



September 27, 2012

CAA AV Organizing Asian Communities
Statement on
U.S. Department Of Education Office of Civil Rights Complaint
of the NYC Coalition for Educational Justice, et al.
Regarding New York City Specialized High Schools

CAA AV Organizing Asian Communities supports the complaint filed by the NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund and Latino Justice PRLDEF challenging the current admissions policy for New York City's Specialized High Schools.

The current admissions process, which relies only on the Specialized High School Admissions Test (SHSAT), has a discriminatory impact on students of color. The admittance rate for African American and Latino students is significantly lower than their peers, resulting in severe racial isolation of these students at top schools such as Stuyvesant and Bronx Science.

A multiple measures approach accounting for middle school grades, attendance, geographical location, or student portfolio would allow for a more reasonable admissions process. Students of color, including low-income Asian American students from ethnic communities less represented at the specialized high schools, would have a more equitable chance at attending these schools. All students at the specialized high schools, including Asian Americans, stand to benefit from a student body that better reflects the diverse backgrounds of New York City.

The SHSAT, which has not been validated to assess true academic merit, overlooks many qualified students who would succeed in a challenging academic environment. As such, CAA AV Organizing Asian Communities shares complainants' concerns with the current admissions policy for the specialized high schools. We support expanding educational opportunity for all students, especially those from low-income immigrant communities of color.