

President Steve Stowe
First Vice President Jennifer Hu
Second Vice President/IEP Rep Elizabeth Chan
Recording Secretary Vito LaBella
Treasurer/ BBP Appointee Marie Brugueras



Council Members

Ghada Amin Maya Rozenblat- ELL Rep
Jona Isufi Joyce Xie
Li Ping Jiang Kevin Zhao- BBP Appointee

Resolution 5 (SY22-23)

Resolution Requesting District 20 Implement Accelerated Academic Screened Middle School Programs

Resolution approved by vote on 10/12/22

- | | |
|------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| 1. Steve Stowe - Yes | 7. Jona Isufi - Yes |
| 2. Jennifer Hu - Abstain | 8. Li Ping Jiang - Yes |
| 3. Elizabeth Chan - Excused | 9. Maya Rozenblat - No response |
| 4. Vito LaBella - Yes | 10. Joyce Xie - Yes |
| 5. Marie Brugueras - Excused | 11. Kevin Zhao - Yes |
| 6. Ghada Amin - Unexcused | |

Co-Sponsors: Stephen Stowe, Vito LaBella

WHEREAS, within the New York City school governance framework, Community Education Council’s (CEC) are the State-designated representatives of parents with children in grades PK - 8¹. Elected CEC members are the only publicly-elected PK - 8 parent representatives in the NYC school governance framework.

WHEREAS, in public elections held in the spring of 2021, District 20 voters cast the 2nd highest number of votes and had the 2nd highest number of voters among all CEC’s in the City (Appendix 1). The high voter turnout and the resulting makeup of the CEC in District 20 is in large part due to the dissatisfaction many families in the District felt toward admission policy reforms made under the former administration of Mayor Bill DeBlasio. The election established a clear mandate for the current CEC to seek reversal of those policy changes.

WHEREAS, on September 29th, the Department of Education (DOE) published middle and high school admissions policy for students applying for SY 22 - 23. This policy reads (emphasis added):

“The middle school application will open on October 26th, and the deadline to apply is December 1st. Students will receive offers in April. **Superintendents will partner with school communities’ leadership, staff, and parents to thoughtfully determine if and where middle school screened programs should exist based on instructional and community needs.** Where screening is allowed, students would be ranked based on a composite of their course grades from fourth grade. **The number of academically screened schools will be limited and based on the needs of the community.** Screens will be determined by the start of the Middle School Admissions process on October 26th”².

¹ New York State Education Law - Title II, Article 52A, Section 2590-E; <https://www.nysenate.gov/legislation/laws/EDN/2590-E>

² New York City Department of Education, “Chancellor Banks Announces Admissions Process Built on Community Feedback”, September 29, 2022

WHEREAS, on a conference call with CCEC Presidents on October 8, Chancellor David Banks and Deputy Chancellor Dr. Desmond Blackburn expressed their intention that parent voices should be heard in the decision of whether to utilize academic screens at Middle Schools.

WHEREAS, in District 20 the process has begun with Middle School Principal's required to engage with their School Leadership Team's (SLT's) to solicit feedback on whether to resume the use of academic screening at their middle schools. Not required but suggested was to engage with the school Parent Teacher Associations (PTA's) for additional feedback. Following these feedback sessions, Middle School Principal's are to recommend whether or not to implement academic screen programs at their respective schools. If recommended, the Principal is to provide a proposal supporting the use of academic screens and how the educational program for students admitted under this method will be differentiated and implemented. This is due to the Superintendent by October 14th. After this, the Superintendent will decide which Middle School's will be allowed to resume the use of academic screens.

WHEREAS, a process based on soliciting feedback primarily from families currently at Middle Schools is inherently biased as any incumbent family will seek to preserve a system under which they have benefited.

WHEREAS, the primary stakeholders in the decision on whether to change future Middle School admissions are families who have not yet entered the process. In other words, families with children currently in Elementary Schools must be the primary parent voices heard in this process. Chancellor Banks signaled support for this premise in the conference call on October 8th, stating that families whose children would be entering Middle School in the next 1 - 2 years should be heard in the decision-making process.

WHEREAS, school administration and staff are key partners in the education of our children. They possess expertise and experience that parents do not and should be granted wide latitude to implement approved policy. However, parents are the ultimate and sole "customer" in the public education system. In addition, SLT's are often led by the school staff with the Principal typically exercising a highly influential role. Parents - not school staff - should be the primary voice guiding high level policy direction, including the decision on whether to resume academic screens at Middle Schools. Implementation and execution is then entrusted to the District, the Principal and school staff.

WHEREAS, when the CEC in District 20 was initially notified regarding the engagement plan, a pledge was made that CEC liaison members and the CEC President would be invited to school engagement sessions. However, CEC members have been inconsistently invited to engagement sessions as of the writing of this resolution.

WHEREAS, under the current lottery-based system of admission, District 20 families fared the worst in the entire City in attaining acceptance to their most preferred Middle School programs. Specifically, only 84% of District 20 families were matched to one of their top 5 ranked Middle School programs, 10 percentage points below the City figure of 94% (Appendix 2). This likely reflects a large number of families in the District all ranking the same, small number of reputable Middle School programs very high. The data showing how District 20 families ranked schools has been requested from the Office of Student Enrollment but is not available at this time.

WHEREAS, the District rightfully seeks to promote academic offerings at all Middle Schools throughout the District. There are many unique offerings at District 20 Middle Schools. However, there is a certain type of academic program sought by many families in the District which is based on the use of academic metrics to screen students for admission and offers accelerated academic course work in core academic subjects. Families

request such Middle School programs for a variety of reasons. These include the benefits of ability grouping both for more productive learning and teaching, the predictability and certainty such programs offer within a large and at times confusing system, and ensuring that a Middle School educational program will prepare their children for the most academically competitive high schools and colleges.

WHEREAS, while a number of screened programs have been proposed thus far, it seems apparent that there are relatively few - if any - proposals focused on accelerated educational programming in core academic areas. Simplistically, this type of accelerated program can be defined as ensuring that a 6th grader who is at a 7th grade learning level can receive that level of instruction. Some other suggested considerations could be academic coursework that exceeds the requirements of the State Regents curriculum, coursework that is on par with high school Advanced Placement (AP) classes, a curriculum that is designed in partnership with the NYC Specialized High Schools, or offering subject-matter specializations in areas beyond common core or State standards.

WHEREAS, there is an argument against academic screens which posits that students already achieving the highest level proficiency of core academic standards (as measured by attaining a “4” on the State ELA or Math exams) should be thought of as having already “made it” and the system is then free to focus its resources elsewhere. This resolution strongly disagrees with this proposition. Like the i-Ready and Acadience assessments utilized during the school year, State test scores should be used not as an end point but a starting point to determine each student’s current level of ability and tailor educational offerings accordingly. As an example, prior to the elimination of academic screens, students entering District 20’s academically screened IS 187 Christa McAuliffe were already highly proficient in core Math and ELA subject matter. From 2013 to 2019, an average 94% of each 6th grade cohort scored a “4” on the State Math exam and an average 81% scored a “4” on ELA. The purpose of such schools is to enable students who have already achieved high proficiency of core State academic standards to move further ahead in their learning with teachers and staff able to deliver programming which goes beyond teaching core concepts. By simple definition, there are more hours in the school day and more days in the year to deliver this type of advanced programming if all students are at a similar ability level.

WHEREAS, there is concern that utilizing programs based on academic screens will foster division within members of the District 20 education community. However, these concerns will exist anywhere in a pluralistic society and are unavoidable given the sheer diversity represented within humanity. Rather than eliminate programs that benefit families and attempt to ignore the fact that differences will always exist in our society, the focus should instead be on addressing the negative side effects of such differences, if and where they exist. There are numerous ways to promote positive interaction between different cohorts of students including mixed non-core classes and extracurricular activities. With talented and committed teachers and staff, District 20 schools are well positioned to manage the dynamics that emerge around these differences.

WHEREAS, while time is of the essence as Middle School admissions are scheduled to open to parents on October 26th, it is important to note that the District has significant experience operating academically accelerated screened programs.

WHEREAS, to determine the amount of academically screened seats, it would be ideal to start with the number of students showing high proficiency of core academic material. This year the District is only allowed to utilize course grades from 4th grade for the selection of students into academically screened programs. We have requested but do not yet have the data showing the numbers of students and distribution of 4th grade grades within District 20.

WHEREAS, historically the District has maintained one stand-alone academically screened Middle School (IS 187) offering approximately 300 seats per grade. The District has also offered District-wide academically

screened admission programs to many Middle Schools, albeit not always in a fully transparent manner. Based on discussions with District staff, this resulted in at least 600 District-wide Middle School seats per grade (inclusive of IS 187) and was likely more.

WHEREAS, an additional consideration is the number of academically screened seats which would need to be added in order to ensure District 20 families were placed at one of their Top 5 choices at the same rate as the City average. With only 3,119 students achieving a Top 5 placement out of 3,709 applicants (placement rate 84%), we would need an additional 380 seats which families ranked as a Top 5 choice for the District's placement rate to equal the City rate of 94% (Appendix 2). In the absence of data on how families ranked schools, this resolution assumes that all 300 seats at IS 187 were ranked as Top 5 choices by the majority of parents³, meaning that an additional 380 seats would result in 680 academically screened seats.

WHEREAS, for the Spring 2022 State exams, District 20 reported 1,392 4th grade students achieving a "4" on the State Math exam and 1,034 4th grade students achieving a "4" on the State ELA exam. As previously stated, this resolution believes that any student demonstrating highest proficiency at core subject matter should be considered for academically advanced programs. Utilizing a simple rounded average of the number of students scoring a "4" on Math and ELA results in an upward bound estimate of approximately 1,200 academically screened seats.

WHEREAS, responsibility for the final decision on the use of academic screens in Middle School admissions rests with the Superintendent.

THEREFORE, be it resolved that the Community Education Council of District 20 calls upon District 20 Superintendent Dr. David Pretto to:

- Implement a more parent-focused engagement process including:
 - Centering the voices of parents, especially those at Elementary Schools
 - Including CEC members in these engagement sessions
- Honor the expressed will of the voters in the Spring 2021 CEC elections by reinstating Middle School academic screens in District 20.
 - Establish a Fall 2025 target of between 600 and 1,200 academically screened seats for 6th grade admission, inclusive of the 300 seats at IS 187.
 - The strength of the 2021 election mandate alone justifies at least 600 seats which was the rough number historically offered by the 3 largest academically screened Middle Schools.
 - The number could increase closer to the upward bound of 1,200 depending on the strength of parent engagement during October 2022.
 - Ensure that at least half of the screened seats newly offered for Fall 2023 are programs offering accelerated learning in core academic areas (math, science, ELA, social studies).
 - Structure the number and location of new screened seats by considering the number and school locations of 4th grade students scoring a "4" on their Math and ELA State Exams in 2022. In areas in which there is a high concentration of such students, create more seats at local zoned Middle Schools. This will help ensure that District-wide applicants do not "crowd-out" zoned applicants. There are many ways to accomplish this but one recommendation for a target 689 seats by Fall 2025 is provided in Appendix 3
- Publish transparent standards for admission at each program, including the number of seats, applicants, average grade of the accepted students, program specifics and school leadership.

³ For the past 2 admission cycles, IS 187 has not utilized academic screens in admission. Nonetheless, we believe a large number of families continue to rank the school highly reflecting the historical reputation and District-wide admission status.

Appendix 1

Spring 2021 CEC Election Results for Community School Districts

DISTRICTS	Votes Cast	Voters
DISTRICT 02	12,914	4,694
DISTRICT 20	10,235	3,348
DISTRICT 25	5,424	1,861
DISTRICT 26	5,107	1,812
DISTRICT 03	5,021	1,774
DISTRICT 15	4,985	1,648
DISTRICT 28	3,774	1,370
DISTRICT 31	3,697	1,499
DISTRICT 30	3,566	1,249
DISTRICT 21	3,405	1,211
DISTRICT 24	3,309	1,183
DISTRICT 22	2,851	979
DISTRICT 10	2,845	1,045
DISTRICT 01	2,620	828
DISTRICT 09	2,287	796
DISTRICT 14	1,713	582
DISTRICT 27	1,326	510
DISTRICT 13	1,321	477
DISTRICT 11	1,225	441
DISTRICT 07	1,072	415
DISTRICT 06	1,025	385
DISTRICT 29	1,016	357
DISTRICT 04	974	316
DISTRICT 05	866	324
DISTRICT 08	747	307
DISTRICT 23	747	236
DISTRICT 17	704	259
DISTRICT 18	646	250
DISTRICT 32	519	198
DISTRICT 12	478	184
DISTRICT 19	428	157
DISTRICT 16	417	152

Source: Department of Education, Elections Working Group, Excel spreadsheet “Votes and Voters by District and School Oct 2021”

Appendix 2

**Fall 2022 Main Round Middle School Admissions: Summary of Matches
by Choice Number - District Level**

Residential District	Total Applicants	Average Demand of Application Choice	Number of Matches to Choice				Percent of Matches to Choice			
			# Matches to Choice 1-3	# Matches to Choice 1-5	# Matches to Choice 1-10	# Matches to Choice 1-12	% Matches to Choice 1-3	% Matches to Choice 1-5	% Matches to Choice 1-10	% Matches to Choice 1-12
20	3,709	10.5	2,750	3,119	3,406	3,421	74%	84%	92%	92%
2	2,195	8.7	1,815	2,034	2,147	2,147	83%	93%	98%	98%
31	4,057	7.5	3,378	3,517	3,574	3,575	83%	87%	88%	88%
15	2,268	9.5	1,899	2,071	2,202	2,205	84%	91%	97%	97%
30	2,447	6.3	2,116	2,206	2,250	2,252	86%	90%	92%	92%
Unknown	101	7.3	90	91	93	93	89%	90%	92%	92%
21	2,203	7.4	1,991	2,074	2,126	2,128	90%	94%	97%	97%
24	4,072	6.2	3,694	3,809	3,853	3,854	91%	94%	95%	95%
1	512	7.1	465	490	495	496	91%	96%	97%	97%
Total	57,958	6.7	52,894	54,676	55,554	55,584	91%	94%	96%	96%
26	1,684	6.3	1,537	1,594	1,611	1,611	91%	95%	96%	96%
22	2,368	6.4	2,173	2,253	2,284	2,288	92%	95%	96%	97%
13	792	7.7	729	764	778	778	92%	96%	98%	98%
28	2,276	5.1	2,124	2,182	2,194	2,194	93%	96%	96%	96%
27	2,999	4.7	2,810	2,853	2,864	2,865	94%	95%	95%	96%

29	2,038	4.3	1,913	1,952	1,959	1,959	94%	96%	96%	96%
25	2,528	4.7	2,387	2,448	2,458	2,458	94%	97%	97%	97%
17	1,054	5.8	999	1,023	1,028	1,028	95%	97%	98%	98%
5	737	5.7	699	712	716	716	95%	97%	97%	97%
10	3,260	10.1	3,116	3,153	3,156	3,156	96%	97%	97%	97%
3	988	7.6	948	971	977	977	96%	98%	99%	99%
9	2,160	5.0	2,077	2,088	2,089	2,089	96%	97%	97%	97%
14	812	5.6	782	798	805	805	96%	98%	99%	99%
16	464	4.9	447	452	457	457	96%	97%	98%	98%
18	847	4.6	817	829	831	831	96%	98%	98%	98%
12	1,360	4.1	1,314	1,318	1,320	1,320	97%	97%	97%	97%
7	917	5.7	893	895	895	895	97%	98%	98%	98%
4	612	5.3	596	604	604	604	97%	99%	99%	99%
6	1,259	4.3	1,227	1,241	1,242	1,242	97%	99%	99%	99%
11	2,676	4.7	2,615	2,633	2,634	2,634	98%	98%	98%	98%
19	1,514	3.1	1,485	1,490	1,490	1,490	98%	98%	98%	98%
23	643	3.9	632	632	633	633	98%	98%	98%	98%
32	677	4.5	667	668	669	669	99%	99%	99%	99%
8	1,729	3.5	1,709	1,712	1,714	1,714	99%	99%	99%	99%

Source: Department of Education, Office of Student Enrollment, Excel Spreadsheet, “Final MS Admissions Summary 2022”

Appendix 3

Projections for suggested schools and new academically-screened seats

	Projected	Total	6th Grade	7th Grade	8th Grade	New Seats	Capacity	% Capacity
J.H.S. 259 William Mckinley	Fall 2022	1,411	470	470	470	-	1,605	88%
	Fall 2023	1,478	537	470	470	67	1,605	92%
Target new 6th grade seats by 2025:	Fall 2024	1,544	537	537	470	67	1,605	96%
200	Fall 2025	1,611	537	537	537	67	1,605	100%

	Projected	Total	6th Grade	7th Grade	8th Grade	New Seats	Capacity	% Capacity
The Christa McAuliffe School\I.S. 187	Fall 2022	871	290	290	290	-	896	97%
	Fall 2023	879	299	290	290	8	896	98%
Target new 6th grade seats by 2025:	Fall 2024	888	299	299	290	8	896	99%
25	Fall 2025	896	299	299	299	8	896	100%

	Projected	Total	6th Grade	7th Grade	8th Grade	New Seats	Capacity	% Capacity
J.H.S. 227 Edward B. Shallow	Fall 2022	1,348	449	449	449	-	1,420	95%
	Fall 2023	1,368	469	449	449	20	1,420	96%
Target new 6th grade seats by 2025:	Fall 2024	1,388	469	469	449	20	1,420	98%

60	Fall 2025	1,408	469	469	469	20	1,420	99%
----	-----------	-------	-----	-----	-----	----	-------	-----

	Projected	Total	6th Grade	7th Grade	8th Grade	New Seats	Capacity	% Capacity
J.H.S. 201 The Madeleine Brennan School	Fall 2022	1,433	478	478	478	-	1,398	103%
	Fall 2023	1,453	498	478	478	20	1,398	104%
Target new 6th grade seats by 2025:	Fall 2024	1,473	498	498	478	20	1,398	105%
60	Fall 2025	1,493	498	498	498	20	1,398	107%

	Projected	Total	6th Grade	7th Grade	8th Grade	New Seats	Capacity	% Capacity
P.S./I.S. 104 The Fort Hamilton School	Fall 2022	1,020	340	340	340	-	957	107%
	Fall 2023	1,030	350	340	340	10	957	108%
Target new 6th grade seats by 2025:	Fall 2024	1,040	350	350	340	10	957	109%
30	Fall 2025	1,050	350	350	350	10	957	110%

	Projected	Total	6th Grade	7th Grade	8th Grade	New Seats	Capacity	% Capacity
J.H.S. 220 John J. Pershing	Fall 2022	1,141	380	380	380	-	1,467	78%
	Fall 2023	1,151	390	380	380	10	1,467	78%
Target new 6th grade seats by 2025:	Fall 2024	1,161	390	390	380	10	1,467	79%

30	Fall 2025	1,171	390	390	390	10	1,467	80%
----	-----------	-------	-----	-----	-----	----	-------	-----

TARGET 6th GRADE SCREENED SEATS	<u>Non-IS 187</u>	<u>IS 187</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>
FALL 2023	127	299	425
FALL 2024	253	299	552
FALL 2025	380	299	679