



Resolution Urging New York City Public Schools to Promote Inclusion of, and Correct Bias Against, English Language Learners in the Administration of the SHSAT and Admissions to Specialized High Schools

WHEREAS, as per the Hecht Calandra Act of 1971, admissions to “the Bronx High School of Science, Stuyvesant High School and Brooklyn Technical High School and such similar further special high schools which may be established shall be solely and exclusively by taking a competitive, objective and scholastic achievement examination, which shall be open to each and every child in the city of New York in either the eighth or ninth year of study, without regard to any school district wherein the child may reside.”

WHEREAS, in addition to the three schools specified by name in the Hecht Calandra Act, five other schools (Brooklyn Latin School; High School for Math, Science and Engineering at City College; High School of American Studies at Lehman College; Queens High School for the Sciences at York College; and Staten Island Technical High School) are now designated “special high schools” for which admissions is determined on the basis of performance on the Specialized High School Admissions Test (“SHSAT”) (collectively, the “SHSAT Schools”)

WHEREAS, New York City Public Schools (“NYCPS”) defines “English Language Learner” (“ELL”) as “[a student who speaks a language other than English at home and needs support learning English.](#)”

WHEREAS, the NYCPS [Bill of Rights for Parents of English Language/Multilingual Learners](#) grants the parents of ELLs “the right for your children to have equal access to all programming and services offered by the school district, appropriate to age and grade level including those required for graduation, and to all school programs available to other students.”

WHEREAS, as of the 2023-2024 school year, 16.3% of NYCPS students citywide and 25% of NYCPS students in District 4 were classified as ELLs.

WHEREAS, [in the 2023-2024 school year, only four \(4\) ELLs were enrolled in the SHSAT Schools, among the 15,654 total enrollment at the SHSAT Schools.](#)

WHEREAS, students classified as ELLs therefore accounted for just 0.026% of students at those schools.

WHEREAS, [the number of ELLs enrolled in the SHSAT Schools in the 2023-2024 school year was as follows](#): Bronx High School of Science (0); Stuyvesant High School (1); Brooklyn Technical High School (2); Brooklyn Latin School (1); High School for Math, Science and Engineering at City College (0); High School of American Studies at Lehman College (0); Queens High School for the Sciences at York College (0); and Staten Island Technical High School (0.)

WHEREAS, all current and some former ELLs are granted extended time to take the SHSAT, but the only language support provided to them consists of bilingual math glossaries that may or may not be provided on the day of the SHSAT at each test administration site in Arabic, Bengali/Bangla, Chinese (Traditional and Simplified), French, Haitian Creole, Korean, Russian, Spanish, and Urdu.

WHEREAS, NYCPS [explicitly excludes from the SHSAT administration other standard accommodations provided to ELLs](#), including “oral interpretation and written translation of the SHSAT directions, questions, and answers,” which “**are not permitted because this changes the standardization of the test**,” thereby excluding ELLs who would otherwise perform at acceptable scores on the SHSAT from access to the SHSAT Schools.

WHEREAS, when students were admitted to NYCPS elementary school Gifted and Talented programs on the basis of a standardized test, ELLs were able to take the admissions test in other languages, including Arabic, Bengali, Chinese (Cantonese and Mandarin), French, Haitian-Creole, Korean, Russian, Spanish, and Urdu.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the District 4 Community Education Council (“CEC4”) calls upon NYCPS to urgently examine the administration of the SHSAT to evaluate its bias against and lack of inclusion of ELLs.

THEREFORE, BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that CEC4 calls upon NYCPS to provide further explanation for its provision of translation and interpretation services for the former Gifted and Talented admissions test but not for the SHSAT.

THEREFORE, BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that CEC4 calls upon NYCPS to offer the SHSAT in multiple languages.

THEREFORE BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that CEC4 calls upon NYCPS to publicly report the steps it has taken and will take to support ELLs' preparation for, and success in performance on, the SHSAT for enrollment to the SHSAT Schools.

This Resolution was approved at D4 CEC Calendar Meeting held on February 12th, 2025, by 9 votes.

Council members as follows:

Elizabeth Soto-Cardona, Mario Medina, Rosa Nagovich, Lacey Jordan, Johanna Dominguez, Evelis Galarza-Serrano, Gloria Flaherty, Jasmin Benitez, and Rosa G. Diaz.

YES- 9

NO- 0

ABSTAIN- 0

ABSENT- 1 (*Rafael Lima*)