WE POWER NYC
GROUP 6: EDUCATION
FINAL PROJECT

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Contents of: Group 6’s Final Project

Here’s what you’ll find in these slides:

1. Background information on NYC school segregation
2. Interviews with students and teachers
3. Selected figures who had/have a role in shaping the system
4. A brief history
5. Local elected and appointed positions
6. Current activism & how you can get involved
NYC Public Schools are some of the most segregated in the country.

Schools are not only segregated by race and ethnicity, but also by factors including wealth and disabilities.

City schools should be reflective of its residents, but this is not the current state.

The COVID-19 pandemic has only exacerbated the inequities present in the system.
For the Fall 2019 class, only seven seats out of 895 were offered to black students at Stuyvesant.

At Staten Island Tech, only one black student was offered admission, of 304 seats. 11 Hispanic students received offers.

Source: NYC Department of Education
01 Demographic Breakdown

Background info supported by data from NYC Council findings
Background Info Supported By Data From NYC Council Findings

Demographic Breakdown of NYC Public School (2018-2020)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Race</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Demographic Background of Specialized High Schools in NYC (2018-2020)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Race</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Asian</td>
<td>60%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: New York City Council Report on Demographic Data in NYC Public Schools
Schools that are Intensely Segregated By Borough

Source: Citizens' Committee for Children of New York

Intensely Segregated = 90-100% of the student body are students of color
Percentage of students attending a school where more than 75% experience poverty

Source: New York City Council Report on Demographic Data in NYC Public Schools
02

Quotes from interviews

Read some selected quotes from selected interviews
“I am very familiar with racism and segregation. I have seen this division in my school. Because our student body consists mostly of students from minority backgrounds, we are facing segregation in funding and other facilities. Our school authority wants us to get involved into the community and provide many opportunities but that couldn't be possible because of the funding deficiency. “

-Queens High School Student

With Mushfiq Milan
“There have been calls to diversify the schools, which have low Black and Hispanic enrollment. As a student who benefitted from this process (SHSAT), I agree that there should be a better way for admission to specialized high schools. I remember reading that one of the top specialized high schools, Stuyvesant, had admitted only seven Black students one year. These schools need more students from diverse backgrounds to truly reflect the makeup of the city.

”-Specialized High School Student

With Marissa Cronin
“The segregation in the NYC school system is both socio-economic and racial. I am a New York City teacher, who is in a title one school. A title one school has the majority of their students as low income. There’s over crowded classrooms, access to technology is a hit or miss, and the stresses on home life are more prevalent. So, they are facing more challenges to even get through their day or to just stay focused than their counterparts. Unfortunately, there are schools known as the ‘forgotten schools’, they are historically lower performing due to the powers above not giving them the help they need. And for some students, this might be one of the only schools they can attend.”

-Bronx High School Teacher
03
Key Figures
Influential People
NYC schools chancellor, has stated “Why are we screening kids in a public school system? That is, to me, antithetical to what I think we all want for our kids.”

Richard Carranza

Mike Bloomberg

Former NYC Mayor, under his tenure the number of screened schools doubled

Burton Hecht & John Calandra

Co-sponsors of the 1971 Act that required New York City specialized high schools to admit solely on the SHSAT
Some More Key Figures

**Bill de Blasio**
Current NYC Mayor, has gone back & forth on his support for the SHSAT, his son graduated from Brooklyn Tech

**Walter T Mosley**
NYS Assemblymember, introduced 2020 legislation to repeal Hecht-Calandra

**Mary C. Wall**
Chief of Staff of the New York City Department of Education, works with the Chancellor to develop and implement the goals, priorities, and policies of the DOE and serve as a key advisor on all aspects of the Department’s mission and leadership
04

History

Important Events to Know
With Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka, the Supreme Court unanimously agreed that segregated schools are "inherently unequal" and must be abolished. Yet, schools in New York City remain segregated. According to a New York Times article, “More than half of the nation’s schoolchildren are in racially concentrated districts, where over 75 percent of students are either white or nonwhite. In addition, school districts are often segregated by income. The nexus of racial and economic segregation has intensified educational gaps between rich and poor students, and between white students and students of color.” So, what was the impact of this ruling on education systems in New York?
The U.S. Supreme Court upholds the ruling in the case of Plessy v. Ferguson in which "separate but equal" policies are legal. It becomes a legal precedent used to justify many other segregation laws, including education.

Then-Mayor Michael Bloomberg instituted an overhaul of struggling high schools. Densely populated and underperforming schools were shuttered, transformed into hundreds of smaller schools. Graduation rates rose to 70.1% by 2011, compared to 38% in 2006.

With Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka, the Supreme Court unanimously agreed that segregated schools are "inherently unequal" and must be abolished.

Hecht-Calandra Act: Educational mandate enacted in NYS that requires three of the Specialized High Schools to base admissions solely on the SHSAT.
05 Local Positions

Local positions that affect our education system
## Local Positions

### Mayor

The mayor’s office holds direct control over the city’s public school system, under a structure dubbed mayoral accountability. The mayor also appoints the schools chancellor.

### City Council

NYC City Council’s Committee on Education presides over the NYC Department of Education. City Council can pass legislation towards desegregating schools, as they did in 2015 with the School Diversity Accountability Act.

### District Attorneys

The office is responsible for the prosecution of violations of New York state laws and are responsible for enforcing laws and prosecuting cases that serve a role in the school to prison pipeline which influences segregation in schools.

### Public Advocate

The NYC public advocate is an elected position that serves as a “watchdog” in government, on behalf of the people.

### Comptroller

The NYC Comptroller oversees the finances of the city. The office of the Comptroller audits city agencies to ensure they are effectively using tax dollars.
There’s also:

**Community Board**

Community Education Councils (CEC) are groups of elected representatives that serve as a link between schools and the Chancellor. There is a CEC for each school district, in addition to four citywide CECs. They meet with their respective superintendents monthly to discuss and advise on policy.

**New Yorkers**

Student-led Organizations such as:

- **Integrate NYC**
- **Teens Take Charge**
06
Looking Forward—Advocacy
Students get involved by joining advocacy groups like Teens Take Charge, a student-led organization fighting for educational equity and school reintegration.
Looking Forward - Advocacy Groups

- **Teens Take Charge**
  - [https://www.teenstakecharge.com/](https://www.teenstakecharge.com/)

- **Integrate NYC**
  - [https://www.integratenyc.org/](https://www.integratenyc.org/)

- **NYC's Inaugural Alliance for School Integration and Desegregation (NYCASID)**
  - [https://www.nycasid.com/](https://www.nycasid.com/)
Thanks For Listening To Our Team!

Mushfiq
Milan

Mikayla
DeLuca

Marissa
Cronin

Nah’sarah
Fofana