

Resolution Calling for Universal Second-Grade Screening and Equitable Expansion of Gifted and Talented Programs

WHEREAS, gifted students are recognized under federal and New York State law as students who require educational services beyond the regular school program to realize their full potential; and

WHEREAS, research in gifted education generally finds that approximately 5–15 percent of students may require advanced academic services, with many researchers using 10 percent as a practical planning benchmark; and

WHEREAS, New York City has operated Gifted and Talented programs for decades, but admissions policies have repeatedly changed amid concerns regarding equity, access, reliability of early identification, and the uneven geographic distribution of programs; and

WHEREAS, prior admissions systems relying on testing at approximately age four raised concerns regarding test preparation, participation disparities, and racial and socioeconomic imbalance, while current systems relying on teacher observations or grades may fail to identify highly gifted students whose abilities are not fully reflected in classroom performance; and

WHEREAS, research indicates that cognitive ability becomes more reliably measurable around second grade, making later universal screening a more accurate and equitable approach than kindergarten-based identification; and

WHEREAS, universal screening has been shown to increase identification of high-ability students from historically underrepresented groups who may otherwise be missed by teacher or parent referral systems; and

WHEREAS, New York State regulations require diagnostic screening to identify students who may need specialized educational services, including students who may be gifted, and require parent notification and consent before further diagnostic evaluation; and

WHEREAS, the NYC Department of Education already administers MAP Growth within its MTSS framework, creating an existing infrastructure that can be used for universal second-grade gifted screening without additional procurement; and

WHEREAS, a two-phase identification process combining universal academic screening with a standardized, minimally verbal cognitive assessment, such as the Naglieri Nonverbal Ability Test, can support more accurate and equitable identification, including for English Language Learners, students with disabilities, and students from low-income families; and

WHEREAS, inclusive enrichment models may benefit many students but do not consistently provide the accelerated pacing, advanced curriculum, and intellectual peer grouping that gifted students often require; and

WHEREAS, Gifted and Talented programs are not evenly available across New York City's community school districts, limiting access for students in historically underrepresented communities;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that Community Education Council 24 urges the New York City Department of Education to implement a universal, research-based, and equitable gifted identification and service model beginning in second grade, including:

1. **Universal Screening:** Administer MAP Growth in second grade as a universal phase-one screen for possible giftedness using existing MTSS infrastructure.
2. **Parent Notification and Consent:** Notify parents or guardians of students scoring at or above the 95th percentile of their eligibility for further evaluation and obtain consent before diagnostic testing.
3. **Testing Preparation and Transparency:** Provide families with sample questions, explanatory videos, and clear information about the second-phase assessment process.
4. **Second-Phase Assessment:** Administer a standardized, minimally verbal cognitive ability assessment, such as the NNAT, to students whose parents or guardians consent.
5. **Grade 3 Program Entry:** Establish dedicated Gifted and Talented programs beginning in Grade 3, with sufficient seats to serve the estimated 5–15 percent of students who require advanced academic services.
6. **Geographic Equity:** Review and adjust G&T program locations to improve access for students in districts and communities historically underrepresented in gifted programs.
7. **Accelerated Academic Pathways:** Ensure identified gifted students have access to accelerated middle school coursework, including pathways to early completion of Regents-level mathematics and science courses.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that CEC 24 urges the DOE to publicly report annually, by community school district and citywide, the number and percentage of students screened, referred for further evaluation, tested, identified, offered seats, and admitted to Gifted and

Talented programs, disaggregated by race, ethnicity, gender, English Language Learner status, socioeconomic status, and disability status.