

**LOCAL LAWS  
OF  
THE CITY OF NEW YORK  
FOR THE YEAR 2019**

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**No. 208**

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Introduced by The Speaker (Council Member Johnson) and Council Members Treyger, Cornegy, Powers, Lander, Louis and Levin.

**A LOCAL LAW**

**In relation to creating a specialized high school taskforce**

*Be it enacted by the Council as follows:*

Section 1. Specialized high school taskforce. a. Definitions. For purposes of this local law, the following terms have the following meanings:

Chancellor. The term “chancellor” means the chancellor of the city school district of the city of New York.

Department. The term “department” means the New York city department of education.

School. The term “school” means a school of the city school district of the city of New York.

Specialized high schools. The term “specialized high schools” has the same meaning as such term is defined in paragraph b of subdivision 1 of section 2590-h of the education law.

b. The mayor shall establish a taskforce to issue recommendations for improving the admissions standards for specialized high schools. The taskforce shall consist of at least 19 members as follows:

1. The mayor, or the mayor’s designee;
2. The speaker of the council, or the speaker’s designee;
3. The chancellor, or the chancellor’s designee;

4. Nine members appointed by the mayor, including 1 member who shall be a parent of a child enrolled in a school; 5 members who shall be departmental employees, at least 1 of whom shall have experience in departmental admissions policies and at least 1 of whom shall be a teacher; 1 member who shall have expertise in the fields of education policy and child development; 1 member who shall have expertise in standardized testing and 1 member who shall have expertise in assessment, evaluation, testing and other aspects of educational measurement; and

5. Seven members appointed by the speaker of the council, including 1 member who shall be a current high school student who is not enrolled in a specialized high school; 1 member who shall be a current high school student who is enrolled in a specialized high school; 1 member who shall be a parent of a child enrolled in a school; 1 member who shall have expertise in the fields of education policy and child development; 1 member who shall have expertise in standardized testing; 1 member who shall have expertise in assessment, evaluation, testing and other aspects of educational measurement and 1 member who shall be a representative of a specialized high school alumni organization.

c. No member shall be removed except for cause by the appointing authority. In the event of a vacancy during the term of an appointed member, a successor shall be selected in the same manner as the original appointment.

d. Membership on the taskforce shall not constitute holding of a public office, and members of the taskforce shall not be required to take or file oaths of office before serving on the taskforce. Each member of the taskforce shall serve without compensation.

e. The taskforce shall be required to hold no fewer than 3 meetings. The taskforce shall also be required to hold at least 1 public hearing to solicit public comment and recommendations on the

admissions process for specialized high schools. The taskforce shall designate 1 member to take minutes at each public hearing.

f. The taskforce shall examine, with the goal of increasing diversity:

1. The current admissions system for specialized high schools, including the specialized high school admissions test and whether such test should be changed or eliminated;

2. Existing programs such as the department's discovery program and the department's dream program, and whether such programs should be expanded and whether new programs or policies for increasing diversity should be created; and

3. The use of alternative admissions methods, including state standardized examinations, grade point average or other criteria.

g. The mayor may designate 1 or more agencies to provide staffing and other administrative support to the taskforce.

h. No later than May 1, 2020, the taskforce shall submit to the mayor and the speaker of the council, and post on the city's website, a report on its findings and recommendations. For each recommendation in the report, the taskforce shall include the number of taskforce members who voted in the affirmative, voted in the negative and abstained. Such report shall also include a description of any engagement with the department or stakeholders, and a summary of the public hearings held pursuant to subdivision e of this local law. Such report shall be submitted to the New York state assembly committee on education and the New York state senate committee on New York city education. The taskforce shall dissolve upon submission of the report to all parties required pursuant to this subdivision.

§ 2. This local law takes effect immediately and is deemed repealed upon issuance of the report required by section one of this local law.

THE CITY OF NEW YORK, OFFICE OF THE CITY CLERK, s.s.:

I hereby certify that the foregoing is a true copy of a local law of The City of New York, passed by the Council on October 30, 2019 and returned unsigned by the Mayor on December 3, 2019.

MICHAEL M. McSWEENEY, City Clerk, Clerk of the Council.

CERTIFICATION OF CORPORATION COUNSEL

I hereby certify that the form of the enclosed local law (Local Law No. 208 of 2019, Council Int. No. 1541-B of 2019) to be filed with the Secretary of State contains the correct text of the local law passed by the New York City Council, presented to the Mayor and neither approved nor disapproved within thirty days thereafter.

STEPHEN LOUIS, Acting Corporation Counsel.