



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Over 2,000 Rushed to Sign Petition to “Stop Carranza from Using the COVID Crisis to Overhaul School Admission Policies”

New York, May 20, 2020 -- In just 48 hours, more than 2,000 people signed PLACE NYC’s petition urging Governor Cuomo and other state and city elected officials to stop Mayor de Blasio and Chancellor Carranza from seizing on the COVID-19 crisis to remove all common objective criteria used for admissions to academically screened middle and high schools.

“The people who signed our petition are just the tip of the iceberg; families and students are outraged at what is happening to our public education,” said Yiatin Chu, PLACE NYC co-President. “Mayor de Blasio and Chancellor Carranza willfully ignored these voices when they announced their K-8 binary grading policy, wiping out the academic achievements of all students prior to the school closures. They are now signaling to end academic-based admissions, not just for this admissions cycle but forever. Instead of effectively shutting down the few remaining academically rigorous programs across the city, the DOE should expand them in all districts or schools giving high performing students in all zip codes more opportunities to meet their full potential,” she continued.

Many of the most academically successful schools in New York City use some form of academics-based admissions criteria to match the needs of students with the schools that would best serve them. Academics-based criteria ensure that the children attending the schools can handle the course work expected of them—this is vital in a city where student proficiency in reading, writing and math vary greatly. These schools use a combination of State test scores, final grades and attendance to base decisions on offers. Due to COVID-19, the State cancelled the annual ELA and Math exams. The Department of Education (DOE) declared that attendance for the entire year will not be used for the upcoming admissions. Finally on April 28, the DOE announced that end-of-year grades for K-8 will be watered down to “Meets Standards” or “Needs Improvement.”

Chancellor Carranza claimed at the Panel for Education Policy on May 7th that “...we are not planning a nefarious plan to use this pandemic to change policies, that is not what we are doing...” Petition signers are skeptical: “It is wrong for the DOE/Chancellor Carranza to exploit this pandemic to push their agenda of killing competitive admissions for selective Middle and High Schools. They want to dismantle the few good schools available to parents. Our kids have

been working very hard and it is unfair that their efforts are being dismissed. Admission criteria to screened schools should remain," commented a NYC parent. Amid the stress and trauma of the pandemic, parents of current 4th and 7th graders are extremely concerned that the opportunity of matching student's academic needs with schools that could best serve them will be eliminated.

PLACE NYC's petition signers demand Mayor de Blasio and Chancellor Carranza leave academics-based admissions in place and allow districts and schools to use alternative criteria for one year to identify students starting in September 2021.

Link to Petition: <http://PetitionToSaveSchoolAdmissions.PLACENYC.org>

About PLACE NYC (<https://www.placenyc.org>)

PLACE advocates for a rigorous curriculum for all students in all schools, more G&T programs with a focus on neighborhoods currently lacking programs, additional Specialized High Schools to accommodate the overwhelming demand for rigorous academics, and increase awareness and preparation for the availability of SHSAT. PLACE also created Friends of Accelerated Curriculum and Education (Facebook - Friends of Accelerated Curricula and Education in NYC) with 750 members and growing consisting of parents and supporters of accelerated curricula and accelerated education.

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