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Resolution 2 (SY24-25)

Resolution Urging the Panel for Educational Policy to Ensure Continuity in the Administration of the Specialized High Schools Admissions Test by Approving the Pearson Assessment Contract

Approved by a vote of 10 Yes and 1 No vote on November 13, 2024

- | | |
|--------------------------------------|---|
| 1. Stephen Stowe - Yes | 6. Yanqing (Angi) Chen - Yes |
| 2. John Ricottone - Yes | 7. Sabrina McNamara - Yes |
| 3. Elizabeth Chan - Yes | 8. Fabiola Mendieta-Cuapio - Yes |
| 4. Meifang (Junmi) Chen - Yes | 9. Maya Rozenblat - Yes |
| 5. Wenming (Angie) Chen - Yes | 10. Tamara Stern - No |
| | 11. Kevin Zhao - Yes |

Sponsors: Stephen Stowe

Co-sponsor(s): Wenming Chen, Yanqing Chen, Fabiola Mendieta-Cuapio, John Ricottone, Kevin Zhao,

WHEREAS, on November 20, 2024 the Panel for Education Policy (“PEP”) will consider a vote to approve a new five-year contract with NCS Pearson, Inc. (“Pearson”) to provide a standardized testing program for Specialized High Schools Admissions Test (“SHSAT”).

WHEREAS, as per the Hecht Calandra Act, admission to New York City Public Schools (“NYCPS”)’ Specialized High Schools must be determined “*solely and exclusively by taking a competitive, objective, and scholastic achievement examination.*” Failure to enter into a new contract with a vendor would put Specialized High Schools in a position of not having the legally required test to admit their Freshmen class for the fall of 2026.

WHEREAS, NYCPS conducted a Request for Proposal in the fall of 2023 seeking vendors for the test, which yielded two submissions: Pearson and Educational Testing Services. Upon review and further negotiation,

NYCPS determined that Pearson’s proposal was the most attractive both from a pricing perspective and from a quality standpoint.

WHEREAS, since the COVID-19 pandemic, NYCPS’ families have endured annual changes to high school admissions, introducing considerable uncertainty into an already stressful process for parents. Throughout this time period, the semi-permanence of a multi-year contract for administering the SHSAT provided parents interested in the Specialized High Schools with a valuable source of stability and comfort among their otherwise busy lives.

WHEREAS, of the approximately 30,000 8th and 9th grade students taking the SHSAT every year, many begin preparing up to years in advance, a significant investment in time, energy, and resources that should be honored.

WHEREAS, in School Year 2021, over 1,800 students in District 20 took the SHSAT and 531 received offers to a Specialized High School.

WHEREAS colleges and universities nationwide have moved to reinstate standardized testing as a component of their admissions process.¹ Testing is viewed by higher education institutions as an excellent way to predict students’ readiness for college-level academics. This helps students and higher education institutions to create the most appropriate placements and improve the likelihood that students will achieve academic success in their post-secondary education. The preparation for and experience of taking the SHSAT prepares students for standardized testing in the college application process.

WHEREAS, the new SHSAT format proposed by Pearson is computerized and adaptive, in line with the recent changes in other standardized tests including the SAT.

WHEREAS, under the current, paper-based testing format, students are unable to review their completed and graded tests, denying them a valuable opportunity to assess their performance.

WHEREAS, parents who have begun preparing for the SHSAT in the Fall of 2025 are concerned that preparation will be impaired by the switch from paper-based testing to computer-based testing.

THEREFORE, be it resolved that CEC 20 urges the Panel for Educational Policy to approve the Pearson Assessments contract, thereby avoiding any material disruption to future admissions cycles.

THEREFORE, be it further resolved that CEC 20 urges NYCPS to work with Pearson to ensure that families interested in reviewing their child’s SHSAT test still have the ability to do so with the new computerized format

THEREFORE, be it further resolved that the CEC 20 urges the NYCPS to work with Pearson to ensure that updated review materials are made available reflecting the content and style of the new computer-based test.

¹ [SAT®/ACT® Score Required: Colleges Reinstate Testing Policies](https://kdcollegeprep.com/sat-act-score-required-colleges-change-testing-policies/)
<https://kdcollegeprep.com/sat-act-score-required-colleges-change-testing-policies/>