

“The singular test for admittance to Specialized High Schools in New York City (SHSAT) does one thing: it shows how well a student does on one test. It does not take into consideration the student’s hard work in the classroom over their K-8 years. As a mother of eight children, I understand that one test does not define the intelligence of any one of my children. It is appalling to me as an African-American mother, that the Department of Education has sat back and watched the steady decline of these numbers and instead of acknowledging that something has to change, has permitted other schools to use the same criteria.

We are complainants in this action because this is a city where Black and Latino students make up more than 70% of the school population yet less than 8% are admitted into these Specialized High Schools. With only 13% of Black and Latino students graduating high school, college and career ready, how will we be able to close the gap if we don’t give these students the chance to succeed?

It is time to move beyond the test and look at the entire scope of a child’s abilities.”

Zakiah Ansari, New York City mother of eight, Advocacy Director for The Alliance for Quality Education.