Mayor Bill de Blasio

City Hall

New York, NY 10007

Dear Mayor de Blasio:

I am a resident of New York’s school District 3 with a child/children at Booker T. Washington Middle School.  I am asking that you deliver on the promise made by your administration and the Department of Education’s online mission statement that states you will be “meeting every student where they are, and providing the support, resources, and high expectations for them to achieve at consistently high levels.”

The Specialized High School (SHS) admissions proposal you introduced will result in a drastic reduction to the number of SHS seats available to my district and others without providing comparable college-prep high school seats. This inequitable approach will aggravate New York City’s education crisis: Consider that nearly 700 D3 eighth graders, about half the district’s total, tackle the process of applying to the SHS. And understand that they do so because of the dearth of alternatives appropriate to their academic level. Now look what happens under the currently proposed SHS legislation, 2018 bills A10427A and S08503A: The number of SHS seats offered to D3 students would be 100, with no comparable alternative for the 600 who aspire to the level of academic rigor for which they are prepared.

As a New Yorker and a voter, I request that no changes be made to the SHS admissions process without the following being provided:

- A transparent process and feedback loop that includes comprehensive data about the effects on individual districts and a timeline for notifying families, district communities and Education Councils of potential changes;

- The elimination of barriers to enrollment, including district and neighborhood priorities, at existing high-performing high schools, so all New Yorkers have access to all high schools at the level they are prepared for;

- The addition of 5,000 high-performing high-school seats (1,250 at each of four grade levels) with access to comprehensive STEAM curricula comparable to what is offered at the SHS.

We look to you for leadership to ensure that every New York City public school student receives an education at the level at which they are prepared to succeed.

Sincerely,

Name:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

NB: Information shared with us by a team led by the CEC3 High School Committee has revealed that only 5% of city high schools (26 of 489) offer at least 4 of these STEAM focused classes (AP Biology, AP Chemistry, AP Physics, AP Calculus AB, and AP Calculus BC) and only 15% of high schools (73 of 489) offer at least 7 AP classes in any topic in contrast to the SHS, which offer on average 13 AP classes.

cc: Chancellor Richard Carranza

State Senators Brian Benjamin, Brad Hoylman, Robert Jackson, Jose Serrano

Assemblymembers Richard Gottfried, Daniel O’Donnell, Linda Rosenthal