Blacks and Latinos than the specialized schools. For example Blacks and Latinos represent 19 percent of students at Townsend Harris, 33 percent at Bard Early College, 15 percent at Eleanor Roosevelt High Schools and 40 percent at Beacon. These schools have far fewer Asians than the specialized schools: While 69 percent of all children offered a seat at Stuyvesant this year are Asian, Asians account for only 16 percent of the teenagers attending Bard and 9 percent at Beacon. 82

In fall 2014, City Councilmember Brad Lander introduced a bill that would require DOE to report regularly on "progress and effort toward increasing diversity in schools." Another measure -- this one a non-binding resolution introduced by Councilmember Ritchie Torres -- would make diversity a goal of the school system. Both measures remain in committee and have not been voted on.

Common Core

The Common Core Learning Standards have had a major effect on k-through-8 education in New York and have been controversial. So far, though, they have had a less noticeable impact on high schools.

As it implements the Common Core -- a 12-year process ending in 2022 -- New York state plans to phase in new Regents exams. It offered Common Core aligned Regents

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^{80 ---, &}quot;Nearly Half of NYC High School Applicants Accepted to First Choice," WNYC, March 5, 2015.

⁸¹ Sean P. Corcoran and Christine Baker-Smith, *Pathways to an Elite Education: Exploring Strategies to Diversify NYC's Specialized High Schools*," Research Alliance for New York City Schools, 2015.

⁸² Gail Robinson, "Keep Exam, Say Specialized School Alums, *Inside Schools*, Dec. 1, 2014.

exams for English language arts and algebra I in June 2014 and will introduce the Common Core geometry exam in June 2015. However, students who started high school before 2013-14 (those who are now juniors and seniors) will be able to take the old Regents exams in English and, if their school allows, integrated algebra. 83

There were indications that the new exams are more difficult than the previous ones. According to one report, while 15 percent of state 8th and 9th graders scored high enough to prove their "mastery" of algebra on the old test, only 3.8 percent achieved that level on the Common Core test. About 67 percent of New York City students who took the new Common Core English test in 2013-14 passed it, compared with 74.5 percent of those who too the old Regents. There was a similar discrepancy in algebra: 57.4 percent passed the new algebra Regents, compared with 65.3 passing the integrated algebra Regents.

The Board of Regents also is adjusting the cut score -- the passing grade -- on the Regents exams. Last year it reportedly set two cut scores for the Common Core exams: one that would apply to students taking the test in 2014 and another so-called "aspirational" score indicating the score a student would need to be considered ready for college classes. By 2022 all student will have to hit the college readiness score in order to graduate. In June 2014, only 22.1 percent of New York state had a sufficient number of correct answers on the Common Core algebra exam to be considered college ready.⁸⁴

Although city schools are to comply with the state Common Core standards, DOE has not recommend or certified any particular Common Core curriculum or materials for high schools, as it did with materials for elementary and middle school.

Universal School Lunch

About 75 percent of New York City public school students come from families whose incomes are low enough that their children can qualify for a low or reduced price lunch. But some experts say many students do not take advantage of the meal because they do not want their classmates to know they are poor. To remove that stigma, the City Council has proposed that all students, regardless of income, get free lunch.

Due to a partnership between the mayor and City Council, the initial roll out of the program started in middle schools at the beginning of the 2014-2015 school year. It has proved very successful. Middle school student participation in the lunch program has increased by over 8 percent compared to the same time period last year, while high school and elementary student participation stayed flat. This points to the direct positive impact universal free school lunch is having on middle school students. In February, however, Chancellor Fariña said the city had no immediate plans to expand the free lunch for all program.

83 Susan Edelman, "What You Need to Know About the Common Core," New York Post, April 11,2015.

⁸⁴ Jill Barhsay, "Determining 'Cut Scores' as New York Students Take the First Common Core High School Exams," *The Hechinger Report*, July 7, 2014.

The Food Research and Action Center has found⁸⁵ that New York City does a particularly poor job of getting free breakfast to its needy students. Only 35.4 percent of children in the school lunch program get breakfast, making the city the second worst performing large school district in the country (Oakland, Calif., was the worst.)

Changes in "School Climate" and the Discipline Code

In April, a new disciple code for New York City schools went into effect.⁸⁶ The city had announced the proposed changes in February, saying, "The new code is designed to address over-reliance on suspensions, puts into place measures to increase oversight and accountability, and seeks to eliminate disparities that have adversely affected African-American and special-education students, who have been four times more likely to be suspended than their peers."⁸⁷

Among other changes, the new code bars principals from suspending students for insubordination infractions such as cursing or wearing prohibited clothing. While principals can suspend students for more serious insubordination, they must get permission for doing so from the Office of Safety and Youth Development. The new code also eliminates the superintendent's suspension -- more serious than the principals' suspension -- for "minor physical infractions." 88

Some advocacy groups had hoped DOE would go further and eliminate all suspensions for "defying authority." The advocates expressed hope that the newly created Climate Leadership Team, which includes representatives from some of those groups, would recommend further charges. ⁸⁹ The Council of School Supervisors and Administrators, on the other hand, expressed concern that the changes in the code would reduce the authority of school administrators. "When it comes to what, if any, consequences are in the best interests of a student, the principal is best positioned to make that call," Mark Cannizzaro, vice president of the union, said. ⁹⁰

⁸⁵ Food Research and Action Center, School Breakfast: Making It Work in Large School Districts, January 2015.

⁸⁶ New York City Department of Education, *Citywide Behavioral Expectation to Support Student Learning*," effective April 2015 (http://schools.nyc.gov/NR/rdonlyres/CD69C859-524C-43E1-AF25-C49543974BBF/0/DiscCodebookletApril2015FINAL.pdf).

⁸⁷ New York City Department of Education, "City Announces School Climate Reforms," Feb. 13, 2015 (http://schools.nyc.gov/Offices/mediarelations/NewsandSpeeches/2014-2015/City+Announces+School+Climate+Reforms.htm)

⁸⁸ Beth Fertig, "New York City Schools Chief Outlines Discipline Changes that Scale Back Suspensions," *SchoolBook*, Feb, 13m 2015.

⁸⁹ Geoff Decker and Stephanie Snyder, "Long-Awaited Discipline Policy Changes Further Restrict Suspensions, Restraints," *Chalkbeat New York*, Feb. 13, 2015.

⁹⁰ Aaron Short, "City New Rules Make It Tough to Discipline Unruly Students, "*New York Post*, Feb.14, 2015.

The code calls for the use of restorative approaches to discipline. This approach uses methods such as peer mediation and negotiation to try to get at the causes of misbehavior, and determine how the effects of the misbehavior can be addressed and what can be done to prevent it in the future. The administration announced it would spend \$1.2 million to train staff in using this approach.

The administration also announced efforts to limit what some have seen as the use of excessive force by police and school safety agents in schools. The police department will begin tracking its use of restraints and is supposed to report to the mayor's office on it. The police department agreed to limit use of metal handcuffs for students under age 12 and to no longer handcuff students to other students or to "fixed objects." The police and DOE also agreed to increase crisis intervention training for school safety agents and police officers assigned to schools.

At the same time, the department announced it would:

- Create a "School Climate Leadership Team" that will report on the effectiveness
 of the reforms "in creating a climate at all New York City schools that promotes
 safety and dignity" and recommend further changes;
- Create a regulation aimed at reducing 911 calls from schools, including developing crisis de-escalation plans and providing crisis de-escalation training;
- Institute the SAGA Innovations Program, an algebra-based intensive mentoring program for at-risk students, in six schools at a cost of \$432,000;
- Spend \$2.36 million to by provide students in the criminal justice system with guidance counselors and offering web-based learning and other technology to schools in detention and placement facilities;
- Establish more community schools (see page 20);
- Increase parent engagement.

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⁹¹ Sarah Darville and Stephanie Snyder, "Suspensions Down 10 Percent This School Year as City Prepares to Apply New Policies," *Chalkbeat New York*, March 31, 2015.

⁹² Michael Cummings, "NYCLU Reveals Suspension Spike in NYC Schools," *ACLU.org*, Jan. 28, 2011 (https://www.aclu.org/blog/speakeasy/nyclu-reveals-suspension-spike-nyc-schools).

Cell Phone Policy

In March, the de Blasio administration reversed another policy left over from the Bloomberg administration, issuing a regulation that would allow students to have cell phones in school. "Students are permitted to bring the following electronic items to school: cell phones, laptops, tablets, iPads, and other similar computing devices ("computing devices"), and portable music and entertainment systems," the regulation states. The measure does set limits, requiring principals to place rules on the use of such devices within their schools -- from allowing their use at times to requiring the devices be stored throughout the school day -- and not allowing the devices to be used during emergency drills, tests or quizzes or in locker rooms. ⁹³

The policy reflects a reality at many schools where students have been allowed to have the devices. A number of other schools, though, did not allow them, and they were banned or confiscated at schools with metal detectors, which tend to serve lower income and Black and Latino children. Many parents disliked the ban, saying they worried about their children, who often commute long distances to school, being unable to contact them in an emergency.

Young Adult Internship Program

This program, operated by the Department of Youth and Community Development and funded by the city, is directed at young people ages 16 to 24 who are out of school and not working. It offers them a paid orientation, training and an internship for 14 weeks, during which they can be paid \$2,800, followed by nine months of service and assistance to help them find a job, a training program or appropriate schooling. ⁹⁴ The idea is to help the young people develop work skills that will enable them to start careers.

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⁹³ Beth Fertig, "De Blasio Lifts Cell Phone Ban; Lets Schools Set New Tech Policies," *SchoolBook*, Jan. 7, 2015.

⁹⁴ New York City Department of Youth and Community Development, Young Adult Internship Program (http://www.nyc.gov/html/dycd/html/jobs/internship.shtml).

Citywide Council on High Schools Recommendations - Annual Report 2014-2015

We, the Citywide Council on High Schools, appreciate the fact that Chancellor Fariña has made parental involvement important in public education, as compared to her predecessor's administration. As the state designated high school council, the CCHS would like Chancellor Fariña to restart the quarterly meetings with the CCHS, in conjunction with citywide high school parent leadership groups. We request a representative from the chancellor's office to participate and record the group's concerns and communicate these back to her. We also request that CCHS be a leader and a partner with all New York City high school focus/working groups relating to high schools.

The following section contains what we would like incorporated into the high school system in the near future.

Admissions

CCHS understands that it is recommended that incoming high school students select 12 programs/high schools during the <u>High School Admissions Process</u>. However, the entire "12 choice" process should be immediately overhauled due to the many flaws:

- That the admission process include equal access as well as total transparency for all students, parents, and principals. Each high school should show the data about how many applied, how many were accepted and how many attend the program/high school.
- That principals be allowed to accept walk-in students if their forecast enrollment numbers are not met.
- That information be made available on the high school website.
- Further outreach by the DOE is needed when informing students and parents of the high school admissions process.
- That counselors advise students and parents at the beginning of the 6th grade about the high school admission procedure, which would allow students to be a part of their own educational process.
- DOE run workshops in the five boroughs, during the day, evening and at least one weekend slot over the summer. This will assist 7th and 8th grade students and families when they attend open houses in September and October. The high school admission workshops should be given in the nine native languages at a central location, so parents who do not speak English or speak limited English can receive assistance helping their child with the admission process. Having host schools in the five boroughs, so parents can have easy access in their neighborhoods, can facilitate this. The DOE high school admission website should have a video of the admission workshop in the nine languages so parents who do not have time to attend the workshop can have access from home.

This information should be well advertised in the local media and in newspapers in the nine native languages. The pre-kindergarten DOE campaign was well advertised. The high school admission process should be marketed with the same enthusiasm! Students are required to spend four very important years in high school and, as CCHS, we want their choices to be well informed as to where they can be the happiest and most productive during their academic careers.

We further ask the chancellor to create an admissions working group consisting of CCHS, high school parents, students and the DOE.

Advanced Placement Tests and SATs

We recommend:

- Advanced placement classes in high school are critical in the students' college readiness process. This is often used as one of the college admission criteria.
- DOE make AP classes more readily available to all high school students citywide.

Career & Technical Education

The CTE program is a welcome move by the DOE. It should address different learning needs of students. Not all students are able to attend college right after high school.

We recommend:

- That CTE programs start in the student's freshman year. Programming the CTE classes to start in the student's freshman year would capture their enthusiasm to stay in school and encourage them to maintain a steady average so they can graduate.
- That DOE require internships or hands-on real-world experience outside of school for the students to fully benefit from CTE programs before their junior year.
- Career Mapping be utilized by guidance counselors.

Tom Pendleton the deputy executive director of Career & Work Readiness Office of Postsecondary Readiness designed a great instructional program called "Career Mapping" that enables students from middle school to high school to look at over 11 career options on a chart. A Career Mapping chart helps guide students and allows them the ability to map out their futures. This wonderful visual tool lets the students see how a high school diploma and a higher educational degree will affect their ability to pursue the desired career choice.

Please visit the link: http://cte.nyc/site/content/cte-schools-and-programs

College / Guidance Counselors

We recommend:

- All high schools provide access to an online college application tool. If high
 schools have this tool, it allows seniors the opportunity to upload all college
 applications, transcripts, recommendations, personal statements, etc. directly to
 the colleges of their choice. This will enable students to have early access to
 scholarships and early decisions that they might miss out on if they were to apply
 with paper application by mail.
- That schools that use the online college application admission process be used as models.
- That college guidance begins in the 9th grade to ensure students are on track for college. There also should be a student mentor program implemented in which recent high school graduates as well as college graduates can discuss the college application process with their peers and offer insightful and valuable information.

Community Schools

We recommend:

Data kept by the DOE be transparent and made readily available to the public.
 Individual schools and others can then use what's working to assist and improve their high schools.

Dual Language

- DOE launch a program such as a buddy system. This program would provide educational rewards as well as address the social and emotional needs of the displaced student. Those students learning a language should be partnered with a student who is a native speaker to that language. Both students can benefit from the buddy interactions. New ELLs already feel disconnected due to the immigration into the U.S. This program will help them connect to a new culture and a possible long-term friend.
- The DOE increase the budget in order to provide adequate funding for additional services needed for ELLs arriving in the middle of the school year including those who may lack adequate education from their homeland. They require a great deal of emotional and academic support in order to stay on track and graduate on time.
- DOE provide data comparing ELL programs vs. dual language programs.

High School Directory

We recommend:

A check and balance process that insures the high school directory contains accurate criteria for admission into individual programs. It should also contain:

- Previous four-year graduation rate of general education, special education, and ELL students.
- Available AP courses along with the passing rate for each course and the number of students admitted.
- The directory should include a special CTE section in the contents page.

Parental Involvement Policy

Moving forward, DOE should reexamine the parental involvement policy. Parent involvement needs to be effective. Parent engagement is not a defined process, but parent partnership can be.

We recommend:

- The department provide transparency on all levels, including schools, district offices and central offices.
- Professional development be put in place for staff and parents whenever needed.
- Realistic shared decision-making on the School and District Leadership Teams.
- That parent leadership accountability be restructured. This includes mandatory training for all leadership positions.
- That all principals must be accountable for enforcing these policies.
- Parent workshops throughout the year rotate between English and other languages.
- Parents be given easy access to classes such as: GED, English as a second language, computer, math, science, health and wellness, and conflict resolution. This should also entail preventative classes. such as anti-bullying (including social media) and awareness.
- Additional classes be provided as needed upon parental request.

Remediation

- That DOE supply remediation classes to those in need. The department's assessment from 3rd to 8th grade ELA/ELA Math scores can be used for this function. This data should be utilized and implemented for support services to those students who are not performing on grade level.
- Intervention classes be provided during the school day.
- Extra support, which can be used online, afterschool, and on weekends, be offered.

School Lunch

We recommend:

- DOE provide universal free lunch to ALL students
- Its top priority in this year's budget should be the expansion of universal free school lunch for ALL students.

There must be respect for all students. We do not want low-income students to be labeled. Students sometimes neglect the much-needed nourishment that school lunch provides. Many of these students are probably labeled with behavior issues like disturbing the class or even falling asleep during class. Stigma is the core barrier to student participation in free lunch. As parents of high school students we know the poverty stigma that free school lunch begins in middle schools but has the greatest negative impact on high school student participation. It is a priority of CCHS that universal free school lunch is expanded to all students starting in the upcoming school year.

Special Education

- The DOE ensure that services are appropriately provided for special needs students during their high school years along with adequate intervention and counseling.
- Students and families with disabilities such as 504 and IEPs need to be better informed of what options there are for students who choose not to be college bound.
- Students who choose to pursue higher education need to have meaningful
 workshops and support services to help them transition into college because this is
 a critical decision-making process for the families of students with disabilities.
 Such help is not being effectively provided by the DOE and needs to be better
 addressed to assist one of our neediest populations.

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- Citywide Council on High Schools Annual Report 2012-2013
- Citywide Council on High Schools Addendum 2013-2014
- Citywide Council on High Schools Annual Report 2014-2015

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